

TAKEN FROM "MY CATHOLIC FAITH" by Bishop Louis Morrow

LOVE OF OURSELVES:

God commands us to love ourselves. We must thus care for both our body and our soul. Since the soul is far more precious than the body, we should give it more careful attention. Every day we must pray for grace to live according to the Will of God. Care for the body includes taking proper treatment and medicine when we are ill. Anything against health violates the duty to love ourselves.

WHY MUST WE LOVE OURSELVES? - - We must love ourselves because:

1. God wishes and requires it. Our Lord said: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"

Thus He made the love of self the measure of love for others.

St. Augustine says: "Learn first to love God, then to love thyself, then thy neighbor as thyself." Each man is his own closest neighbor.

2. We are made after God's image. We must therefore reverence God's image in ourselves, just as we are bound to respect it in our neighbor, even our worst enemy.

3. We are REDEEMED by the blood of Christ. We are bought with a great price. We must be very precious in God's sight.

St. Peter says: "You were redeemed from the vain manner of life handed down from your fathers, not with perishable things, with silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ."

4. By the merits of Jesus Christ we are made children of God and temples of the Holy Ghost. Should we not love ourselves as such, if only to show reverence for God?

"Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God"

I John 3:1

"KNow you not that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, Who is in you?"

1 Cor. 6:19

5. We are destined to live eternally with God and the angels in heaven. This dignity should impel us to love ourselves aright.

The end of man is the glory of God and the salvation of his own soul. We must have care, love of ourselves, in order to save ourselves for God. For this reason, we should even love ourselves more than others; we have a greater duty to ourselves than to others. This should not be interpreted, however, as meaning that we should not sacrifice ourselves for the sake of others: for, as we shall see, self-sacrifice is not only possible, but most desirable.