

# **BUILDING BLOCKS FOR A SIMPLE LIFE**

## **Daily Building Blocks** A STUDY GUIDE FOR SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS



**January 24-30, 2010**  
**Fasting, Praying, and Giving**

**CAN ALSO BE FOUND ON THE UC WEBSITE**  
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## How to use the building blocks:

Just like real building blocks – when you stack them on top of each other, you begin to create something much greater than the one block. For our study, we have chosen the blocks “A”, “B” and “C”.



= **“Align Yourself with God’s Word”** on Sunday and Monday (or Monday and Tuesday if this works better in your schedule) –

Spend time reading, praying and responding to thoughts and questions in your notebook.



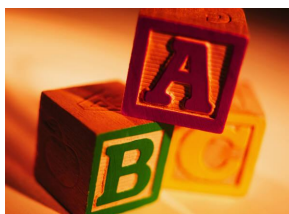
= **“Be Verbs...Take Action”** on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Spend time each in a personal challenge and ‘action-oriented’ application that stretches your comfort zone.



= **“Create A Simplified Life-Lesson”** on Friday and Saturday.

Spend time defining what you learned from the week and how you will use it in your walk with God from now on.



## Align Yourself with God's Word.

To begin with, ALIGN yourself with God's Word for 3 days beginning on either Sunday or Monday. **Spend time during these two days in at least 15 minutes of prayer THREE TIMES A DAY at a regimented time.** You will need your journal or a spiral-notebook to fully experience this practice so have one ready along with a pencil or pen.

I WANT TO BE LIKE DANIEL: - PRAYING THREE TIMES A DAY.

### DAY I

- Read Daniel 6:1-11 (found in your handout section) What are the charges that Daniel will be found guilty of violating?
- Spend time in Matthew 6:1-24 – circle the words and sentences in this teaching that really challenge you, bother you, or summon your faith to live in a more courageous fashion.
  - Look at the words and phrases you circled – these might be the goals and projects for you work on more deeply this week.
- Make a list of 5 things that you think would allow you to be found guilty of being called a Christian.
- Praying Three Times a Day – respond to the following questions in your journal.
  - Is it difficult to stop and pray the third/middle time in your day?
  - What did you decide to pray about in the middle of the day?
  - What did you have to give up in order to get this done?
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### DAY II

- Read Isaiah 58
- Which sentences really bother you or make you nervous and cautious to consider and really take to heart in your Christian behavior?
- What characteristics of fasting is God frustrated by in Isaiah 58? What is missing in the motives and purpose behind why they fast?
- What teaching from fasting in Isaiah 58 directs you to MORE than just giving something up or abstaining from something for a period of time?
  - What is our focus to be upon according to the teaching of Isaiah 58? Where should we be spending our time?
- What did you see in your life today that tried to take you away from God?



## **e Verbs...Take Action.**

The next three days are a time for action – but not without your readings from the last two days. **We are increasing our prayer time this week to THREE times a day – just like Daniel.**

### DAY I

Go through your house/apartment/dorm with a ‘Post-It Note’ pad and stick a note on any and everything in your place that you think seems to be something worldly, materialistic, or unnecessary to your spiritual life.

- Be sure to go item by item, CD by CD, and Movie by Movie if you need to...look at your entertainment, your credit card statements, your debit card receipts and beyond.
- IT MAY LOOK WEIRD to others – but LEAVE THESE NOTES UP for the rest of the week. We will use them later.

Get organized with your prayer life. You have probably been struggling as to what to speak with God about. Are you looking forward to praying or is it turning into a “have-to” session in order to satisfy the requirements of this week’s exercise?

- Write down three things to pray about in the morning, three for the afternoon, and three for the evening/bedtime.
  - Some suggestions:
    - Morning prayer - give thanks for the gift of the day and the opportunities and challenges God is placing before you.
    - Afternoon prayer – spend time in prayer for the people you have encountered throughout the day – were you listening to their prayer needs, worries, and stresses? Did you say that you would pray for them?
    - Evening prayer – begin with a reading of one of the scriptures for this week – pray that God opens your eyes to understanding. Spend time in prayer focused on last week’s goals to be a person of the kingdom of Heaven first in your life.

### DAY II

Today is a FASTING DAY – it will continue through the LAST day of this weekly exercise (do not break this fast until after morning services on Sunday).

- Identify TWO things from the list below (or substitute) and fast from those for the rest of the week.
  - Television
  - Radio and Music
  - Internet (non-school related) usage.
  - Video Games, ON-Line games, and Cell-Phone applications
- Select TWO things from the list below (or substitute) that you are going to REPLACE for the things you fasted from above.
  - Time in prayer and Bible reading

- Writing letters and encouragement cards to friends, those struggling and fellow-Christians.
- Rounding up and visiting other Christians or those struggling in their faith.
- Try to spend time with the person you invited to Praise Service last week – can you engage them with spiritual talk and conversation? Share with them something you are reading from the Bible that you have substituted in your fasting.
- Consider the teachings of Isaiah 58 and see if there is a lesson that you would apply in your actions today.

### DAY III

Today is a GIVING day -

- Go BACK through the action-item of when you used the post-it-note system in your life.
  - It's time to GRADE your post-it-note exercise. Place an "A" on the item/idea if you think you really still need it in your life. Place an "F" on the item if it needs to go. You can use "A, B, C, D, F" to get a sense of what needs to stay and go in your life.
  - Choose one of the following ideas to practice sacrificial giving as a Christian.
    - Write a check or place funds in an envelope to be given in the church offering plate this Sunday. Put it in your Bible and see it everyday until Sunday. Remind yourself to be a giving person.
    - Choose to give up TWO meals this week that you would normally have paid for. Add up the amount of the meals and spend the money on groceries for someone in need. If you do not know of someone, bring the groceries to the church benevolence pantry or the UC office.
    - Identify some of the items in your world that got the grade of "D" or "F" in your life (see yesterday's Be Verb). Get rid of them, pawn them, sell them as quickly as possible – take the funds and do something positive for others (not yourself) – this is not a "self-indulgence garage sale – this is a selling of things that are getting between you and God)
  - Today is a day to give not only your money to God – but your TIME and TALENTS as well.
    - You have been fasting from time-consuming things that steal the talents given to you by God.
    - Write down some talents that God has given you that have been neglected because of lack of attention and work.



## **reate a Simplified Life-Lesson.**

These two days are to be used to adapt the intensity of practice from the past three days into something that YOU think God can do in your life from now on. Don't forget, 15 minutes of prayer, three times a day.

### **DAY I**

- Read the story of the Christian martyr, Perpetua, and her fellow Christians arrested and martyred in 203 AD. Reflect on the reading and then respond in your journal.
  - What amazed you about Perpetua's convictions in her faith?
  - Would you have sat next to her in a prison cell or tried to sit on the other side of the room? Why?
- What would you be willing to give up in your life in order for the gospel of Jesus to be clearer to those around you?
- How difficult has it been to stop and pray three times a day? Why do you think you were challenged by this task? Were you too busy? Too undisciplined? Are there too many other things that are stealing your time?
- You have been fasting from TV, Music, Internet, etc. for a few days now. Write your reflections on what you have learned about yourself so far?
  - What have you found you enjoyed in the absence of things of this world?
  - What things about your former spiritual life bother you right now that you are going to correct?

### **DAY II**

- Read Matthew 6:1-24 (see handout) again.
- Which of the three teachings from Jesus challenge you the most and are the ones you want to distance yourself from? Why do you think that is?
- Rank the three teachings in an order that YOU think you can begin to work toward deepening your obedience to in the next two months. Why did you rank them that way?
- Looking back on the three days of Action (Be Verb Blocks), which one was the most helpful in "linking" you back up with God and being more in line with His desires for your life?
- Set TWO goals from this week's lessons you are going to attempt in the next few weeks – be ready to share them in class on Sunday.

## Handouts for Reading:

### Daniel 6 - Daniel in the Den of Lions

<sup>1</sup> It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom, <sup>2</sup> with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. The satraps were made accountable to them so that the king might not suffer loss. <sup>3</sup> Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. <sup>4</sup> At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent. <sup>5</sup> Finally these men said, "We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God."

<sup>6</sup> So the administrators and the satraps went as a group to the king and said: "O King Darius, live forever! <sup>7</sup> The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or man during the next thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be thrown into the lions' den. <sup>8</sup> Now, O king, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered—in accordance with the laws of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed." <sup>9</sup> So King Darius put the decree in writing.

<sup>10</sup> Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. <sup>11</sup> Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help. <sup>12</sup> So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree: "Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or man except to you, O king, would be thrown into the lions' den?"

The king answered, "The decree stands—in accordance with the laws of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed."

<sup>13</sup> Then they said to the king, "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day." <sup>14</sup> When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort until sundown to save him.

<sup>15</sup> Then the men went as a group to the king and said to him, "Remember, O king, that according to the law of the Medes and Persians no decree or edict that the king issues can be changed."

<sup>16</sup> So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions' den. The king said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!"

## **Isaiah 58 - True Fasting**

- <sup>1</sup> *"Shout it aloud, do not hold back.  
Raise your voice like a trumpet.  
Declare to my people their rebellion  
and to the house of Jacob their sins.*
- <sup>2</sup> *For day after day they seek me out;  
they seem eager to know my ways,  
as if they were a nation that does what is right  
and has not forsaken the commands of its God.  
They ask me for just decisions  
and seem eager for God to come near them.*
- <sup>3</sup> *'Why have we fasted,' they say,  
'and you have not seen it?  
Why have we humbled ourselves,  
and you have not noticed?'  
"Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please  
and exploit all your workers.*
- <sup>4</sup> *Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife,  
and in striking each other with wicked fists.  
You cannot fast as you do today  
and expect your voice to be heard on high.*
- <sup>5</sup> *Is this the kind of fast I have chosen,  
only a day for a man to humble himself?  
Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed  
and for lying on sackcloth and ashes?  
Is that what you call a fast,  
a day acceptable to the LORD ?*
- <sup>6</sup> *"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:  
to loose the chains of injustice  
and untie the cords of the yoke,  
to set the oppressed free  
and break every yoke?*
- <sup>7</sup> *Is it not to share your food with the hungry  
and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—  
when you see the naked, to clothe him,  
and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?*
- <sup>8</sup> *Then your light will break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing will quickly appear;*

*then your righteousness <sup>[a]</sup> will go before you,  
and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard.*

<sup>9</sup> *Then you will call, and the LORD will answer;  
you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.  
"If you do away with the yoke of oppression,  
with the pointing finger and malicious talk,*

<sup>10</sup> *and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the oppressed,  
then your light will rise in the darkness,  
and your night will become like the noonday.*

<sup>11</sup> *The LORD will guide you always;  
he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land  
and will strengthen your frame.  
You will be like a well-watered garden,  
like a spring whose waters never fail.*

<sup>12</sup> *Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins  
and will raise up the age-old foundations;  
you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls,  
Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.*

<sup>13</sup> *"If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath  
and from doing as you please on my holy day,  
if you call the Sabbath a delight  
and the LORD's holy day honorable,  
and if you honor it by not going your own way  
and not doing as you please or speaking idle words,*

<sup>14</sup> *then you will find your joy in the LORD,  
and I will cause you to ride on the heights of the land  
and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob."  
The mouth of the LORD has spoken.*

## **Matthew 6 -**

### ***Giving to the Needy***

<sup>1</sup>"Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

<sup>2</sup>"So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. <sup>3</sup>But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup>so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

### ***Prayer***

<sup>5</sup>"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. <sup>6</sup>But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. <sup>7</sup>And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. <sup>8</sup>Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

<sup>9</sup>"This, then, is how you should pray:

" 'Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,

<sup>10</sup>your kingdom come,  
your will be done

on earth as it is in heaven.

<sup>11</sup>Give us today our daily bread.

<sup>12</sup>Forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

<sup>13</sup>And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from the evil one.<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>14</sup>For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. <sup>15</sup>But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

### ***Fasting***

<sup>16</sup>"When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.

<sup>17</sup>But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup>so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

### ***Treasures in Heaven***

<sup>19</sup>"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup>But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

<sup>22</sup>"The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. <sup>23</sup>But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

<sup>24</sup>"No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

### **The Martyrdom of PERPETUA – 203 AD**

An account of the martyrdom of a woman named Perpetua, Felicitas, and their companions is one of the great treasures of martyr literature, an authentic document preserved for us in the actual words of the martyrs and their friends. It was in the great African city of Carthage, in the year 203, during the persecutions ordered by the Emperor Severus, that five young Christians were arrested for their faith. The group consisted of a slave Revocatus, his fellow slave Felicitas, who was expecting the birth of a child, two free men, Saturninus and Secundulus, and a matron of twenty-two, Vivia Perpetua, wife of a man in good position and mother of a small infant. Perpetua's father was a pagan, her mother and two brothers Christians, one of the brothers being very young. These five prisoners were soon joined by one Saturus, who seems to have been their instructor in the faith and who now chose to share their punishment. At first they were all kept under strong guard in a private house. Perpetua wrote a vivid account of what happened...

*"While I was still with my companions, and my father in his affection for me was trying to turn me from my purpose by arguments and so weaken my faith, 'Father,' said I, 'do you see this vessel—water pot or whatever it may be? . . . Can it be called by any other name than what it is?' No,' he replied. 'So also I cannot call myself by any other name than what I am—a Christian.' Then my father, provoked by the word 'Christian,' threw himself on me as if he would pluck out my eyes, but he only shook me, and in fact was vanquished.... Then I thanked God for the relief of being, for a few days, parted from my father . . . and during those few days we were baptized. The Holy Spirit bade me after the holy rite to pray for nothing but bodily endurance.*

*"A few days later we were lodged in the prison, and I was much frightened, because I had never known such darkness. What a day of horror! Terrible heat, owing to the crowds! Rough treatment by the soldiers! To crown all I was tormented with anxiety for my baby. But Tertius and Pomponius, those blessed deacons who ministered to us, paid for us to be moved for a few hours to a better part of the prison and we obtained some relief. All went out of the prison and we were left to ourselves. My baby was brought and I nursed him, for already he was faint for want of food. I spoke anxiously to my mother on his behalf*

*and encouraged my brother and commended my son to their care. For I was concerned when I saw their concern for me. For many days I suffered such anxieties, but I obtained leave for my child to remain in the prison with me, and when relieved of my trouble and distress for him, I quickly recovered my health. My prison suddenly became a palace to me and I would rather have been there than anywhere else.*

*"My brother then said to me: 'Lady sister, you are now greatly honored, so greatly that you may well pray for a vision to show you whether suffering or release is in store for you.' And I, knowing myself to have speech of the Lord for whose sake I was suffering, promised him confidently, 'Tomorrow I will bring you word.' And I prayed and this was shown me. I saw a golden ladder of wonderful length reaching up to heaven, but so narrow that only one at a time could ascend; and to the sides of the ladder were fastened all kinds of iron weapons. There were swords, lances, hooks, daggers, so that if anyone climbed up carelessly or without looking upwards, he was mangled and his flesh caught on the weapons. And at the foot of the ladder was a huge dragon which lay in wait for those going up and sought to frighten them from the ascent. The first to go up was Satorus, who of his own accord had given himself up for our sakes, because our faith was of his building and he was not with us when we were arrested. He reached the top of the ladder and, turning, said to me: 'Perpetua, I wait for you, but take care that the dragon does not bite you.' And I said: 'In the name of Jesus Christ, he will not hurt me.' And the dragon put out his head gently, as if afraid of me, just at the foot of the ladder; and as though I were treading on the first step, I trod on his head. And I went up and saw a vast garden, and sitting in the midst a tall man with white hair in the dress of a shepherd, milking sheep; and round about were many thousands clad in white. He raised his head and looked at me and said: 'Thou art well come, my child.' And he called me and gave me some curds of the milk he was milking, and I received them in my joined hands and ate, and all that were round about said 'Amen.' At the sound of the word I awoke, still tasting something sweet. I at once told my brother and we understood that we must suffer, and henceforth began to have no hope in this world.*

*"After a few days there was a report that we were to be examined. My father arrived from the city, worn with anxiety, and came up the hill hoping still to weaken my resolution. 'Daughter,' he said, 'pity my white hairs! Pity your father, if I deserve you should call me father, if I have brought you up to this your prime of life, if I have loved you more than your brothers! Make me not a reproach to mankind! Look on your mother and your mother's sister, look on your son who cannot live after you are gone. Forget your pride; do not make us all wretched! None of us will ever speak freely again if calamity strikes you.' So spoke my father in his love for me, kissing my hands and casting himself at my feet, and with tears calling me by the title not of 'daughter' but of 'lady.' And I grieved for my father's sake, because he alone of all my kindred would not have joy at my martyrdom. And I tried to comfort him, saying, 'What takes place on that platform will be as God shall choose, for assuredly we are not in our own power but in the power of God.' But he departed full of grief.*

*"The following day, while we were at our dinner, we were suddenly summoned to be examined and went to the forum. The news of the trial spread fast and brought a huge crowd together in the forum. We were placed on a sort of platform before the judge, who was Hilarion, procurator of the province, since the proconsul had lately died. The others were questioned before me and confessed their faith. But when it came to my turn, my father appeared with my child, and drawing me down the steps besought me, 'Have pity on the child.' The judge Hilarion joined with my father and said: 'Spare your father's white hairs. Spare the tender years of your child. Offer sacrifice for the prosperity of the emperors.' I replied, 'No.'" Are you a Christian?' asked Hilarion, and I answered, 'Yes, I am.' My father then attempted to drag me down from the platform, at which Hilarion commanded that he should be beaten off, and he was struck with a rod. I felt this as much as if I myself had been struck, so deeply did I grieve to see my father treated thus in his old age. The judge then passed sentence on us all and condemned us to the wild beasts, and in great joy we returned to our prison. Then, as my baby was accustomed to the breast, I sent Pomponius the deacon to ask him of my father, who, however, refused to send him. And God so ordered it that the child no longer needed to nurse, nor did my milk incommode me."*

\* Secundulus seems to have died in prison before the examination. Before pronouncing sentence, Hilarion had Saturus, Saturninus, and Revocatus scourged and Perpetua and Felicitas beaten on the face. They were then kept for the gladiatorial shows which were to be given for the soldiers on the festival of Geta, the young prince whom his father Severus had made Caesar four years previously.

The remainder of the story was added by another hand, apparently that of an eyewitness. Felicitas had feared that she might not be allowed to suffer with the rest because pregnant women were not sent into the arena. However, she gave birth in the prison to a daughter whom one of their fellow Christians at once adopted. Pudens, their jailer, was by this time a convert, and did all he could for them. The day before the games they were given the usual last meal, which was called "the free banquet." The martyrs strove to make it an Agape or Love Feast (communion service), and to those who crowded around them they spoke of the judgments of God and of their own joy in their sufferings. Such calm courage and confidence astonished the pagans and brought about many conversions.

On the day of their martyrdom they set forth from the prison. Behind the men walked the young noblewoman Perpetua, "abashing the gaze of all with the high spirit in her eyes," and beside her the slave Felicitas. At the gates of the amphitheater the attendants tried to force the men to put on the robes of the priests of Saturn and the women the dress symbolic of the goddess Ceres, but they all resisted and the officer allowed them to enter the arena clad as they were. Perpetua was singing, while Revocatus, Saturninus, and Saturus were calling out warnings to the bystanders and even to Hilarion himself, as they walked beneath his balcony, of the coming vengeance of God. The mob cried out that they should be scourged for their boldness. Accordingly, as the martyrs passed in front of the venatores, or hunters, each received a lash.

To each one God granted the form of martyrdom he desired. Saturus had hoped to be exposed to several sorts of beasts, that his sufferings might be intensified. He and Revocatus were first attacked half-heartedly by a leopard. Saturus was next exposed to a wild boar which turned on his keeper instead. He was then tied up on the bridge in front of a bear, but the animal refused to stir out of his den, and Saturus was reserved for one more encounter. The delay gave him an opportunity to turn and speak to the converted jailer Pudens: "You see that what I desired and foretold has come to pass. Not a beast has touched me! So believe steadfastly in Christ. And see now, I go forth yonder and with one bite from a leopard all will be over." As he had foretold, a leopard was now let out, sprang upon him, and in a moment he was fatally wounded. Seeing the flow of blood, the cruel mob cried out, "He is well baptized now!" Dying, Saturus said to Pudens, "Farewell; remember my faith and me, and let these things not daunt but strengthen you." He then asked for a ring from Pudens' finger, and dipping it in his own blood, returned it to the jailer as a keepsake. Then he expired.

Perpetua and Felicitas were exposed to a mad heifer. Perpetua was tossed first and fell on her back, but raised herself and gathered her torn tunic modestly about her; then, after fastening up her hair, lest she look as if she were in mourning, she rose and went to help Felicitas, who had been badly hurt by the animal. Side by side they stood, expecting another assault, but the sated audience cried out that it was enough. They were therefore led to the gate Sanevivia, where victims who had not been killed in the arena were dispatched by gladiators. Here Perpetua seemed to arouse herself from an ecstasy and could not believe that she had already been exposed to a mad heifer until she saw the marks of her injuries. She then called out to her brother and to the young ones: "Stand fast in the faith, and love one another. Do not let our sufferings be a stumbling block to you." By this time the fickle populace was clamoring for the women to come back into the open. This they did willingly, and after giving each other the kiss of peace, they were killed by the gladiators. Perpetua had to guide the sword of the nervous executioner to her throat. The story of these martyrs has been given in detail for it is typical of so many others. No early Christians were more universally honored in all the early Church calendars and stories of martyrdom.