



A Spiritual Remedy for Times of Anxiety, Hurry, and Noise

We live in a paradoxical age. Never before have we enjoyed so many comforts, technological advances, and possibilities for communication. Yet never before have we been so exposed to anxiety, uncertainty, constant stress, and the feeling that everything depends on us.

News reaches us every moment. Social media bombards us with opinions, controversies, and worries. The future seems uncertain. Many people live trapped between the regrets of the past and the fears of tomorrow.

Amid this landscape, a simple, brief, and profoundly Christian text continues to resonate with astonishing relevance: the **“Decalogue of Serenity,”** also known as **“Just for Today,”** attributed to **Saint John XXIII.**

It is not a theological treatise. It is not an encyclical. It is not a complicated ascetical program reserved for monks or theologians.

It is something much simpler and, precisely because of that, far more revolutionary.

It is an invitation to live in the present under the gaze of God.

And perhaps today it is more necessary than ever.

What Is the “Decalogue of Serenity”?

The so-called “Decalogue of Serenity” is a list of spiritual resolutions expressed in a practical and everyday way.

Although several versions exist, they all revolve around one central idea:

Not trying to carry the whole burden of life at once.

Instead of worrying about years ahead, all future problems, or the wounds of the past, the Christian focuses on responding faithfully to God during the next twenty-four hours.

Hence the expression that gives the text its name:



“Just for today...”

Just for today I will try to live.

Just for today I will do good.

Just for today I will avoid useless worries.

Just for today I will trust in God.

The spiritual genius of the text lies in making holiness attainable.

It is not about promising impossible acts of heroism.

It is about living as a Christian for one day.

And then another.

And another.

Saint John XXIII: The Pope of Goodness

Saint John XXIII was one of the most beloved figures of the twentieth century.

Elected Pope in 1958, he surprised the world with his simplicity, warmth, and profound Christian optimism.

He was the convener of the Second Vatican Council and entered history as the “Good Pope.”

Yet behind that smile stood an intense spiritual life.

He understood the interior struggles of the human soul.

He had experienced wars, political conflicts, pastoral sufferings, and enormous responsibilities.

Precisely because of this, he understood that inner peace is not born from the disappearance



of problems.

It is born from trust in God.

The “Decalogue of Serenity” perfectly reflects this spirituality.

It is not naïveté.

It is not superficial optimism.

It is faith.

The Gospel Foundation of “Just for Today”

Although the text is not a biblical quotation, it is deeply inspired by the Gospel.

Our Lord taught something very similar in the Sermon on the Mount:

“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

(Matthew 6:34)

This verse is probably the most important biblical foundation of the Decalogue.

Christ does not tell us to ignore the future.

He does not tell us to stop being prudent.

What He condemns is obsessive worry that seeks to control what lies beyond our power.

The Christian works.

Plans.



Strives.

But ultimately trusts.

Because he knows that God governs history.

The Great Modern Mistake: Wanting to Control Everything

One of the greatest sufferings of contemporary life is born from an illusion.

The illusion of total control.

We want to control:

- Our health.
- Our finances.
- Our work.
- Our marriage.
- Our children.
- The Church.
- Politics.
- The future.

But the reality is that much of this lies beyond our power.

When we try to carry the universe on our shoulders, we end up exhausted.

Christian serenity begins when we understand that we are not God.

And far from being bad news, that realization is liberating.



What Does Christian Serenity Really Mean?

Many people confuse serenity with indifference.

They are not the same.

Christian serenity does not mean ceasing to struggle.

It means struggling without losing peace.

It does not mean the absence of problems.

It means the presence of God in the midst of problems.

The saints faced enormous difficulties.

They suffered persecutions.

Illnesses.

Slanders.

Apparent failures.

And yet they radiated a supernatural peace.

Why?

Because they knew that the final word always belongs to God.

Analyzing the Decalogue of Serenity Through Catholic Theology



1. Just for today I will try to live only this day

Here we find a profound spiritual teaching.

Grace is received in the present.

We cannot love God yesterday.

We cannot obey Him tomorrow.

We can only respond to Him today.

The present moment is where God awaits us.

2. Just for today I will take the greatest care of my appearance

This may seem like a minor observation, but it possesses an important Christian dimension.

The body is not contemptible.

It is a temple of the Holy Spirit.

The Catholic tradition has always rejected contempt for one's own body.

External dignity reflects, to some extent, interior order.

3. Just for today I will be happy

This point often surprises people.

Many believe holiness consists in being perpetually sad.

Nothing could be further from the Gospel.

Christ desires our happiness.



Not a superficial happiness.

Not a joy based on passing circumstances.

But the deep joy of one who knows he is loved by God.

4. Just for today I will adapt myself to circumstances

Humility consists in accepting reality.

Not an imaginary reality.

Not the reality we wish existed.

The real one.

Many anxieties arise because we fight against facts that we cannot change.

Christian serenity accepts Divine Providence.

5. Just for today I will devote time to spiritual reading

The mind needs nourishment.

If we continually feed the soul with scandals, controversies, and negative news, we will eventually become inwardly exhausted.

Spiritual reading purifies the intellect.

Strengthens faith.

Clarifies judgment.



6. Just for today I will do a good deed

Charity is an extraordinary remedy against sadness.

When we stop obsessively focusing on ourselves and begin serving others, many worries lose their power.

Charity frees us from the prison of self-centeredness.

7. Just for today I will do something I do not like

Here we encounter the ascetical dimension.

The Catholic tradition has always taught the value of mortification.

Not because suffering is good in itself.

But because it strengthens the will.

It helps us become free.

It teaches us to govern our impulses.

8. Just for today I will plan my day

Trust in God does not eliminate responsibility.

The virtue of prudence requires organization.

External disorder often becomes internal disorder.



9. Just for today I will firmly believe that God takes care of me

Perhaps this is the heart of the entire Decalogue.

Divine Providence.

The certainty that God never abandons His children.

As Scripture says:

"We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him."

(Romans 8:28)

This truth does not eliminate suffering.

But it completely transforms its meaning.

10. Just for today I will not be afraid

Fear is one of the great spiritual illnesses of our time.

Fear of the future.

Fear of failure.

Fear of illness.

Fear of death.

Fear of the opinions of others.

Yet one of the most frequently repeated commands in the Bible is:



| *“Do not be afraid.”*

Because where God is present, terror cannot reign.

Serenity and Divine Providence

Catholic theology teaches that God governs the universe with infinite wisdom.

Nothing escapes His knowledge.

Nothing escapes His power.

Nothing escapes His love.

This doctrine is known as Divine Providence.

To believe in Providence does not mean that everything is easy.

It means that everything has meaning, even when we cannot understand it.

The saints discovered that inner peace depends more on trust than on circumstances.

That is why they could maintain serenity amid terrible trials.

“Just for Today” in a Society Dominated by Anxiety

Modern anxiety is often fed by three sources:



The Weight of the Past

Many people live chained to old mistakes.

Yet God forgives.

The Sacrament of Confession exists precisely to restore peace.

Fear of the Future

We seek answers to problems that do not yet exist.

But God grants the grace for a trial when it arrives, not before.

Constant Overstimulation

We live permanently connected.

Serenity requires spaces of silence.

Prayer.

Recollection.

Disconnection.

Contemplation.

A Spiritual Practice for Living the Decalogue

When you wake up each morning, you can say:

“Lord, I do not promise You my whole life.

I do not promise You the entire week.

I do not promise You the whole year.



I promise You only today.

Help me to live this day for Your glory.”

And at the end of the day:

“Thank You, Lord, for sustaining me today.
Tomorrow I will trust in You again.”

This simple practice gradually transforms the heart.

What the Decalogue of Serenity Can Teach Catholics Today

We live in times of social uncertainty, cultural crises, political tensions, and even concerns within the Church itself.

It is easy to fall into discouragement.

But the Christian is not called to despair.

He is called to fidelity.

Holiness does not consist in solving all the problems of the world.

It consists in responding to God’s grace here and now.

That is exactly what “Just for Today” teaches.

Not to carry the weight of all history.

Not to try to control the uncontrollable.

Not to live enslaved by the past or terrified by the future.

But rather to walk day by day hand in hand with Christ.



Conclusion: Holiness Begins Today

The Decalogue of Serenity of Saint John XXIII remains extraordinarily relevant because it touches upon a permanent truth of the human heart.

We want to know what will happen tomorrow.

God asks us to trust Him today.

We want absolute guarantees.

God offers us His presence.

We want to control the future.

God invites us to abandon ourselves into His hands.

Perhaps the greatest lesson of this little text is that holiness is not built through extraordinary feats, but through small acts of fidelity repeated day after day.

Peace is not born when problems disappear.

Peace is born when we discover that, whatever happens, God remains our Father.

And then we can say with serene confidence:

“Just for today, Lord, I want to love You, serve You, and trust in You.”