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A SACRED OBLIGATION

Grenville Kleiser

we can never hope to be a happy nation.”

“To live at this time is an inestimable privilege, and a sacred obligation devolves upon you to make right use of your opportunities. Today is the day in which to attempt and achieve something worthwhile.”



ON ENTHUSIASM

Og Mandino

The Greatest Salesman in the World, Part II, p. 102

“Enthusiasm in all I do will become, with hard work, a habit. We first must make our habits and then, good or bad, they make us. Enthusiasm will be my chariot to a better life.”

REAL SERVICE

Donald A. Adams

“To give real service you must add something which cannot be bought or measured with money, and that is sincerity and integrity.”

STORIES BECOME NEW

The Spirituality of Imperfection, p. vii

“Stories become ‘new’ to us when something in our own experience makes us ready to hear them. Story-listening requires a childlike wisdom that combines innocence and experience, and no one can be both innocent and experienced in the presence of every story. And so not every reader will ‘get’ every story, at least not right away. Story, like the spirituality that it conveys, cannot be commanded or forced; it must float loosely within its vehicle, the better to lodge in each hearer’s individual spirit.”

POST-CHRISTMAS

CONNECTIONS, Jan.1, '95

“Long after the angels disappear into the heavens, the shepherds return to their flocks, the magi journey home and the great star sets, Jesus remains. The Child in whom we rediscover God’s great love for humanity becomes the adult Redeemer who challenges us to imitate his selflessness and compassion in order that we might transform our world in love...”

May we allow the miracle of Christmas to continue long after the holiday trappings have been packed away; may we welcome the adult Messiah and his challenging Gospel to recreate our lives, making the peace, justice and hope of this holy season a reality in every season of the new year.”

SUCCESS IS UNLIMITED

Napoleon Hill

“Your success is unlimited except by your own ambition and desires.

If you are ready, you can mark this day as the most important turning point of your life, regardless of your past failures, your present handicaps, or what it is that you desire most from life.”

TIME TO DO RIGHT

Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

“We must use time creatively, in the knowledge that the time is always ripe to do right.”

ON PRAYER

Francois Fénelon

“Tell God all that is in your heart, as one unloads one’s heart to a dear friend. People who have no secrets from each other never want for subjects of conversation; they do not weigh their words, because there is nothing to be kept back. Neither do they seek for something to say; they talk out of the abundance of their hearts, just what they think. Blessed are they who attain such familiar, unreserved communication with God.”

FAREWELL ADDRESS

Pres. George Washington

“It is my earnest prayer to God that he would be most graciously pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility and specific temper of mind which were the characteristics of the Divine Author of our religion; without a humble imitation of whose example in these things

A NEW YEAR

William Arthur Ward

“Another fresh new year is here ...
Another year to live!
To banish worry, doubt, and fear,
To love and laugh and give!

This bright new year is given me
To live each day with zest ...
To daily grow and try to be
My highest and my best!

I have the opportunity
Once more to right some wrongs,
To pray for peace, to plant a tree,
And sing more joyful songs!”



GOOD MANAGEMENT

John Luther

SOUNDINGS, June '87, 3

“Good management starts with respect for the people you are trying to manage. If an employee realizes from the way you act and what you say, and do, that you recognize that he or she is a worthwhile, important individual, the battle for good work is half won.”

A NEW YEAR EXERCISE PLAN

BCTOR

- 1) EXERCISE CIVILITY: to be civil in my encounters with others each day.
- 2) EXERCISE COURTESY: to be courteous to everyone, regardless of the situation.
- 3) EXERCISE CONSIDERATENESS: to be considerate and anticipate the needs of others; to outdo others in doing good.”

SOMETIMES SO BUSY

St. Francis de Sales

“We are sometimes so busy being good angels that we neglect to be good men and women.”

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Complete Speaker's Almanac, p. 22

“Here we are in a month named after the Roman god Janus, an appropriate personification of the start of the new year. This particular Roman god had two faces so that he could look ahead toward the future and back at the past at the same time. As we get rid of an old year and look forward to a new one, we all try to be a little like Janus. We know through experience what we did wrong and what we did right,



and hope to do better this year. Some people make ambitious new year's resolutions; others just take a deep breath and hope for the best....”

START IT!

SOUNDINGS, Vol., 3, #4

“How to get things done:

Don't put it off for a day,
Start it.

Don't imagine it is too difficult,
start it.

Don't look for someone else to do
it, start it.

Don't think it over, start it.

And don't start half-heartedly; put everything you can muster into your start.”

MASKS OF VIRTUE

Elizabeth-Anne Vanek

LIVING FAITH, Jan.-Mar. '95

“Because evil appears in such subtle forms, it seduces us so effectively — apathy masks as fatigue, poor self image as humility, workaholism as productivity, ruthlessness as efficiency, emotional dependency as affection, rigidity as discipline, prejudice as patriotism. We deceive ourselves and those around us by wearing the mask of virtue when, in fact, our spiritual selves are greatly in need of overhaul.”

WHAT GOD WANTS ME TO DO?

Fr. Mark Burger

Hearing God's Voice, 2009, p. 116

“A priest was on a retreat at a Trappist abbey where he encountered a Buddhist monk also on a retreat. They had many conversations during the week together. The priest told the monk that part of his prayer while on retreat was to discern what God wanted him to do. The monk smiled and said he was asking God the same thing. Then he told the priest that one of his spiritual masters had given him one of the sayings of Buddha to help him ‘hear’ what God was saying. The monk wrote out for the priest the saying:

It was the Buddha who said, “There are two things that keep great projects from coming to life: 1) Not starting, and 2) Not finishing.”

After reading the saying, the monk explained, ‘My master taught me that if I wanted to know what God wants me to do on any day, ask myself these two questions: “What in my life needs starting? What in my life needs finishing?”’

Take a few minutes every morning to ask yourself: ‘What in my life needs starting? What in my life needs finishing?’ And then begin.”