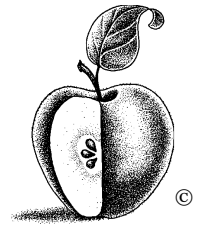


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A SACRED OBLIGATION Grenville Kleiser

“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.”



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 we can never hope to be a happy nation.”

PRACTICE Virginia Voeks

“We learn only what we do;
And what we do, we become.
Live therefore, in the ways you desire to have as part of your personality.
Practice being the person you wish to become.”

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.”



STRENGTH TO LOVE

Martin Luther King, Jr., p. 74

“The means by which we live are marvelous indeed. And yet something is missing. We have learned to fly the air like birds and swim the sea like fish, but we have not learned the simple art of living together. ... Our abundance has brought us neither peace of mind nor serenity of spirit.”

PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE Marsha Massie

Top Performance, Vol. 4, # 2, p. 11

“The pursuit of knowledge makes learning a continuum. When we cease to learn, we cease to grow.”

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

FAREWELL ADDRESS Pres. George Washington

“It is my earnest prayer to God that he would be most graciously pleased to dispose us

in need of overhaul.”

SELF-MOTIVATION Gerhard Gschwandtner
TOP PERFORMANCE, Vol. 1, # 4

“Can I ever graduate in self-motivation?’ Zig Ziglar paused ... ‘I don’t think I’ve graduated, because I constantly read and constantly study. ... I think you could draw an analogy with eating. You need to continue to make choices about your input. The same is true with self-motivation. You need to continue to make choices about what level of self-motivation you want to maintain.”

BLESSED ARE THEY ... William Arthur Ward

“Blessed are they who know themselves, control themselves, improve themselves and, most importantly, give themselves.”

A CORE DESIRE Jack Zufelt
“The Conquering Force,” Insight, # 94, p. 22

“A core desire is a genuine, clearly defined want that causes us to be willing to put forth the effort necessary to make that desire become reality — even when it means overcoming insurmountable, or seemingly insurmountable, obstacles. A core desire is not just a wish, a dream or a hope. It isn’t that New Year’s Day resolution that lasts only a day or a week. It’s a powerful, deep want.”

FEAST OF ST. CLARUS Ed Hays
The Old Hermit’s Almanac, p. 15

“Lost amidst the various celebrations of this holiday, the football games and family gatherings that welcome in the new year, is the Feast of St. Clarus, which also comes on the first day of January. By heaven’s good fortune and great insight, Clarus is the perfect saint for New Year’s Day, being the patron saint of those who suffer from myopia, who are shortsighted.

Rub your eyes today and ask St. Clarus, who was a French monk of the seventh century, to make you long-sighted so that you can see the big picture in life. Just as myopia causes distant objects to be blurred, myopia of the spirit causes you to lack discernment in planning ahead.

St. Clarus, aid us today that we might see clearly with both eyes, that we might be wise in planning ahead for the various possibilities hidden in this new year, and that we might behold all the blessings directly in front of us.

O good St. Clarus, whose name means clear, on this eighth day of Christmas, when the vision of so many is focused not on the family but only on a televised football game, give us the gift of clear vision.”

TELL A STORY Allan B. Chinnen, MD,
Once Upon a Midlife, p.2

A Hasidic proverb says: “Give people a fact or an idea and you enlighten their minds; tell them a story and you touch their souls.”

A GOOD MARRIAGE Ruth Bell Graham

“A good marriage is the union of two forgivers.”

KNOWLEDGE AND BEAUTY C.S. Lewis

“If we had postponed the search for knowledge and beauty until they were secure, the search would never have begun. We can pursue knowledge and beauty, as such, in the sure confidence that by doing so we are either advancing to the vision of God ourselves or indirectly helping others to do so.”

NEW YEAR’S RESOLUTIONS
Contemporary Sermon Illustrations, # 557

Try this *Recipe for a Happy New Year*.

“Take twelve full-grown months, free from old memories of bitterness, hate and jealousy. Cleanse them completely from every clinging spite. Pick off the little specks of pettiness. See that these months are free and clean as when they came from the storehouse of time. Cut these months into thirty or thirty-one equal parts; the whole batch equals one year. If you try to make up the whole batch at once you may spoil the whole lot.

Prepare one day at a time according to this pattern: into each day put 12 parts of faith, 11 parts of hope, 10 parts of prayer, 9 parts of kindness, 8 parts of patience, 7 parts of work, 6 parts of fidelity, 5 parts of courage, 4 parts of generosity, 3 parts of quiet meditation, 2 parts of good humor, and a dash or two or three of fun and play. Put love into the whole batch and mix with enthusiasm. Garnish with smiles and a sprig of cheer.

Follow these directions and a happy new year is guaranteed!”

