

Chapter 12 HOLINESS IS POSSIBLE

Read the prayer on pg. 297 in your workbook by Matthew Kelly.

Watch the video "Perseverance" (Season 12: Episode 1). People who persevere never regret having persevered. It's the people who quit who are full of regrets. Learn to be strong no matter what hurdles come your way.

Whatever it is we feel called to accomplish in this life requires perseverance. You are about to hear one of the greatest stories of perseverance!!!

1. What is the one idea in this short film that you found most helpful?

Watch the video "The Holy Moment" (Season 12: Episode 2)

Holiness is possible, and achieving Holiness is simpler than you think. It all starts with a single Holy Moment.

The biggest Christian lie in history is not one that others tell about us. It is a lie we tell ourselves: Holiness is not possible. This lie neutralizes our Christianity. It is diabolical. HOLINESS IS POSSIBLE!

1. What is the goal of Christian Life?
2. What 3 things should we keep in mind about making Holiness possible?
3. What is Holiness?
4. What is a Holy Moment?
5. Give 2 examples (of many) of a Holy Moment.
6. Holiness is possible when _____.
7. Answer the 3 questions on pg.301 in your workbook.

Read through the handout Holy Moments Day 30 (taken from 33 Days

to Eucharistic Glory by: Matthew Kelly)

1. What does Holy Moment inject into our lives?
2. What is a Holy Moment
3. Life is full of _____ and _____ !

Read through the handout Six Defining Spiritual Moments Day 6 (taken from 33 Days to Eucharistic Glory by Matthew Kelly).

1. What are the Six Defining shifts for Spiritual Moments and give a brief description of each.

Watch the video: "Everything is an Opportunity" 9 Season 12: Episode 3.

Many people think that Holiness is about doing something extraordinary. But a lot of the time, it's simply about doing ordinary things well!!!!

1. Saint Therese (Mother Teresa) was famous for what she called "The Little Way". What is "The Little Way"?

2. Who is the Holiest person you ever met? Or know? Why do you say they are Holy?

3. Give two examples (of the many ways) of how you can be Holy.

4. What did St. Paul mean when he said, "Pray without ceasing."?

5. Answer the 3 questions on pg.306 in your workbook.

Watch the video " Your YES can Change The World" (Season 12: Episode 4)

If you want to see something incredible, make yourself available to God. Learn to yes to the right things and no to the things that aren't good for you.

Everything is an opportunity. Very often the biggest opportunities in life are draped in the very ordinary things of life. It is only looking back that we realize God was using the most basic circumstances to bring about his beautiful plan for our lives.

1. What does the first line in the Catechism chapter one say?

2. You have a God size hole in you. What are you trying to fill it with?

3. finish this quote from Hans Urs Von Balthasar. "What you are is God's gift to you, _____
_____ "!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

4. What types of people does God usually use for his greatest works?

5. Read carefully and slowly the pledge on pg. 313. Are you going to say yes to God and his church? The enthusiastically say yes and sign the pledge on pg. 313 !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

6. Read blue rectangle "Who was David". Are you going to be like David and make yourself available to God?

7. Answer the 3 questions on pg. 311 in your workbook.

Watch the video " Review" (Season 12: Episode 5)

Review the key messages you've learned during this program.

1. Pick out 3 things (illustrations) from pgs. 314-315 that stand out to

you. What 3 did you choose and why do they stand out to you? What did you learn or remember from these teachings?

2. What are the 7 most powerful ways are everyday habits will help us have a Dynamic relationship with God? (Pg. 316 first paragraph)

3. How did Moses pray?

4. Answer the 3 questions on pg. 318 in your workbook.

Don't let Decision Point be the end of your efforts to grow Spiritually!!!!!! Work toward the dreams God has placed in your heart and commit to becoming a better person each day!!!!!!

Watch the Video "DREAM" (Season 12: Episode 6)

1. What DREAMS has God placed on your heart?

2. Answer the 3 questions on pg.322 in your workbook.

3. end with praying Psalm 27 on pg. 324 in your workbook.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Jesus,

I believe that You are truly present
in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist.

Every day I long for more of You.

I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot receive You sacramentally at this moment,

I invite You to come and dwell in my heart.

May this spiritual communion increase my desire for the Eucharist.

You are the healer of my soul.

Take the blindness from my eyes,

the deafness from my ears,

the darkness from my mind,

and the hardness from my heart.

Fill me with the grace, wisdom, and courage to do Your will in all things.

My Lord and my God, draw me close to You, nearer than ever before.

Amen.

SIX DEFINING SPIRITUAL MOMENTS DAY 6

"This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad."

Psalm 118:24

The spiritual life is chief among serious endeavors. Something that is serious is demanding and requires careful consideration and earnest application. Our need for depth and seriousness is best met with a rich inner life.

The spiritual life is made up of seasons, and even in the darkest moments it is important to remind ourselves that spring will come again. What is unchanging allows us to make sense of

change. The six lessons I am about to share with you have served me well in every season.

Over the past thirty-five years, I have experienced many seasons in my spiritual life: long stretches of great spiritual consistency; other stretches when I have been inconsistent in my prayer; times of resistance and times of surrender; seasons of great patience and seasons of selfish impatience; periods when I couldn't wait to get to prayer and periods when I had to force myself to keep showing up; days when I felt the warmth of God's love fill my whole being and days when I felt so cold it seemed He could not be further away from me; weeks when I felt I was in the thickest fog and months when I saw things with great clarity; seasons of trial when nothing seemed to go right and seasons of triumph when it seemed nothing could go wrong.

The six lessons I am about to describe to you had a seismic impact on my inner and outer life, and I am confident they will also have a great impact on your life. The definition of seismic is "of enormous proportions or effect"; I use that word very deliberately here.

The First Shift: Just Begin the Conversation. This is the first seismic shift in the spiritual life. Prayer is a conversation. Once the conversation has begun, it can lead anywhere. Most important, it will lead to the places it needs to lead to. Never underestimate how important it is to just begin the conversation. This is true with your friends and colleagues, your brothers and sisters, your spouse and children, and of course with God.

This first shift requires us to make the journey from the head to the heart, to turn from a thinking type of prayer to a relational style of prayer. It is about learning to pray from your heart.

The Second Shift: Ask God What He Wants. The second of these seismic shifts occurs within the conversation when we stop asking God for what we want and start asking what He wants.

The majority of prayers mumbled and muttered, whispered and screamed on the planet today will be asking God for something. This second shift is seismic because it is when we begin to ask the Big Question: "God, what do You think I should do?"

When we start asking God for advice, direction, inspiration, and guidance, this is a significant moment. When we stop asking Him for things, for favors, and for our will to be done, we begin to open ourselves to much more than His will. We open ourselves to His wisdom. As we mature spiritually, we realize that to want anything other than the will of God is foolish and futile. But in the early stages of our spiritual development, the will of God can seem heavy, restrictive, and burdensome, even though the opposite is true.

The other thing that happens when we ask God about His ways and plans is that we begin to adopt a spiritual curiosity. This curiosity about God and His dreams for us and the world can be incredibly invigorating. It transforms the way we see ourselves, other people, creation, society, and indeed God Himself.

Getting what we want doesn't make us happy. We know that from experience. The wise seek the will of God in all things.

The Third Shift: Give Yourself to Prayer. The third seismic shift that occurs in the inner life is when we stop doing our prayer and start giving ourselves to prayer.

Giving yourself to prayer means showing up and letting God do what He wants to do with you during that time of prayer. It means letting go of expectations and agendas for our time with God. It means detachment from the feelings that prayer provokes within us.

In *The Seven Levels of Intimacy*, I introduced the concept of *carefree timelessness*. Carefree timelessness is the reason young people fall in love so easily, and the lack of carefree timelessness is the reason so many couples fall out of love. What is carefree

timelessness? Time together without an agenda.

The third seismic shift of the spiritual life requires us to surrender to the experience and to believe that God is working in us even when it feels like we are not accomplishing anything. It is about enjoying some carefree timelessness with God.

What makes it difficult is that so much of our lives are focused on doing and accomplishing. This shift requires us to let go and focus on being. The shift from doing prayer to giving ourselves to prayer may seem subtle, but the reality is it is one of the most significant inner changes that can take place in our souls.

The Fourth Shift: Transform Everything into Prayer. Prayer is not an activity that encompasses a small portion of our days. It is a way of life. Prayer awakens our spiritual senses and we become aware of God at our side throughout the day. Not that He is in our presence, but that we are continually in His presence.

The fourth seismic shift occurs when we discover that every activity can be transformed into prayer by offering it to God. "Pray constantly," was Saint Paul's invitation, and it is a beautiful spiritual principle.

Learning to transform daily activities into prayer was one of the greatest spiritual lessons of my life. Offer the next hour of your work for a friend who is sick. Offer the task you are least looking forward to today to God as a prayer for the person you know who is suffering most today, and do that task with great love, better than you have ever done it. Offer each task, one at a time, to God as a prayer for a specific intention, and do so with love.

The Fifth Shift: Make Yourself Available. Do you wish to know the secret to supreme happiness? Strip away everything in your heart that makes you less available to God. The joy we experience is proportional to how available we make ourselves to God.

The fifth shift is about making ourselves 100 percent available to God. Consecration is ultimately about making ourselves

available to God. Prayer is about making ourselves available to God.

Through prayer, our spiritual awareness is constantly fine-tuned, and the more fine-tuned it becomes, the more we come to see that so few things really matter. The challenge, then, is to focus on the things that really matter. Is your life focused on the things that matter most?

The fifth seismic shift in the spiritual life is availability. It is about surrendering ourselves, our plan, and our lives to God. It is through this surrender that our ultimate transformation takes place. It is through this surrender that we make ourselves 100 percent available to God, allowing Him to transform us and our lives.

How available are you to God? Are you ready to surrender and make yourself completely available to Him?

The Sixth Shift: Just Keep Showing Up. No matter what, just keep showing up to prayer. Keep showing up to Mass. Keep showing up for your spiritual routines and rituals. We will explore this sixth shift in more detail tomorrow, but for now, it's enough to be mindful that it's not about what we are doing. It's about what God is doing in us, through us, and with us—when we show up.

It is important to remember that God does all the heavy lifting in the spiritual life. The six seismic shifts are things that God does in us. All He asks is that we open ourselves to Him and cooperate. If we start feeling overwhelmed spiritually, there is a fairly good chance that we have confused our role with God's role.

The Eucharist floods our souls with the grace needed to respond to these six seismic shifts with courage and wisdom. Each time we receive Jesus in the Eucharist, spend time in the presence of the Eucharist, or acknowledge Jesus' presence in a tabernacle, our souls flood with grace.

Consecrating yourself to Jesus in the Eucharist involves all six of these spiritual shifts. We will eventually arrive at these six significant moments in the spiritual life organically if we stay committed to the journey. This consecration process will raise our awareness of them all over these thirty-three days.

Trust. Surrender. Believe. Receive.

LESSON

The spiritual life is not about what we are doing. It's about what God is doing in us, through us, and with us—when we surrender and make ourselves available to Him.

VIRTUE OF THE DAY

Surrender: The virtue of surrender leads to tranquility. If you find yourself wrestling with every situation or doing battle with every person, it's time to explore why you are so insistent on imposing your will on every person and situation. The secret to surrendering to God is knowing your responsibilities and being clear about His responsibilities. Our willingness to surrender says a lot about our understanding of God.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Jesus,

I believe that You are truly present
in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist.

Every day I long for more of You.

I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot receive You sacramentally at this moment,
I invite You to come and dwell in my heart.

May this spiritual communion increase my desire for the Eucharist.

You are the healer of my soul.

Fill me with the grace, wisdom, and courage to do Your will in all things.

My Lord and my God, draw me close to You, nearer than ever before. Amen.

HOLY MOMENTS DAY 30

"This is the will of God, that you be holy."

1 Thessalonians 4:3

When I was fifteen years old, I had a great spiritual mentor. I don't know how my life would have unfolded if I hadn't met him. But it's difficult to imagine that life would have been anywhere near as fruitful or rewarding as it has been. He encouraged me to read the Gospels. He taught me how to pray. He showed me how to care for the poor and visit the lonely. He encouraged me to read great spiritual books. He watched without judgment as I foolishly wrestled with God. He listened patiently to my questions, doubts, excuses, and resistance. And perhaps most of all, he encouraged me to honor those sacred truths that were emerging in my soul: Something is missing, there is more to life, and you do have more to offer.

One of the fruits of this friendship was a moment of clarity so piercing that it has defined my life. I was walking home from meeting with him one day, when everything we had been discussing for months came together in a single clarifying thought: *Some moments are holy, some moments are unholy, and our choices can guide a moment in either direction.*

It was a rare moment of clarity in a chaotic and confusing world. It was also a moment of intense joy. Everything good in my life has been connected to that moment. And all the pain and dis-

appointment I have caused myself and others has been the result of abandoning the wisdom that was revealed in that moment.

In that moment I realized what was possible. In that moment I learned to collaborate with God and create Holy Moments. It was a moment of grace like none other. And I have spent my life trying to help others discover that same clarity and joy. It is the only way I know to express my gratitude for the infinite blessings that moment brought to my life.

Now it's your turn. This is your moment. The moment when you realize that despite what your life has been up until now, and regardless of anything you have done in the past, what matters most is what you do next.

It's time for your life to make sense. Once we discover that some moments are holy, some moments are unholy, and our choices can guide a moment in either direction, life finally begins to make sense.

This is no small thing. Most people in the modern secular world cannot make sense of life. The culture has exiled them from God, religion, and spirituality. So, each day is a frustrated attempt to put together the jigsaw puzzle of life without crucial pieces. And the more disconnected from God our lives become, the more meaningless life becomes.

Holy Moments inject divine meaning and purpose into every moment of our lives. Meaning is crucial to our health and happiness. We cannot thrive as human beings without it. And we cannot live a meaningful life by filling our life with trivial things and meaningless activities. Holy Moments solve the meaninglessness of our lives.

Now, let us explore exactly how "our choices can guide a moment," for this is the essence of collaborating with God to create Holy Moments.

The crucial question is: What is a Holy Moment?

A Holy Moment is a single moment in which you open yourself to God. You make yourself available to Him. You set aside personal preference and self-interest, and for one moment you do what you prayerfully believe God is calling you to do.

These Holy Moments, these tiny collaborations with God, unleash the pure unmitigated joy that I first experienced walking home that afternoon when I was fifteen. The same pure unmitigated joy that is about to flood every corner of your being.

So, begin today. One of the beautiful things about this idea is that you can implement it immediately. You do not need to study it for years. No special qualifications are necessary. You are equipped right now to collaborate with God and create Holy Moments. You know everything you need to know right now to begin activating Holy Moments in your life.

And here's the beautiful thing. If you can collaborate with God today to create one Holy Moment, you can create two tomorrow, and four the next day, and eight the day after that. There is no limit to the number of Holy Moments you can participate in. Holiness is possible.

Life all comes down to the moment of decision. Learn to master the moment of decision. We all make choices. That's the easy part. The hard thing about choices is living with them. We all have regrets. We have all said and done things that we would do differently if we could go back in time. We know we can't. We may have made peace with those choices to some extent, but still, in the quiet hours they haunt us.

If I could give only one piece of advice, it would be this: Make choices that are easy to live with. Make choices you can look back on longingly, like you do upon the best of times with the best of friends.

Life is choices. We are constantly making them. But are we choosing wisely? We are not born great decision makers. It is

something that must be learned. The wisdom of Holy Moments will teach you how to become a great decision maker.

When you have a decision to make, consult your future self. Imagine yourself twenty years from now, looking back on this moment, and honor what your future self advises you to do.

Choices have consequences. It is one of life's fundamental truths. When we teach children that choices have consequences, the emphasis is usually placed on the consequences of poor choices, while the powerful and positive consequences of wise choices are often overlooked. Holy Moments are choices with powerful and positive consequences. Holy Moments are choices that are easy to live with.

It's time to start filling your life with Holy Moments. If you glance back at your life, the choices you find hardest to live with were unholy moments. And the choices you find easiest to live with, those you cherish, the ones you are rightly proud of, they each held the seed of goodness. They were Holy Moments.

Decision making is a powerful force in our lives. Our decisions quite literally shape our lives. We make the future with our choices. The beautiful thing about choices is you have more to make. Choices got you here, but if you don't like "here" all you need to do is start making different choices.

Your choices have power. If someone had an incredible power and used it for evil that would be a horrible thing. But what about if someone had an incredible power and didn't use it for good? There's something tragic and wrong about that too, isn't there?

That someone is you. You possess an incredible power. You can choose what is good and holy or you can choose what is unholy and destructive. Your choices have power.

So, let me ask you: What are you going to do with the rest of your life? More of the same? Continue to distract yourself with meaningless nonsense? Focus on what you can get? Keep dreaming

about a change you know you will never make? Or are you finally, once and for all, ready to do something about the nagging dissatisfaction in your soul?

If you are ready for a change, it only takes a handful of Holy Moments to flood your soul with joy and show you a new and exciting vision of the rest of your life.

So, don't let your past rob you of your future. You are more than the worst thing that has ever happened to you. You are more than the worst thing you have ever done. God is never more than one choice away. It only takes one Holy Moment to shift the momentum of your life in the right direction.

Have you been wondering how you will live out this consecration for the rest of your life? One Holy Moment at a time.

Trust. Surrender. Believe. Receive.

LESSON

Some moments are holy, some moments are unholy, and you get to decide. Fill your life with Holy Moments, one at a time.

VIRTUE OF THE DAY

Simplicity: The virtue of simplicity fosters a spirit of contentment. Never confuse needs with wants. Concern yourself with the essential few rather than the trivial many. Liberate yourself from the things of this world so that your heart is free to rejoice in the pursuit of holiness.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Jesus,

I believe that You are truly present
in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist.

Every day I long for more of You.

I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot receive You sacramentally at this moment,
I invite You to come and dwell in my heart.

May this spiritual communion increase my desire for the Eucharist.

You are the healer of my soul.

Take the blindness from my eyes,

the deafness from my ears,

the darkness from my mind,

and the hardness from my heart.

Fill me with the grace, wisdom, and courage to do Your will in all things.

My Lord and my God, draw me close to You, nearer than ever before.

Amen.

THE WAY OF VIRTUE DAY 31

"This is the will of God, that you be holy."

1 Thessalonians 4:3

Eight hundred years ago, a young Italian man searching for meaning in his life went into a dilapidated old church and heard the voice of God speak to him: "Rebuild my Church. As you can see, it is in ruins." If you and I listen carefully, I believe we will hear the same voice saying the same thing today.

The young man was Francis of Assisi. His first reaction was to repair and rebuild a number of churches in and around Assisi, but the voice kept calling to him: "Francis, rebuild my Church. As you can see, it is in ruins."

Over the past fifty years, we have spent a lot of time, energy, and money building and restoring the physical facilities of our churches. But the voice of God continues to call to us. Once again,