

## **Questions and Answers about Sacrifice and Victimhood**

What is a victim soul?

A victim soul is a person chosen by God to suffer more than most people during life, and who generously accepts the suffering in union with the Savior and after the example of Christ's own Passion and Death.

Example: St. Paul wrote: "I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is lacking of the passion of Christ in my flesh, for his body, which is the church." (Col. 1:24).

What dogma is related to victimhood?

Victimhood is related to the dogma of the communion of saints, the doctrine that the prayers, reparation, and actions of one member of the church may be offered, in order to help another member of the church.

"If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and members in particular." (1 Cor. 12:26)

Did the Blessed Virgin Mary speak about reparation and victimhood at Fatima?

She did not use the word victim. However, she did speak about suffering, penance, and reparation. In August 1917 She declared the need for praying a great deal, and making sacrifices, because many souls go to hell because they have no one to pray and make sacrifices for them. Therefore she did speak about the communion of saints, about reparation and victimhood. She asked the seers of Fatima to suffer and make sacrifices, in reparation. Jacinta Marto offered herself to make sacrifices, and generously accepted the suffering. Mary requested this of her. Jacinta suffered in close union with Christ; she was a victim. The Virgin Mary requested her to offer herself in this manner. Near the end of her life, Jacinta declared: "Now many souls will be saved, because I suffer much."

Who can be a victim soul?

Any practicing Catholic of good will, in the state of sanctifying grace, may be a victim soul.

5. What are the conditions of being a victim soul?

The conditions for being a victim soul are described in the book *Legion of Victim Souls*, written in Mexico by Maria Concepcion Zuniga Lopez. Imprimatur 1966.

What is a legion of victim souls?

A legion of victim souls is a group of victims, in one country or various countries, with the same or similar objectives, namely, to save other souls by offering one's actions and sufferings to God, in union with the sufferings of Christ. In ancient times the Roman legion was a division of 3000 foot soldiers. Legion means a large group of soldiers, an army.

Why are the victim souls called a legion?

Victim souls are called a legion, because they are engaged in a spiritual battle with Satan, who is drawing many souls to perdition and destruction. Satan is now victorious, and souls are falling like leaves into hell. We are in a battle, a spiritual war. Victims are soldiers who fight, using the same spiritual weapons to battle, that Christ and his apostles employed: acceptance of the cross, obedience unto death, (Phil. 2:8) humiliation, reparation, and sacrifice.

Example: St. Paul exhorted Timothy to act like a soldier. "Thou therefore endure hardship, as a

good soldier of Jesus Christ." (2 Tim. 2:3)

The cross is a weapon that protects: "You will not even fear your enemy, the devil, if you are armed with faith and signed with the cross of Christ." --- *Imitation of Christ*, Bk. 2 Ch. 12.

Who are the members of this spiritual army?

The members of this army are known mainly by God, for they live hidden lives. There is no list of victim souls, no exterior organization, no meetings. They live hidden lives. They appear in public, only under obedience and in order to perform their duties.

Are the members of the legion of victims placed under the patronage of any saint or any title of Our Lady?

The members of the legion of victims are placed under the protection of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

10. What is the motive for their being placed under the protection of Mary?

The motive for their being placed under Her protection, is that only by the special help and intercession of the blessed Virgin Mary can victim souls fulfill their arduous vocation.

Example: Jacinta Marto greatly needed the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in order to fulfill her vocation of reparation, of having her painful operation and of dying alone. After her operation she had to suffer extreme physical pains, and she often exclaimed, "Mia madre, mia madre!" Only with the help of Mary could she have suffered so much. (Another motive: see historical note at end.)

Are there any organizations, meetings, rules, external observances, etc., for being a victim soul?

There are no external rules, no organization, no meetings, etc., for being a victim soul. The norms for being a victim are given in the book *Legion of Victim Souls*. The essence of being a victim consists in remaining united to Christ, by practicing the doctrine of reparation, sacrifice and atonement.

What prayers do victim souls pray?

Victim souls use traditional Catholic prayers, such as the Lord's prayer, the Rosary, the Stations of the Cross, etc., and they attend Mass and receive the sacraments frequently.

Is it normal to feel afraid of being a victim soul?

It is normal, and no defect, to be afraid of being a victim. With the help of God, this fear can be overcome. Example: Jacinta Marto felt afraid of having to die alone. Lucia had to encourage her, and remind her she was going to heaven.

Is it normal to feel repugnance at the idea of being a victim soul?

It is normal to feel repugnance at the idea of being a victim soul. Christ Our Lord felt repugnance in the garden of Gethsemani. He suffered as we do, and he will give us the grace to overcome our repugnance and to do our duty.

Example: Jacinta Marto felt repugnance upon having an operation; when her body was uncovered and in the hands of doctors, she wept.

15. Is there any formula for offering oneself as a victim?

There is a formula for offering oneself, given in the book *Legion of Victim Souls*. In addition, there are other formulas that have been written. Any suitable formula may be used.

Should a period of waiting precede one's offering oneself as a victim?

A period of waiting should be made before offering oneself, because it is a grave decision, and

should not be made lightly.

After having made the offering, how does one know that he or she has been accepted?  
After making the offering, one knows about acceptance if suffering comes, usually in an unexpected manner. Some frequent forms of acceptance are: one contracts a painful illness or grave health problem, one has an accident, one is lied about, criticized, or attacked verbally. One is falsely accused, hated, abandoned or abused. One feels as if abandoned by God and has no joy in prayer or meditation. One is separated from, or loses, a close relative or friend. One suffers a loss of property. One is misunderstood by friends and acquaintances, and so forth.  
Example: Jacinta Marto offered herself in reparation and in sacrifice. She knew she was accepted when she contracted a painful illness, had to go to a far-away hospital, separated from all her relatives, had to undergo a painful operation, and finally, when she had to die alone.

If someone is already suffering, without having sought it, can one offer oneself as a victim?  
If people are already suffering, without having sought it or asked for it, they may offer themselves as victims. Thus they make virtue out of a necessity, and they do not waste their suffering by murmuring or complaining, but see it as sent by God for their own salvation and the salvation of their neighbors.

Example: Lydwina of Schiedam had an accident when she was a girl, and was ill and in bed all the time. She prayed for a cure. Later a priest brought her communion once a month, and taught her how to meditate upon the sufferings of Christ. She obeyed. Then she realized that her vocation was to be ill all the time, in order to offer her suffering to God, for the church and for souls.

Should victim souls tell others that they are victims?

Victim souls should not tell others that they are victims, because they are supposed to be united to Christ and to suffer in silence, and should not speak about themselves.

20. Does this mean that they are never to speak about reparation at all?

They may speak, only if under obedience, that is, if a higher authority gives a formal command to speak, or if someone asks a question. Victims must practice silence as much as possible, and speak little.

If a victim is criticized, lied about, or attacked verbally, should one defend oneself?

A victim soul must never defend itself, if lied about or attacked verbally. A victim soul must suffer in silence, in order to be united to Christ, who was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and who did not open his mouth. (Is. 53).

Does this mean that they are never to speak in defence at all?

They may speak, if someone else is being lied about or attacked verbally, in order to defend the other person or group, but they should never defend themselves. They are supposed to follow Christ, who allowed himself to be spoken against and who did not defend himself. Only God can defend victim souls, and they may have to wait, and suffer injustice, until they see the vindication, that God always brings about in due time.

Examples: On Good Friday Christ was accused and did not defend himself. God did not defend him until Easter Sunday. St. Vincent de Paul when a young man was accused of being a thief. He did not defend himself. For six months people thought he was a thief. Later the real thief confessed his misdoing, and Vincent was vindicated and cleared of blame. A woman accused St. Gerard Mayella of having sinned with her. He was silent and did not defend himself. He was not allowed to receive communion. Later the woman confessed that she had told a lie, and he

was cleared of blame. In May 1917 Lucia Albobora's mother accused her of telling lies; she humiliated her, beating her with a broom, and forced her to go to confession. Lucia's sisters believed the accusation and made fun of her. Lucia spoke, not to defend herself, but to defend the Virgin Mary. Jacinta and Francisco knew that Lucia was telling the truth, and wanted to defend her, but they were unable to clear her of blame. For several months many suspected Lucia of being a liar. On Oct. 13, 1917 God defended her, working a miracle, and it became evident to everyone that Lucia was telling the truth. She had to wait six months to see the vindication.

Do victims lead a hidden life?

Victim souls are supposed to lead a hidden life; that is why they speak little, say little or nothing about themselves, and never talk about their works. Their actions will be made known only at the day of judgment or whenever God determines to reveal what he wants made known. Souls are not saved by words (except when uttered under obedience) but by suffering in silence and by hidden actions.

Do victim souls have to wait?

Victim souls should accustom themselves to waiting for long periods. They may not see the fruit of their sacrifice, until they are on the other side of the veil.

Examples: St. Monica wept and suffered much because of her son. She had to wait ten years, before he was converted. She did not change him by words, only by suffering. Peter d'Airelle did not see the conversion of his father, until after he died and was in heaven.

25. Are there any exterior practices for victim souls?

There are no exterior practices that are required formally. However, it is recommended for victim souls to kiss the ground often. Our Lord requested Josefa Menendez to kiss the ground frequently. At Lourdes the Blessed Virgin requested Bernadette to kiss the ground for the conversion of sinners. The seers of Fatima prayed with their faces to the ground. Kissing the ground is an exterior sign of reparation, adoration, humility, thanksgiving, expiation, and atonement.

Is there any other practice besides this?

The other practice used frequently is to pray with one's arms in the form of a cross. (See booklet *Penitential Rosary*.) Praying with one's arms in the form of a cross is a reminder that a victim should be united to Christ, who died on the cross with his arms extended.

Why does God want ordinary people to be victim souls?

God desires ordinary people to be victim souls, because we are living in times of crisis. In an emergency, even ordinary people are expected to act like heroes. In times of persecution and crisis, weak women and children have acted like heroes. God gives them the grace to act in this manner.

Example: Jacinta Marto was only 9 years old, but God gave her the grace to suffer in an heroic manner. At Fatima the Virgin Mary requested Jacinta to offer herself in reparation. She submitted, she obeyed, she suffered.

If someone has sinned grievously, can he or she still be a member of the legion of victim souls? If someone has sinned grievously, he can still be a member of the legion of victim souls, provided that he is sincerely sorry, has made a confession, has performed the penance and has offered suitable expiation for what he or she did.

Examples: St. Paul sinned grievously, and afterwards God gave him a vocation to be an apostle

and victim. St. Margaret of Cortona sinned grievously when she was young, and afterwards God raised her up from her fall and made her a shining example of suffering, penance and sanctity. Through her suffering in union with Christ, she obtained the conversion of many souls.

What should victim souls read?

Victim souls may read any suitable Catholic books. It is recommended to read Scripture, the New Testament, *The Imitation of Christ* by Kempis, and *The Way of Divine Love* by Josefa Menendez, because these books describe how victims should live in their day-to-day lives.

30. Are victim souls permitted to utilize radio, television, motion pictures, music, sports, games and other forms of entertainment?

Victim souls are permitted to use means of entertainment with moderation. Since most of the media are dominated by Satan, if they cannot renounce entertainment entirely, they should use these means of diversion as little as possible, and only under obedience (for example, moderate recreation and entertainment with one's family). They should observe moderation. They should have a schedule and not have too much recreation. They should maintain all forms of entertainment under strict control; they cannot offer atonement for vanity, if they themselves are misled by vanity. See the writings of St. Francis de Sales, about amusements and recreation.

What images should victim souls use?

Any suitable traditional Catholic images, crucifixes, holy cards, statues, etc. may be used. The veneration of the image of Our Lady of Perpetual Help is recommended. In Russia this image is venerated under the title "Our Lady of the Passion," because the angels are holding the instruments of the passion in their hands. This image is known universally in both the western and eastern churches. The veneration of this image may contribute to the conversion of Russia, and other Eastern Orthodox nations, to the Roman Catholic Church. In 1867 this image was carried in solemn procession in Rome, miracles occurred, and Pope Pius IX expressed the desire that it might be spread throughout the entire world. The Redemptorists and other congregations spread it in many countries.

Has the book *Legion of Victim Souls* been approved by the Church?

The book *Legion of Victim Souls* was given an Imprimatur by Fidel Cortes Perez, the Bishop of Chilapa, Mexico in 1966.

The doctrine in the book *Legion of Victim Souls* is based upon the writings of St. Paul and St. John, upon the dogma of the communion of saints, and upon the lives of the saints. The writings of St. Paul and St. John have been approved by the Church. The dogma of the communion of saints has been approved by the church. The lives of the saints have been approved by the church.

**Historical Note.** The year 1867 was the anniversary year of the martyrdoms of Saints Peter and Paul. Many pilgrims were in Rome at that time, in order to visit the tombs of the two apostles and to attend the ceremonies that were being held. At the same time that these events were happening, the original image of Our Lady of Perpetual Help was re-discovered (it had been hidden because of the persecution of the church by the liberals). Pope Pius IX commanded the image to be carried in solemn procession through the streets of Rome. During the procession a mother held her sick, infirm baby toward the image and it was cured instantly. Many other miracles of cures and conversions occurred during the procession. After the procession the image was placed in the church of St. Matthew, and the Pope commanded the Redemptorist Fathers to spread copies of the sacred image throughout the world. The Redemptorists obeyed, and by 1900 the image of Our Lady of Perpetual Help was well-known by Catholics in all nations. At that time (1867) the Pope made a prophecy: "Our Lady of Perpetual Help and the Sacred Heart of Jesus will save the world for the last periods of time."

In Eastern Orthodox churches, this sacred image is venerated under the title "Our Lady of the

Passion." At each side of the image the archangels Michael and Gabriel are holding the cross, the nails, and other instruments of the passion. The Infant Jesus is looking at the cross, his sandal is falling off, and he places his hands into the hands of his mother. (He knows in advance that he is the Lamb of God, the victim that will be immolated on the altar of the cross). During the 1930s a prophecy was made to a soul in Mexico, that the veneration of this image would contribute to the conversion of the Eastern Orthodox nations (especially Russia) to the Roman Catholic Church.

## Writings of Maria Concepcion Zuniga Lopez

"Wisdom renews all things, and through nations conveys herself into holy souls. She makes the friends of God and prophets."

-----Wisdom 7:27

Maria Concepcion Zuniga Lopez was a Mexican religious who died in the odor of sanctity in 1979.

Her most famous book is *Legion of Victim Souls*. (Imprimatur, 1966).

Her other works are:

*My Best Book*. A short autobiography.

*Laments of Jesus, Victim*. Six short meditations.

*Warnings and Voices from Beyond the Grave*.

An account of how her sister, Esther Zuniga, appeared to her in purgatory and pleaded for help.

Prayer books: *Penitential Rosary*. The value of praying with one's arms in the form of a cross.

*Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help*.

These books have been translated into English and are available on-line.

"Ask not who is speaking, but mark what is said."

----- *Imitation of Christ*, Bk. 1, Ch. 5

## Consecration of Victimhood

Written by Rev. Francis Duchala, O.F.M. (+2002)

"Lord, my God, you have asked everything of your little servant: take and receive everything, then. This day I belong to you without any reservations, forever. O Beloved of my soul! It is you only whom I want, and for your love I renounce all.

"O God of Love! Take my memory, and all its memories, take my intelligence so that it will act only for your greatest glory; take my will entirely, so that it will forever be drowned in your own; never again what I want, O most sweet Jesus, but always what you want; receive me, guide me, sanctify me, direct me; to you.

"O God of goodness, take my body and all its senses, my spirit and all its faculties, my heart and all its affections; O adorable Savior, you are the sole owner of my soul and of all my being; receive the immolation, that every day and every hour, I offer you in silence, deign to accept it and change it, into grace and blessing for all those I love, for the conversion of sinners, and for the sanctification of souls.

“O Jesus! Take all of my little heart; it begs and sighs to belong to you alone; hold it always in your powerful hands, so that it will surrender and pour itself out to no other creature.

“Lord, take and sanctify all my words, all my actions, all my desires. Be for my soul its good and its all. To you I give and abandon it.

“I accept with love all that you send me: pain, sorrow, joy, consolation, dryness, shame, desertion, scorn, humiliation, work, suffering, trials, everything that comes to me from you, everything that you wish, O Jesus.

“I submit humbly to the glorious control of your providence in supporting me solely by the help of your immense goodness; I promise you the most sincere fidelity. O Divine Savior, as a victim for the salvation of souls, I surrender and abandon myself to you.

“I implore you to accept all of my offering, and I will then be happy and trusting. Alas! It is all too little, I know, but I haven’t anything else; I love my extreme worthlessness, because it will obtain for me your mercy and all your paternal solicitude.

“My God, you know my frailty and the bottomless abyss of my weakness. If, one day, I were to be unfaithful to your sovereign will, if I were to recoil before suffering and the cross, and to stray from your path of love, fleeing the tender protection of your arms, Oh! I beg and implore you for the grace of dying at that instant. Pardon me, O Sacred Heart of my Saviour, forgive me by your most sweet name of Jesus, by the sorrows of Mary, by the intercession of Saint Joseph, and by the love that you had in doing your Father’s will.

“O God of my soul! O Divine Sun! I love you, I bless you, I praise you, I abandon myself completely to you. I take refuge in you; hide me in your bosom, for my being shudders under the burden of the cruel afflictions that crush me on all sides –and I am always so alone.

“My Beloved, help me, take me with you. In you alone I wish to live, so that in you alone I may die.”

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