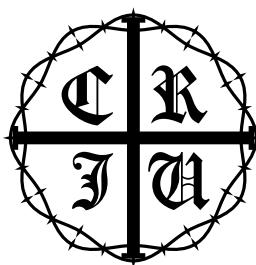


The
Final Teachings
of
King St. Louis

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King St. Louis

From the Latin with an original translation



Consociatio Christi Regis
2025

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This document contains the Latin text of King St. Louis's written final advice to his son Philip. There is a somewhat more complete version in medieval French, the language in which St. Louis originally wrote it, but this Latin version covers all the essentials, and comes from someone who knew him well. Gaufrido de Belloc, in the *Vita Ludovici Noni* (*Life of Louis IX*), gives this text. We have provided an original translation. It is released into the public domain, which of course also contains the Latin text, and it is proudly published by the Confraternity of Christ the King. For more information, visit <http://ccregis.org>.

Documenta

quæ pius rex ante mortem filio
primogenito scripsit, et quasi pro
testamento reliquit

FILI CARISSIME, inprimis
te doceo, quod dominum
Deum tuum diligas ex toto corde
tuo, et ex tota virtute tua; nam
sine hoc non est salus.

TEM: debes te custodire ab
omnibus quæ Deo nove-
ris displicere, videlicet ab omni
mortali peccato: ita quod prius
deberes te permettere omni ge-
nere martyrii cruciari, quam ali-
quod mortale peccatum com-
mittere. Præterea si tibi domi-
nus aliquam tribulationem ha-
bere permiserit, benigne, et cum
gratiarum actione debes susti-
nere: cogitans quod ad bonum
tuum proveniat, et quod hoc be-
ne forsitan meruisti. Insuper,
si Dominus tibi prosperitatem
quamcumque contulerit, debes
ei humiliter regratari: cavens ne
inde fias deterior, sive per unam
vanam gloriam, sive quocum-
que alio modo; quia non debes
Deum impugnare, vel offendere

Teachings

which the pious king wrote to his firstborn
son before death, and left as it for a
testament

DEAREST SON, first I teach thee,
that thou shalt love the Lord thy
God with all thy heart, and with all thy
strength; for without this there is no
salvation.

ALSO: thou must guard thyself from
all which thou knowest to dis-
please God, namely from every mortal
sin; this is so because thou shouldst first
permit thyself to be crucified by every
sort of martyrdom, rather than com-
mit any mortal sin. In addition, if the
Lord should permit thee to have some
trouble, thou shouldst bear it kindly
and with thanksgiving, thinking that it
comes for thy good, and that thou has
perhaps merited it well. Above this, if
the Lord has brought to thee any pros-
perity whatever, thou shouldst humbly
return thanks to Him, bewaring lest
from it, or through some vain glory, or
in any other way thou be made lesser;
for thou shouldst not fight against God,
or offend Him from His own gifts.

ex donis suis.

TITEM: moneo te frequenter confiteri, et quod discretos et honestos tibi eligas confessores, qui te sciant docere a quibus tibi sit cavendum, et quæ te facere sit necesse. Et tu ad confessores tuos te habeas tam modeste, quod ipsi et alii amici tui te securere reprehendere audeant.

TITEM: libenter et devote audiás officium ecclesiæ; et quamdiu eris in ecclesia, cave ne vase circumspicias, ne vana loquaris: sed ora dominum devote, sive ore, sive cordis meditatione; et specialiter amplius intendas devotioni in secreto Missæ circa horam consecrationis corporis et sanguinis domini nostri JESU CHRISTI.

TITEM: cor habeas pietatis ad pauperes, miseros, et afflictos: et secundum posse tuum eis subvenias, et eos consoleris.

TITEM: si habueris aliquam cordis desolationem, dic eam confessori tuo, vel alicui probo viro; et tunc eam levius feres.

ALSO: I advise thee to confess frequently, and that thou choosest honest and discerning confessors for thyself, who know to teach thee what things thou shouldst beware of, and what is needful for thee to do. And thou shouldst behave thyself to thy confessors so modestly that they and thine other friends will dare to blame thee without trouble.

ALSO: thou shouldst willingly and devoutly hear the office of the Church, and as long as thou art in the church, beware lest thou shouldst look around wanderingly or speak vain things; but pray to the Lord devoutly, whether by mouth or by meditation of heart; and attend with specially more devotion in the rite of the Mass around the time of the consecration of the Body and Blood of Our Lord JESUS CHRIST.

ALSO: thou shouldst have a heart of piety toward the poor, wretched, and afflicted; and according to thy power, thou shouldst support and console them.

ALSO: if thou hast some desolation of heart, tell it to thy confessor, or to some proven man, and then thou shalt bear it more lightly.

TEM: diligas habere semper tecum societatem bonorum, sive religiosorum, sive secularium, et habe frequenter colloquium cum eis: et cave societatem pravorum.

TEM: audi libenter sermones tam in aperto, quam in secreto, et libenter tibi procures indulgentias matris nostræ ecclesiæ.

TEM: in proximis semper diligas bonum, et odias malum.

TEM: noli pati dici coram te verbum allectivum ad peccatum nec verbum detraictorium de alio: maxime autem nullum verbum blasphemiarum de Deo sive de sanctis patiaris dici ab aliquo, quin vindictam de eo fieri facias.

TEM: de omnibus beneficiis tibi a Deo collatis sic gratias agas illi, ut sis dignus majora accipere.

TEM: erga subditos tuos ita juste te habeas, quod lineam iustitiae teneas, non declinans ad dexteram, neque ad sinistram: et semper plus te teneas ex parte causæ pauperis, quam dicitis, donec sis certus de veritate.

ALSO: thou shouldst love to always have the society of good men with you, whether religious or secular; both frequently have conversation with them, and beware the society of the vicious.

ALSO: willingly hear sermons, whether openly or secretly, and thou shalt willingly attend for thyself to the indulgences of our mother the Church.

ALSO: thou shalt always love the good in neighbors, and hate the evil.

ALSO: do not suffer to be said before thee words which entice to sin, nor words slandering anyone; but thou shalt especially not suffer words of blasphemy about God or the saints to be said by anyone, and thou shalt make vengeance be done for it.

ALSO: thou shalt so give thanks for all the benefits given by God to thee, that thou shalt be worthy to receive greater ones.

ALSO: thou shalt so do justly to thy subjects that thou shalt have a line of justice, falling away neither to the right nor to the left; and thou shalt always take more the part of the poor rather than the rich, until thou art certain of the truth. And if anyone have

Si quis autem contra te querelam habuerit, stes potius pro causa adversarii tui, donec constet tibi de veritate: et sic illi qui sunt de consilio tuo, citius stabunt pro justitia.

TEM: si pro certo intelligas, quod teneas aliquid de alieno, sive ab antecessoribus tuis, sive a tempore tuo, statim restitue. Si res obscura est, veritatem inquiri facias per discretos.

TEM: sis diligens, quod omnes subditi tui in justitia et pace serventur, maxime autem personæ ecclesiasticæ ac religiosæ. Dicitur de rege Philippo a nostro, quod quidam de Consiliariis suis dixit et quod Clerici multa damna inferebant ei, jura ipsius usurpando; et mirabantur multi, quod ita tolerabat. Cui rex respondit: « Bene credo quod dicitis; sed quando cogito beneficia, quæ mihi dominus contulit, melius volo pati, quam inter me et ecclesiam scandalum suscitare. » Ama igitur, o fili, personas ecclesiasticas, serva pacem earum quantum poteris.

a quarrel against thee, thou shalt stand rather for the cause of thy adversary, until the truth is certain to thee; and thus they who are of thy counsel will more quickly stand for justice.

ALSO: if thou understandest for certain that thou hast something of another's, whether from thy predecessor's time or from thine own, immediately restore it. If the thing is uncertain, thou shouldst have the truth examined by wise ones.

ALSO: thou shouldst be diligent, that all thy subjects are preserved in justice and peace, but especially Church and religious persons. It is said about King Philip, our grandfather, that a certain one of his counselors said that clerics were doing many harms to him by usurping his rights, and many were marveling that he was so tolerating it. To him, the king responded: “I well believe what thou hast said; but when I think of the benefits which the Lord has brought to me, I wish to suffer better, rather than stir up scandal between me and the Church.” Therefore, O son, love the people of the Church; persevere their peace as much as thou canst.

TEM: libenter subveni pauperibus religiosis in suis necessitatibus et maxime illis per quos Deus magis honoratur in terra.

TEM: honora parentes tuos, et reverenter serva mandata eorum.

TEM: beneficia ecclesiastica personis idoneis dona de consilio spiritualium virorum, et eis qui non habent aliud beneficium. Cave ne absque maximo consilio guerram primus moveas contra aliquem Christianum: et si oporteat fieri, fac caveri ne innocentes, et ecclesiæ, ac res eorum sine merito puniantur. Et quam citius poteris, pacifica de guerris et contentionebus tuis, et etiam de guerris quæ sunt inter subditos tuos; sicut fecit beatus Martinus, qui bonam virtutum suarum consummationem estimavit, si pacem inter discordantes restituisset.

TEM: sis sollicitus, quod habeas fideles præpositos et baillivos, et inquire diligenter quomodo se gerant. Similiter de illis de hospitio tuo.

ALSO: willingly assist poor religious in their necessities, and especially those through whom God is most honored in the land.

ALSO: honor thy parents, and reverently keep their commands.

ALSO: give Church benefices to suitable persons on the advice of spiritual men, and to those who do not have another benefice. Beware lest thou shouldst first move to war against any Christian without the most serious advice; and if it must be done, take care lest innocents and churches and their things be punished without cause. And as quickly as thou canst, make peace from thy wars and controversies, and even from wars which are between thy subjects; thus did blessed Martin, who esteemed it a good consummation of his powers if he could restore peace between those at variance.

ALSO: thou shouldst be concerned that thou hast faithful overseers and bailiffs, and inquire diligently into how they bear themselves. Similarly for those of thy hospitality.

ITEM: sis devotus et obediens matri nostræ romanæ ecclesiæ, et summo pontifici tanquam patri spirituali.

ITEM: labora quod omne peccatum de terra tua removeatur, maxime autem blasphemias et hæreses.

ITEM: memoriter recognosce, et regratiare Deo super omnibus beneficiis suis.

ITEM: attende, quod expensæ domus tuæ cum moderamine fiant.

IN FINE obsecro te o fili, quod si decedam ante te, quod tu fideliter animam meam juvari facias in Missis et orationibus, et mittas per sanctas congregaciones regni nostri, ad orationum suffragia impetranda pro me; et quod in omnibus bonis, quæ facturus es, participationem habeam specialem.

DFILI carissime in fine do tibi omnem benedictionem, quam pius pater potest donare filio; et tota Trinitas, et omnes sancti custodiant te ab omni malo; et det tibi Dominus gratiam faciendi suam voluntatem taliter, quod serviatur et honoretur per

ALSO: thou shouldst be devout and obedient to our mother, the Roman Church, and to the supreme pontiff as to a spiritual father.

ALSO: work that every sin be removed from thy land, but especially blasphemies and heresies.

ALSO: recollect in memory, and give thanks to God above all for His benefits.

ALSO: attend that the expenses of thine house are made with a purpose.

IN THE end, I beseech thee, O son, that if I should depart before thee, that thou act that my soul be helped in Masses and prayers, and that thou sendest through the holy congregations of our kingdom that offerings of prayers be obtained for me; and that in all good things which thou shalt do, I have a special participation.

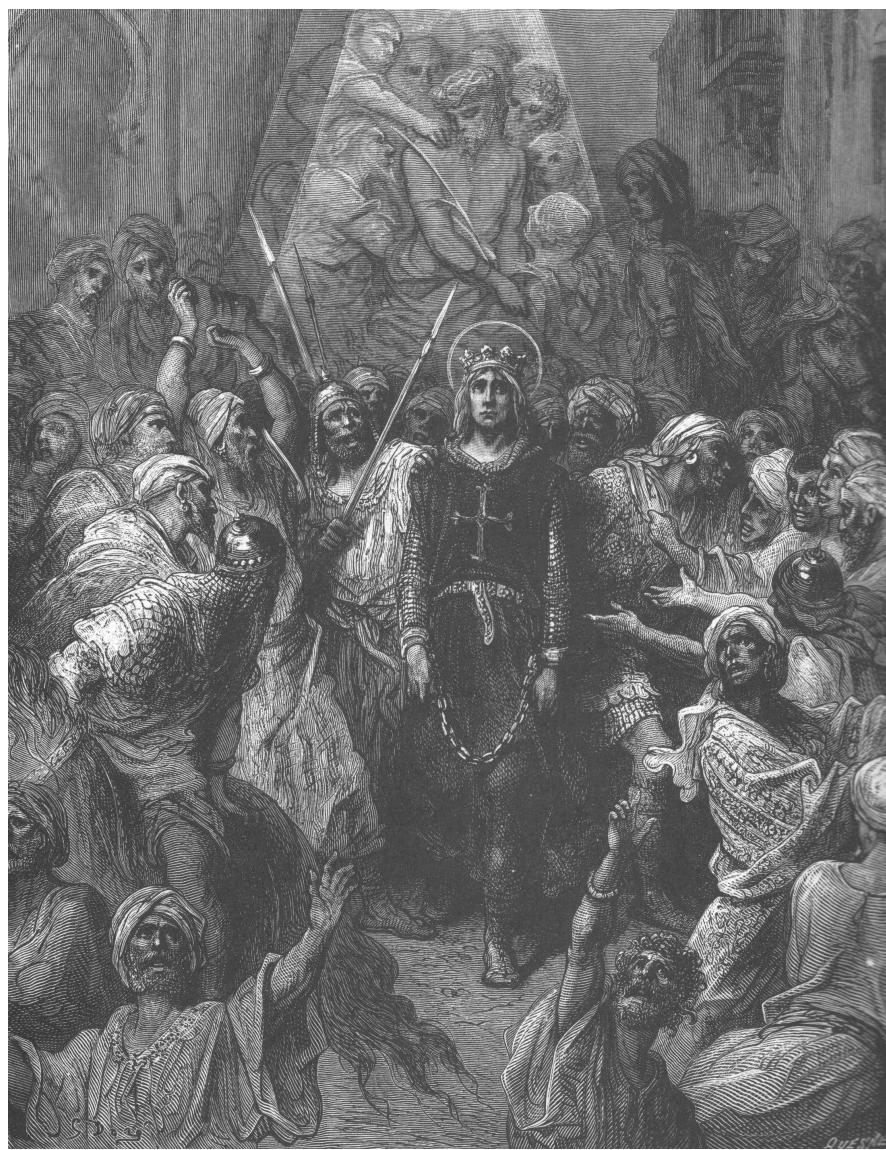
DEAREST son, in the end I give to thee every blessing which a faithful father can give to a son; and may the whole Trinity, and all the saints guard thee from every evil; and may the Lord give thee the grace of doing His Will in such a manner that He is served and honored through thee; thus, after this

te: ita quod post hanc vitam nos simul perveniamus ad ipsum vindendum, amandum, et laudandum sine fine. Amen.

PECCE Testamentum pii patris ad filios. O Testamentum vitae et pacis! Testamentum nulla oblivione delendum, nulla similiter ordinatione mutandum! Testamentum non morte testatoris, sed immortalis vitae adeptione firmatum! Siquidem pius pater de his, quae vere sua erant, condidit Testamentum; et quae in se possederat, aliis haec legavit. Virtutes enim, quas filiis delegavit, in se completas habuit, ut pote qui in se prius coepit facere, et alios postremo docere. Hujus nos, carissimi, tam sancti Testamenti generalis patris ac regis nostri pro modo nostro simus legatarii et haeredes; et praeципue principes, et praelati. Et haec de doctrina et instructione liberorum dicta sufficient.

life, we may come together to that living, loving, and praising without end. Amen.

BEHOLD, the testament of a faithful father to his sons. O testament of life and peace! The testament must not be destroyed by any forgetfulness, or similarly changed by any order! A testament established not by the death of the testator, but by attaining of immortal life! Accordingly, the faithful father established the testament of these things, which were truly his; and what he had possessed in himself, he bequeathed to others. For the virtues which he transferred to his sons, he had complete in himself, inasmuch as he began to do them first in himself, and afterwards to teach others. Dearest ones, let us be the heirs and legatees of this holy testament of our general father and king, for our own way; and especially the princes and prelates. And these things having been said about the teaching and instruction of children should suffice.





Sancte Ludovice
ora pro nobis

COLOPHON

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