

**Chapter 1 : Introduction to the Devout Life by St. Francis de Sales**

*Introduction to the Devout Life www.nxgvision.coms de Sales. This document has been generated from XSL (Extensible Stylesheet Language) source with RenderX XEP Formatter, version Client Academic.*

September 9, by richardconlin Leave a Comment My summary notes for: Francis de Sales, Saint. An Introduction to the Devout Life. Gill and Son, Instructions and exercises for conducting the soul from her first desire for a devout life till she is brought to a full resolution of embracing it. True devotion is the love of God in the highest form. True devotion is the perfection of charity. True devotion is suitable to all vocations and professions " True devotion hinders no one, but rather it perfects everything. The necessity of a spiritual guide for progress in the devout life " The path of humble obedience and full trust that God is working fully through him. Be open in all faithfulness and sincerity, laying bare both good and evil. Your spiritual guide must be filled with charity, knowledge, and discretion. We must hate sin with a hearty, vigorous contrition and detest every affection, circumstance, and inducement which tends towards it. The discipline of purification can and must cease only with our life, therefore be not discouraged by infirmities; our perfection consists in struggling against them Francis recommends a general confession as the most profitable beginning to start the devout life Francis recommends the most. Devote 1 hour daily to mental prayer " if you can, let it be early in the morning. Do not spend longer than an hour unless expressly desired to do so by your spiritual director. If during vocal prayer your heart is drawn to mental prayer, do not restrain it, but let your devotion take that channel except if bound to recite the Office. Preparation 1 Begin all prayer, whether mental or vocal, by placing yourself in the presence of God. Awareness that God dwells in your heart and spirit. Picture Jesus looking down from heaven on you. Imagine our Saviour beside or in front of us. Meditation Meditation is an act of understanding consisting of one or more reflections made with the view of exciting our affections towards God and the things of Heaven Concluding the meditation " Make the following 3 acts with utmost humility: Dryness " If you experience dryness, recourse to vocal prayer, or read a book until you feel reassured to enter back into prayer or stir up your heart with actions or gestures. Morning exercise " gratitude for the night, firm resolution for the day ahead, review the upcoming day, humble yourself, offer yourself to God. Evening exercise " gratitude, examination, offer to God yourself, ask for protection. Consider what He is doing, and what you are doing. Strive to extract holy thoughts and pious aspirations from all the varying circumstances of our mortal life. Without it you cannot follow the contemplative life well, nor the active life without danger. Mass " The most holy, sacred and royal sacrifice is the Sun of all spiritual exercises, the center of the Christian religion, the heart of devotion, the soul of piety; an ineffable mystery which embraces the untold depths of divine charity, and in which God, giving Himself to us, bestows upon us freely all His favours and graces Prayer, united to this Divine Sacrifice, has unutterable power Make a spiritual communion if you are not able to daily attend Mass Francis gives tips to meditate on for each part of the Mass as well. You will also practise the virtues of humility, obedience, sincerity, charity; nay, in a word, in this one act of confession you can exercise more virtues than in any other whatsoever. Always entertain a sincere hatred of the sins you confess, even though they be trifling, and a heartfelt resolution to amend" Accuse yourself honestly and simply of the special omission or commission To learn to love God To purify yourself from your imperfections To be delivered from your miseries To be comforted in your afflictions To be supported in your weakness 2 sorts of persons ought to communicate frequently: Rules for the Practice of Virtue Pick one virtue to cultivate or vice to crush. This should be fitting in regards to the state of life to which God has called you. Humility consists in really knowing and freely acknowledging our abasement. The most profitable humiliations are those that God sends us and those that are most opposed to our natural inclinations. Humility perfects us towards God. Gentleness perfects us towards our neighbor. Fresh wounds are always the easiest to heal " make immediate reparation for faults. We must be gentle towards ourselves " look upon your faults with a calm, collected, and firm displeasure. Have a quiet, calm, and persevering repentance. Be

careful and diligent in work but never hurried or anxious. Be like a little child with one hand clinging to your father and the one hand gathers fruits. Charity alone can place us in perfection, but obedience, chastity, and poverty, are the three principal means by which to attain to it. Obedience consecrates our heart, chastity our body, and poverty our means to the love and service of God. These three branches of the spiritual cross are grounded on a fourth, viz. I shall say nothing of these three virtues, when they are solemnly vowed, because this subject concerns religious orders only; nor even when they are simply vowed; for though a vow may add many graces and merits to virtues, yet, to make us perfect, it is not necessary that vows should be made, provided they be observed. For though being vowed, and especially solemnly, they place a man in the state of perfection; yet, to arrive at perfection itself, they must be observed, there being a very great difference between the state of perfection and perfection itself; since all bishops and religious are in a state of perfection; and yet, alas, all have not arrived at perfection itself, as is too plainly to be seen. Let us endeavour then, Philothea, to practise well these virtues, each one according to his vocation; for though they do not place us in the state of perfection, yet they will make us perfect: Obedience â€” two kinds of obedience: If you would seek perfection here, follow also their counsels, wishes, inclinations, as far as charity and prudence will permitâ€” obey meekly without answering back, speedily without delay, cheerfully without fretfulness, and above all, obey in a loving spirit for love of Himâ€” who preferred losing His life to being disobedient Voluntary â€” is that to which we bind ourselves by our own choice to our confessor, our director, our equals, and inferiors. Chastity â€” has its origin in the heart and its substance in the body. Associate with chaste and virtuous persons. Receive Jesus in Holy Communion. Poverty â€” The poor in spirit have not riches in their hearts nor their hearts in riches. If you possess them preserve your heart from loving them. Be poor in spirit. Since our possessions are not our own but rather gifts from God to cultivate them, we must take great care to render them useful and fruitful. In doing so, any loss will not deprive us of composure or tranquility. Love poverty and the poor; for by this love you will become truly poor yourself, since we become like to that which we love Friendship â€” The more your friendship stands on the foundation of virtue, the more perfect it will be. Perfection lies in entertaining no friendships that are not pure, holy, and sacred We must not tolerate any sins in our friends. External Mortification â€” We must begin mortification from within. A continued habitual temperance is far better than occasional, rigid abstinence alternating with great relaxation. Society and Solitude â€” As a general rule, we should always preserve a quiet cheerfulness of manner. When we are in society, associate with the virtuous and devout as much as possible. Conversation â€” When you speak of God, let it be done with reverence, devotion, gentleness, charity, and humility. Let your speech be gentle, frank, sincere, clear, simple, and truthful. Amusements â€” recreation is good to relax the mind and body but we must guard against excess either in the time they occupy or in the importance given to them for then they become evils as soon as they absorb the heart. John the Evangelist, as Cassian relates, amusing himself one day with a partridge on his hand, was asked by a huntsman: How such a man as he could spend his time in so unprofitable a manner? John said to him: Why do you not carry your bow always bent? Because, answered the huntsman, if it were always bent I fear it would lose its spring and become useless. Be not surprised, then, replied the apostle, that I should sometimes remit somewhat of my close application and attention of spirit in order to enjoy a little recreation, that I may afterwards employ myself more fervently in divine contemplation Actions â€” We must be faithful in things great and small. Be ready for martyrdom but in the meantime meekly endure all little evils, trifling inconveniences, and unimportant losses, which happen daily; for by using these little opportunities with a good and loving purpose you will overcome your heart and have it entirely under control All our actions must be offered to God. When I saw in the Life of St. Catherine of Sienna her many raptures and elevations of spirit, her many words of wisdom, nay, even sermons uttered by her, I doubted not but that, with the eye of contemplation, she had ravished the heart of her Heavenly Spouse. Her manner of meditating was as follows: Whilst she was dressing meat for her father she imagined that she was preparing it for our Saviour, like another St. Martha, and that her mother held the place of Our Blessed Lady, and her brothers that of the apostles: Let us be firm in our plans and unchanging in our resolutions. We

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are gradually being formed by our desires and resolutions. Temptations â€” The 3 degrees by which we fall into sin â€” temptation, delectation, and consent. We are not always able to banish the temptation but we can take no pleasure in the sin and refuse consent. We must develop a spirit of resistance, strengthened by continual prayer, participation in the Sacraments, and trust in God. Catherine of Siena being assaulted with temptations and Jesus revealed that He was within her heart filling it with displeasure and resistance to refuse all consent to the sin. But it is the great perfection of heavenly love to make those who love God suffer and fight for his love, not knowing whether they possess the love for which and by which they fight All temptations are never permitted by God save to those whom He purposes to exalt in His pure and excellent love Have you voluntarily brought on the sin yourself?

## Chapter 2 : Introduction to the Devout Life

*Devout life does not require withdrawal from the world. This was the central insight of Saint Francis de Sales, a 16th-century priest whose Introduction to the Devout Life has not gone out of print in almost four centuries.*

The flower-girl Glycera was so skilled in varying the arrangement and combination of her flowers, that out of the same kinds she produced a great variety of bouquets; so that the painter Pausias, a. Even so the Holy Spirit of God disposes and arranges the devout teaching which He imparts through the lips and pen of His servants with such endless variety, that, although the doctrine is ever one and the same, their treatment of it is different, according to the varying minds whence that treatment flows. Assuredly I neither desire, nor ought to write in this book anything but what has been already said by others before me. I offer you the same flowers, dear reader, but the bouquet will be somewhat different from theirs, because it is differently made up. Almost all those who have written concerning the devout life have had chiefly in view persons who have altogether quitted the world; or at any rate they have taught a manner of devotion which would lead to such total retirement. But my object is to teach those who are living in towns, at court, in their own households, and whose calling obliges them to a social life, so far as externals are concerned. Such persons are apt to reject all attempt to lead a devout life under the plea of impossibility; imagining that like as no animal presumes to eat of the plant commonly called Palma Christi, so no one who is immersed in the tide of temporal affairs ought to presume to seek the palm of Christian piety. And so I have shown them that, like as the mother-of-pearl lives in the sea without ever absorbing one drop of salt water; and as near the Chelidonian Isles springs of sweet water start forth in the midst of the ocean b and as the firemoth c hovers in the flames without burning her wings; even so a true stedfast soul may live in the world untainted by worldly breath, finding a well-spring of holy piety amid the bitter waves of society, and hovering amid the flames of earthly lusts without singeing the wings of its devout life. Of a truth this is not easy, and for that very reason I would have Christians bestow more care and energy than heretofore on the attempt, and thus it is that, while conscious of my own weakness, I endeavour by this book to afford some help to those who are undertaking this noble work with a generous heart. It is not however, my own choice or wish which brings this Introduction before the public. I was bound to her by various ties, and had long observed her remarkable capacity for this attainment, so I took great pains to teach her, and having led her through the various exercises suitable to her circumstances and her aim, I let her keep written records thereof, to which she might have recourse when necessary. These she communicated to a learned and devout Religious, who, believing that they might be profitable to others, urged me to publish them, in which he succeeded the more readily that his friendship exercised great influence upon my will, and his judgment great authority over my judgment. Consequently you will find very little precision in the work, but rather a collection of well intentioned instructions, explained in clear intelligible words, at least that is what I have sought to give. But as to a polished style, I have not given that a thought, having so much else to do. I have addressed my instructions to Philothea, d as adapting what was originally written for an individual to the common good of souls. I have made use of a name suitable to all who seek after the devout life, Philothea meaning one who loves God. After this, I lead her on by showing her two great means of closer union with His Divine Majesty; the Sacraments, by which that Gracious Lord comes to us, and mental prayer, by which He draws us to Him. This is the Second Part. In the Third Part I set forth how she should practise certain virtues most suitable to her advancement, only dwelling on such special points as she might not find elsewhere, or be able to make out for herself. In the Fourth Part I bring to light the snares of some of her enemies, and show her how to pass through them safely and come forth unhurt. And finally, in the Fifth Part, I lead her apart to refresh herself and take breath, and renew her strength, so that she may go on more bravely afterwards, and make good progress in the devout life. This is a cavilling age, and I foresee that many will say that only Religious and persons living apart are fit to undertake the guidance of souls in such special devout ways; that it requires more time than a Bishop of so important a diocese as mine can spare, and that it must

take too much thought from the important duties with which I am charged. But, dear reader, I reply with S. Denis that the task of leading souls towards perfection appertains above all others to Bishops, and that because their Order is supreme among men, as the Seraphim among Angels, and therefore their leisure cannot be better spent. The ancient Bishops and Fathers of the Primitive Church were, to say the least, as devoted to their duties as we are, yet they did not refuse to undertake the individual guidance of souls which sought their help, as we see by their epistles; thereby imitating the Apostles, who, while reaping the universal world-harvest, yet found time to gather up certain individual sheaves with special and personal affection. Petronilla were of S. Peter for Baronius and Galonius have given learned and absolute proof that S. Petronilla was not his carnal but spiritual daughter. And is not one of S. I grant that the guidance of individual souls is a labour, but it is a labour full of consolation, even as that of harvesters and grape-gatherers, who are never so well pleased as when most heavily laden. It is a labour which refreshes and invigorates the heart by the comfort which it brings to those who bear it; as is said to be the case with those who carry bundles of cinnamon in Arabia Felix. It is said that when the tigress finds one of her young left behind by the hunter in order to delay her while he carries off the rest of her cubs, she takes it up, however big, without seeming over-weighted, and speeds only the more swiftly to her lair, maternal love lightening the load. How much more readily will the heart of a spiritual father bear the burden of a soul he finds craving after perfection carrying it in his bosom as a mother her babe, without feeling weary of the precious burden? But unquestionably it must be a really paternal heart that can do this, and therefore it is that the Apostles and their apostolic followers are wont to call their disciples not merely their children, but, even more tenderly still, their "little children. It is too true that I who write about the devout life am not myself devout, but most certainly I am not without the wish to become so, and it is this wish which encourages me to teach you. A notable literary man has said that a good way to learn is to study, a better to listen, and the best to teach. Augustine, writing to the devout Flora, e says, that giving is a claim to receive, and teaching a way to learn. Alexander caused the lovely Campaspe, f who was so dear to him, to be painted by the great Apelles, who, by dint of contemplating her as he drew, so graven her features in his heart and conceived so great a passion for her, that Alexander discovered it, and, pitying the artist, gave him her to wife, depriving himself for love of Apelles of the dearest thing he had in the world, in which, says Pliny, he displayed the greatness of his soul as much as in the mightiest victory. Pausias of Sicyon B. A portrait of Glycera, the young flower-girl whom he loved, with a garland of flowers, was one of his masterpieces. It was called the Stephane-plocos [Stefanh-plokoV], or garland wreath, and was purchased by L. Lucullus at Athens for two talents. These islands are in the Mediterranean Sea, in the Gulf of Lycia. The address to Philothea by name has been omitted, as being somewhat stiff and stilted, and the term child or daughter used instead, but the omission in no way alters the sense or application of any sentence. This is probably the person mentioned as "our most religious daughter Flora" in S. See Library of the Fathers, S.

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## Chapter 3 : Catholic Treasury | Introduction to a Devout Life | St Francis de Sales

*Introduction to the Devout Life by Saint Francis de Sales. The most popular Catholic self-help book of all time is written for laymen. This 17th century classic is a proven spiritual guide for living an authentic Christian life.*

I apologize for taking so long to write this review Every Christian is called to work on their faith, spirituality is like a garden that must be tended on a continual basis if it is to produce fruit. Francis de Sales shows the average person, no matter what their calling is in life, how to become closer to God and provides excellent advice on many spiritual subjects. As the translator, John K. Ryan, explains in his introduction i. Francis avoids the extremes that lead to danger or are themselves dangerous. His purpose is to arouse in his reader a complete love of God and an absolute confidence in Him. This life of devotion is as open to soldiers, shopkeepers, courtiers, statesmen and men of business affairs, and women in their homes as it is to solitaires in the desert and nuns in their cells. To the diversity of men and women he presents ways and means to attain holiness of life that are perfectly adapted to their varying conditions of life. Francis, the ambassador of the Duke of Savoy to the republic of Berne. For legal reasons, Marie was compelled to stay in Annecy during the early part of , the town close to where the St. Francis was born and where he resided after he was consecrated bishop of Geneva in However, when the time came for her to leave and return to Savoy, Marie was afraid her spiritual life might backslide without his personal guidance, which she was privileged to receive. He told her not to worry, for he would continually guide her through correspondence when needed. Francis to have them printed whereby all the faithful could profit from his instructions. Francis did as he advised. I use a name that can refer to all who aspire to devotion. However, as can be expected, it became very popular and a second edition was called for, but errors crept in over the years, some due to himself St. Francis admits, others were due to printing errors, so the saint continually worked on the book and its various editions, adding to the material when a new topic came to him that needed clarification, or to correct serious blunders when chapters were accidentally omitted. To make a long story short about revisions and new editions, the final and most definitive version arranged by St. Francis de Sales was printed in , from which the latest edition featuring in this review is based. It is not a difficult book to read or understand, St. Francis de Sales uses straightforward language and advises the Catholic Christian in a simple manner how to grow in devotion and expand upon the spiritual life, giving various instructions and examples drawn not only from Scripture and writings of the saints plus their lives, but also quaint parables and stories from the learning of the period. Such examples the reader will find very helpful, like advice on how to discern a temptation which is not sinful from a venial or even a mortal sin, especially when the sin is by interior consent and not by action, which is often a troubling issue to discern. Of course, this book is excellent reading material for the penitential season of Lent when we need to pull up our bootstraps and scrub our souls a little! I will say no more but allow the reader judge for themselves by the Table of Contents, The subjects are numerous, but the book only has about pages, so the chapters are short despite their number: The book also includes a short chronology of St. Certainly, this spiritual diamond deserves the full five stars.

**Chapter 4 : Baronius Press: Introduction to the Devout Life by St Francis De Sales**

*When St. Francis De Sales wrote "Introduction to the Devout Life" in the 16th Century, he probably didn't know that his book would continue to be one of the most widely read books on Christian spirituality years later.*

Sample Page Since its first publication in this book has never gone out of print. It has always occupied a privileged position in the Church: Written for the layman surrounded by worldliness, this is a masterpiece of mystical and devotional literature, by a great and much loved Doctor of the Church. This book does what many similar books fail to do, teach the reader to grow in holiness, step by simple step. Francis de Sales was a master psychologist, with a special gift for teaching practical morality. His writings are characterized by sublime common sense. Even non-Christians have admired his prose. Above all, he is a spiritual genius, and thus was made a Doctor of the Church. This book is truly medicine for the soul. This edition has been re-typeset using the text of the edition originally published by Burns Oates and Washbourne, London, under the imprimatur of Edm. Preface to this Edition This wonderful book has always occupied a privileged position: Written for the layman surrounded by worldliness, this masterpiece by a great and much loved Doctor of the Church really does what so many similar books fail to do: Francis de Sales was born into an old aristocratic family at Thorens, in the Duchy of Savoy, 21 August, He received a splendid education at the hands of the Jesuits and seemed destined for a distinguished political career. Francis, however, chose to pursue his vocation in the ecclesiastical life, which led to friction with his father. In , he was consecrated Bishop of Geneva. Francis was often to be in France in the following twenty years, being much in demand as a great preacher, and founding, with St. Jane Frances de Chantal, the Institute of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin for young girls and widows who felt called to the religious life but were unable to join any of the great orders. Nevertheless, he resolutely refused to accept the prestigious French appointments he was offered, choosing rather to return to Annecy. Francis de Sales died at Lyons, 28 December, These paths are for everyone, not merely priests and religious. The saint goes on to insist that "it is an error, it is even a heresy", to hold that piety is incompatible with any state of life. The first part of the book is devoted to helping the soul to free itself from all inclination to, or affection for, sin. In the second part, he teaches the soul how to be united to God by prayer and the sacraments. The third is concerned with developing the practice of virtue. The fourth is devoted to strengthening the soul against temptation. Finally, in the fifth part, the spiritual doctor teaches the soul how to form its resolutions and to persevere. The Catholic Encyclopaedia has the following to say about the characteristics of St. There are two elements in the spiritual life: Francis de Sales looks chiefly to love. Not that he neglects penance, which is absolutely necessary, but he wishes it to be practised from a motive of love. He requires mortification of the senses, but he relies first on mortification of the mind, the will, and the heart. This interior mortification he requires to be unceasing and always accompanied by love. The end to be realized is a life of loving, simple, generous, and constant fidelity to the will of God, which is nothing else than our present duty. The model proposed is Christ, whom we must ever keep before our eyes. The practical means of arriving at this perfection are: As the reader will discover, St. Francis was a master psychologist, with a special gift for teaching practical morality; his writings are characterized by the sublime common sense so dear to Chesterton. He is also the most delightful of companions: Francis de Sales was made a Doctor of the Church: The flower-girl Glycera was so skilful in arranging her flowers, that, with the same flowers, she made a great variety of nosegays; so that the painter Pausias, when he strove to emulate her skill, fell short of it, for he was not able to vary the composition of his pictures in so many ways as Glycera was able to vary her nosegays. In like manner the Holy Ghost disposes and arranges the teachings of devotion, which he gives by the tongues and pens of his servants, with so great a variety, that, though the doctrine is always one and the same, yet the discourses in which they deliver it, are very different, according to the divers ways in which they are composed. I am not able indeed, neither do I wish, nor ought I to write in this Introduction anything which has not been already published on the subject by our predecessors; they are the same flowers that I present to

thee, my Reader, but the nosegay which I have made of them will be different from theirs, because it is arranged in a different manner. Those who have treated of devotion have almost all had in mind the instruction of persons very much withdrawn from the society of the world, or at all events they have taught a kind of devotion which leads to this complete withdrawal. My intention is to instruct those who live in towns, in households, at the court, and who, by reason of their circumstances, are obliged to lead an ordinary life in outward show; who very often, under colour of an alleged impossibility, are not willing even to think of undertaking the devout life, because they are of the opinion that, just as no beast dare taste of the herb called palma Christi, so no one ought to aspire to the palm of Christian piety, while living in the midst of the press of worldly occupations. And I show them that, as the mother pearls live in the sea without taking one drop of salt water, and as towards the Chelidonian isles there are springs of perfectly fresh water in the midst of the sea, and as the flies called pirastes fly in the flames without burning their wings, so a vigorous and constant soul can live in the world without receiving any worldly taint, can find springs of sweet piety in the midst of the briny waters of the world, and can fly among the flames of earthly concupiscences without burning the wings of the holy desires of the devout life. It is true that this is not an easy task, and for this reason I should like many to undertake it with more zeal than has been shown up to the present; and therefore, wholly weak though I be, I am endeavouring by means of this book to contribute some help of my own to those who, with a generous heart, are willing to undertake this worthy enterprise. And yet it is not altogether by my own choice or inclination that this Introduction is published. A soul, full of honour and virtue, having some good while since received from God the grace to aspire to the devout life, requested my assistance in the matter; and I, being in many ways under an obligation to her, and having long before noted in her a singularly good disposition for this design, took great trouble to instruct her carefully, and, having conducted her through all the exercises which were suited to her desire and to her condition of life, I left her some records of them in writing, so that she might have recourse to them according to her need. She subsequently showed them to a great, learned and devout Religious, who, being of the opinion that many others would derive great profit from them, earnestly exhorted me to publish them: Now, that the whole may be more useful and acceptable, I have revised it and reduced it to some sort of order, adding thereto many counsels and instructions proper to my purpose. But I have had to do all this with scarcely any leisure at all; and therefore thou wilt find herein nothing very exhaustively treated, but only a collection of sincere admonitions, which I explain in clear and intelligible words: But as regards elegance of style, I have not given a thought to it, having other things enough to do. I address my words to Philothea, because, wishing to apply to the common good of many what I had in the first instance written for one only, I address her by that name which is common to all those who wish to be devout; for Philothea means a lover of God. Therefore, in all this matter having in mind a soul, who, by the desire of devotion, aspires to the love of God, I have divided this Introduction into five parts; in the first of which I endeavour by certain counsels and exercises to change the simple desire of Philothea into a firm resolution which she makes at the end, after a general confession, by means of a firm protestation, followed by the most Holy Communion, wherein giving herself up to her Saviour, and receiving him, she enters happily into his holy love. That done, to lead her farther on, I show her two great means of uniting herself more and more with his divine Majesty; the one, the use of the Sacraments, by which our good God comes to us; the other, holy prayer, whereby he draws us to himself; and with this I occupy the second part. In the third, I show her, how she ought to exercise herself in divers virtues more especially proper for her advancement, not delaying but to give her certain particular counsels, which she could not easily have got elsewhere, nor have discovered for herself. In the fourth, I make known to her some snares of her enemies, showing her how she may escape them, and go forward. And last of all in the fifth part I make her retire awhile, to refresh herself, to recover breath, and to repair her strength, that she may afterwards more successfully gain ground, and advance in the devout life. This is a very capricious age, and I foresee clearly that many will say, that it appertains only to Religious and persons of devotion, to direct individual souls along the path of piety; that such a work requires more leisure than a Bishop can well spare, when charged with a

diocese so heavy as mine is; that it is too great a distraction to the understanding, which should be employed in affairs of greater importance. But as for me, my dear Reader, I say, with the great St Denis, that it appertains principally to Bishops to lead souls to perfection, since their Order is supreme among men, as is that of the Seraphim among the angels; so that their leisure cannot be better employed than about such business. The ancient Bishops and Fathers of the Church were at least as careful of their charge as we are, yet they failed not for all that to have a care for the individual guidance of many souls who had recourse to their assistance, as appears from their epistles. And herein they imitated the Apostles themselves, who, in the midst of the general harvest of all the world, gathered notwithstanding with a special and particular affection, certain notable ears of corn. And does not St John, the beloved disciple of our Lord, write one of his canonical epistles to the devout lady named Electa? It is a labour, I confess, to undertake the direction of individual souls, but one which brings withal much comfort; like the toil of husbandmen in time of harvest and vintage, who are never better pleased, than when busily engaged and fully occupied; it is a labour which recreates the hearts of those who undertake it through the abundance of delight which flows from it, as the cinnamon with its sweet odour comforts those who carry it through Arabia Felix. How much more willingly then will a fatherly heart take upon him the charge of a soul, which he finds possessed of a desire of holy perfection, carrying such a soul in his bosom, as a mother carries her little child, being never weary of carrying the burden which she loves so entirely. But it must needs be a fatherly heart; and for this reason the Apostles and apostolic men call their disciples not only their children, but with more tender affection their little children. To conclude, my dear Reader, it is true that I write of the devout life, being myself without devotion, yet not without an earnest desire of attaining thereto, and it is this very desire which has given me courage to instruct thee; for as a great and learned man said, it is a good means to become learned for a man to study hard, a better to have a learned master, and the best of all to teach others. And it often comes to pass, says St Augustine writing to his dearest Florentina, that "the office of distributing to others, serves us as a merit to receive," and the office of teaching becomes a foundation of learning. Alexander caused the lovely Campaspe, who was so dear to him, to be painted by the hand of the incomparable Apelles; and Apelles, being forced to gaze much upon Campaspe, whilst he was drawing her features in the picture, imprinted the love of her beauty upon his heart, and became so enamoured of her, that Alexander perceiving it and pitying his case, gave her to him in marriage, depriving himself for his sake, of the dearest love he had: And, if ever his divine Majesty perceive my soul sincerely in love with this beautiful virtue, he will bestow her upon me in an everlasting marriage. The fair and chaste Rebecca, watering the camels of Isaac, was destined to be his spouse, and received from him golden earrings and bracelets; so do I promise myself through the boundless goodness of my God, that, whilst I am leading his beloved sheep to the wholesome waters of devotion, he will make my soul his spouse, fastening in my ears the golden words of his holy love, and binding on my arms the strength to practise them well, in which lies the essence of true devotion; which I humbly beseech his heavenly Majesty to bestow upon me, and upon all the children of his Church; to which Church I wish always to submit my writings, my actions, my words, my wishes, and my thoughts. We carefully choose fonts for our titles in order that our books are readable even by those with eyesight impairments. It is important to know that the font size alone is not a good indication as to whether a text is easy to read. We therefore encourage our customers to print out a sample page of the title they are interested in to see whether the type of font and the font size are acceptable to them. [Click here](#) to see an explanation of font sizes and legibility.

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### Chapter 5 : Introduction to the Devout Life - Google Books

*St Francis de Sales brings the reader into the realm of eternal love by the truth and revelations he himself received by the grace of God. Treatise on the love of God was completed after his well known work Introduction to the Devout Life.*

Additional authorized editions were printed in , , , , etc. The book was translated into over 17 different languages by the year and has had countless editions printed since. This book report is from two different current translations. Quote from the Encyclical: By your blessing give life to its words so that the souls for whom it has been written may receive from it the sacred inspirations I desire for them, in particular that of imploring your infinite mercy in my behalf to the end that while I point out to others the way of devotion in this world I myself may not be rejected and eternally condemned in the other, but that with them I may forever sing as a canticle of triumph words that with my whole heart I utter in witness of fidelity amid the hazards of this mortal life: Yes, Lord Jesus, live and reign in our hearts forever and ever. Second Part of the Introduction Prayer: Third Part of the Introduction Practice of Virtue: Fourth Part of the Introduction State of Soul: Our age is very captious. I foresee that many people will say that it is only members of religious communities and persons dedicated to devotion who should give special direction in piety Next add its beauty to that of a fine day in such a way that the brilliant sun does not prevent a clear view of the stars or moon. I hold that although it is licit to engage in sports, dance, wear fine clothes, attend harmless [stage] comedies, and enjoy banquets, to have a strong liking for such things is not only opposed to devotion but also extremely harmful and dangerous. Catherine of Siena deprived her of all opportunity for time and place to pray and meditate, our Lord inspired her to build a little oratory within her soul where she could retire mentally and enjoy this holy heartfelt solitude while going about her outward duties. The more wretched he esteems himself the more daring he becomes because he places his whole trust in God who rejoices to display his power in our weakness Once damaged, they are almost impossible to keep except by sugar or honey. In like manner when chastity has not been violated it can be kept safe in many ways. Once broken, nothing can preserve it except extraordinary devotion, which is the true sugar and honey of the spirit Human bodies are like glass vessels that cannot be carried about while touching one another without risk of breakage. They are also like [sound fruits] which No matter how fresh and pure the water in a vessel may be, once it has been touched To be rich in effect and poor in affection spirit is a great happiness for a Christian. The higher the virtues Just as it breathes forth its thought from the tongue so it breathes in the thoughts of others through the ear. Let us keep close watch on our ears against breathing in the foul air of filthy words, for otherwise our heart will soon become infected. God detests this vice Nothing is so opposed to charity, and even more so to devotion It is an abuse to desire martyrdom and lack courage to put up with an injury. Gregory Nazianzen tells us that in his time married people kept their wedding anniversary as a festival day. For my part, I approve of reviving this custom, provided that it is not attended by worldly and sensual amusements. On that day the husband and wife should go to confession and receive Holy Communion and with more than ordinary fervor commend to God the success and happiness of their marriage. An evil is half cured when its cause is known. Look up to heaven, and think of him who reigns there! Your approaching end will quickly close the brief course of this life. Look down into hell, and do not cast yourself into it for the sake of fleeting things. Look upon Jesus Christ, and do not renounce him for the world. And when the labors of a devout life seem hard to you, sing with St, Francis of Assisi:

### Chapter 6 : Introduction to the Devout Life (Audiobook) by St. Francis De Sales | [www.nxgvision.com](http://www.nxgvision.com)

*Introduction to the Devout Life (French: Introduction À la vie d'À©vote) is a book written by Saint Francis de Sales, the first edition being published in The final edition was published in , prior to the death of Francis in*

### Chapter 7 : Introduction to the Devout Life - Saint Francis (de Sales) - Google Books

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*LibraryThing Review User Review - pmackey - LibraryThing. Introduction to the Devout Life is one of the best books I've read on Christian formation. Written in the 17th Century, Francis De Sales' practical and grace-filled advice is ageless.*

### Chapter 8 : Introduction to the Devout Life - Christian Classics Ethereal Library

*Introduction to the Devout Life is a compilation of letters and notes used in the spiritual direction of his cousin, Madame Marie de Charmoisy, the wife of an ambassador of the Duke of Savoy.*

### Chapter 9 : Meditations from the Introduction to the Devout Life by St. Francis de Sales

*or The Introduction to the Devout Life by St. Francis De Sales Originally written in French and first published in , this book was an overnight classic.*