

# Seven Principles of Sainthood



Following Saint Mother Theodore Guérin

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PUBLICATIONS

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# Introduction

## The Principles of Sainthood



We know all the excuses for not living exemplary lives. Maybe we think it's not important to refrain from excessive eating, drinking or spending. We say we are entitled to keep material goods we do not need. We spread gossip about our neighbors even when we aren't sure what we say is true. We also tell ourselves we are too busy to go to church, pray, read the Bible, or give thanks for our many blessings. However, we have plenty of time for television, surfing the Internet, and other mindless activities. And sometimes we even may participate in activities that are violent, hateful or obscene without much thinking about them.

Although these activities may appear perfectly acceptable to the general public, the truth of the matter is that we know they are not. How we spend our limited time on this earth is a matter of choice and preference. All too often we choose to follow a path led by human beings rather than the one laid out by our perfect God.

### Following Saint Mother Theodore Guérin

This is where the saints can be of great assistance to us. Saints, such as Mother Theodore Guérin, were real people with real problems. They are excellent role models. By examining how

they lived and worked through their challenges, we can learn critical life lessons for sanctity.

Saint Mother Theodore was a courageous, compassionate and pious woman who attained great success under difficult circumstances. She came to the United States in 1840 as a French missionary to establish a religious community and schools that provided Christian education to children in the American wilderness.

Potholes riddled her road: Poverty, illness, separation from loved ones, difficult superiors, and outright malice plagued her. Throughout it all, she persevered. She refused to surrender her divine assignment.

Mother Theodore was undaunted by the great hardships she endured because she firmly believed God provides and protects. If she followed the path God laid for her, the outcome could only be victorious. She said, "Pray, be humble, be charitable, and God's blessing will be with you." This is exactly what she did. She submitted herself entirely to the will of God and indeed fulfilled her mission with abundant results.

The seeds she and the Sisters of Providence planted firmly took root. Upon her death, Mother Theodore succeeded in creating an American religious congregation, the first Catholic institution for the higher education of women in Indiana, elementary schools in Indiana and Illinois, two orphanages, and free pharmacies in Vincennes and Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana. And to this very day, the vibrant community of the Sisters of Providence and the Academy that became Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College continue as a testimony to her providential confidence.

In this book, examples from Mother Theodore's experiences

and quotes from her writings are offered to illustrate the basic principles on which she lived. These principles are commonly identified with holy people. Although timeless, they are not easy, but we too may achieve greatness and holiness by following them on our own road to heaven.

The question you must ask yourself throughout this book is whether or not you have the desire. To be a saint, you have to live like one. Are you willing to live your life by Mother Theodore's principles? Will you, like her:

- ✦ pray with the saints
- ✦ trust in Providence
- ✦ spread the Word of the Lord
- ✦ lead by serving
- ✦ be just and kind
- ✦ forgive like Jesus
- ✦ strive for humility

If so, you are already on the road to heaven.