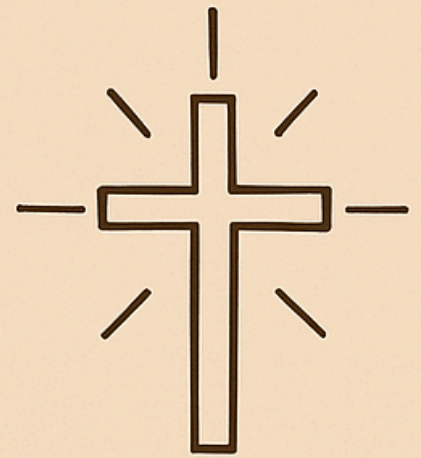


# Clean Eating & the Virtue of Temperance

A Catholic Guide to  
Nourishing Your  
Body and Soul



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## ***Introduction: What is Clean Eating?***

Clean eating isn't about trends or food rules—it's about reverence. It's about treating your body, created in the image of God, with the respect it deserves. Clean eating is the practice of choosing foods in their most natural form—God-made over man-manipulated. When we shift from processed and artificial ingredients to whole, living foods, we honor the Creator through our daily habits. It's not just physical nourishment; it's spiritual stewardship. Through clean eating, we learn to rebuild the body—both physically and spiritually—with intention, patience, and gratitude.

**Reflection: How have I viewed food in the past: as fuel, comfort, control, or gift?**

***“So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”***

1 Corinthians 10:31

# **About Me**



Hi, I'm Marty, the Catholic fitness coach, stroke survivor, and believer in the body-soul connection. After suffering a stroke in 2019, just weeks after my daughter was born, I began a journey of rebuilding—physically, spiritually, and emotionally.

Clean eating became a key part of my recovery. What started as a way to heal my body turned into a spiritual practice that taught me the beauty of temperance. I discovered that eating well wasn't about control or guilt—it was about freedom, joy, and honoring God with my choices.

This guide flows from that journey. My hope is that it helps you discover the gift of treating your body as a temple, and that you find peace, clarity, and grace in the process.

Marty





# **Chapter 1**

## **Understanding Temperance: A Catholic Virtue**

***“A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls.” - Proverbs 25:28***

Temperance is one of the four cardinal virtues, and it is the virtue that allows us to regulate our desires and cravings so that they serve our good rather than dominate us. In a world of indulgence and extremes, temperance is the quiet strength that says "enough." The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 1809) defines temperance as “the moral virtue that moderates the attraction of pleasures and provides balance in the use of created goods.”



Clean eating offers an opportunity to practice this virtue daily. It's not just about saying no to unhealthy food—it's about saying yes to the better, more life-giving choice.

In rebuilding the body, temperance is the scaffolding that supports long-term growth.



## Reflection

What does temperance look like in my daily routine?

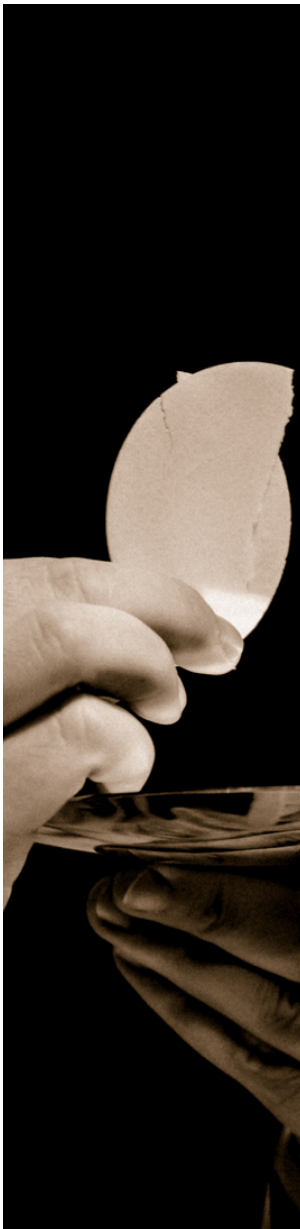


# **Chapter**

## **2**

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# **The Connection Between Faith and Food**



***“Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger.’” – John 6:35***

From Genesis to the Gospels, food has been a sacred symbol. In Eden, the first sin was an act of eating. In Exodus, manna came down from Heaven to nourish the people. At the Last Supper, Christ gave us His Body and Blood through bread and wine.

Food is never just about sustenance—it is about communion, covenant, and transformation. In rebuilding the body, we must remember that our meals can become moments of grace.

By choosing foods that heal and energize, we align our bodies with our souls, reminding ourselves that our daily bread can lead us closer to the Bread of Life.



## Reflection

How can I allow meals to be moments of communion with Christ?



# **Chapter 3 Principles of Clean Eating**

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***“Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him.” – Psalm 34:8***

Clean eating is rooted in simplicity, purity, and mindfulness.



## ***Here are the guiding principles through the lens of virtue:***

- Eat foods as close to God's design as possible—whole, organic, and unprocessed.
- Avoid ingredients that numb the body and dull the spirit—like excessive sugar, artificial additives, and chemically altered fats.
- Practice gratitude by praying before meals and acknowledging the labor and love behind your food.
- Choose hydration as a form of self-care—clean, filtered water as a gift, not a chore.
- Embrace mindful eating: slow down, savor, and listen to your body's cues.
- Let your meals be an act of worship.

### **Reflection**

Which food habits bring me life and which ones drain my energy or peace?



# Chapter 4

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## Practicing Temperance Through Daily Food Choices



***“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.” – Matthew 5:6***

Temperance shows up when no one is watching—when you open the fridge late at night, when you feel triggered by emotion, when you're stressed and want comfort. It's not about shame. It's about redirecting desire. We're not meant to deny our needs—we're meant to reorient them toward true fulfillment.

When we choose a nourishing meal over a quick fix, we're choosing virtue. When we pause to ask, "Will this choice build me up or break me down?" we are inviting Christ into our hunger.

Rebuilding the body through temperance is less about restriction and more about discernment. What you eat is forming not just your body—but your character.



## Reflection

What do I typically turn to for comfort when I feel emotionally overwhelmed?



# **Chapter 5**

## **Clean Eating in Scripture and Tradition**

***“But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine...” – Daniel 1:8***

Daniel’s fast in Babylon was a clean eating act of resistance and trust. He rejected the king’s rich food and flourished on vegetables and water. In Proverbs 25:16, we are warned not to overindulge in honey, lest we become sick.



These are not just dietary tips—they are calls to virtue. The desert fathers and monastic communities lived by rhythms of simplicity, moderation, and gratitude in their meals.

Clean eating revives that sacred rhythm in our modern lives. Simplicity in food creates space for clarity of thought and depth of prayer.



## Reflection

How can I draw from monastic traditions of simplicity in my own meals?

# Chapter 6

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## Overcoming Gluttony and Scrupulosity



***“For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.” – Galatians 5:1***

Gluttony isn't just overeating—it's seeking comfort, escape, or meaning in food rather than in God. On the other end of the spectrum, scrupulosity can turn food choices into a spiritual anxiety. Both are distortions. The virtue of temperance is the antidote. It allows us to eat with freedom, not fear.



When you fall into excess or obsession, remember: God meets you with mercy. Rebuilding the body doesn't demand perfection—it invites progress, guided by grace.

Every small victory over gluttony is a step toward freedom. Every surrender of scrupulosity is an invitation to trust.



## Reflection

Where do I  
need healing or  
mercy in my  
relationship  
with food?

# **Chapter 7** Creating a Catholic Clean Eating Plan

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***“Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.” – Proverbs 16:3***

Start with prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your food choices.



## ***Then:***

- Plan meals around God-made foods: vegetables, fruits, grains, nuts, lean proteins.
- Shop with virtue: support ethical farms, avoid waste, and give thanks for provision.
- Prep with intention—make space in your week to cook and savor.
- Eat in community when possible. Sharing food builds the Body of Christ.
- Honor your hunger, and listen when you're full. Temperance lives in that awareness.
- Include fasting on Fridays or Ember Days as spiritual training for the will.
- Celebrate with feasting on Sundays and holy days—let joy sanctify your table.

## **Reflection**

How can I invite the Holy Spirit into my grocery list and prep time?



# **Chapter**

## **8**

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# **Fasting, Feasting, and the Liturgical Year**



***“For everything there is a season... a time to fast, and a time to feast.” – Ecclesiastes 3:1 (adapted)***

The liturgical calendar is a divine rhythm for clean eating and temperance. In Lent and Advent, we fast not just to deny ourselves, but to make room for Christ. During Easter and Christmas, we feast as a foretaste of Heaven.

These rhythms are training grounds for virtue. They teach us to let go and to receive.

Clean eating within this context becomes a sacred practice—not because we eat perfectly, but because we eat prayerfully, with an eye toward eternity.



## Reflection

What does joyful feasting look like in my life without overindulgence?



# ***Conclusion***

**Nourish to Flourish in Christ**

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“

***“I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.” — John 10:10***



Clean eating is a way to say "yes" to the life God offers. It's a small but powerful act of obedience. Through temperance, we gain the freedom to live beyond our cravings and build lives of purpose, health, and holiness.

Rebuilding the body isn't just about what's on your plate—it's about who you're becoming. Let your meals nourish your strength. Let your strength serve the Kingdom. Let your body become a living testimony to the glory of God.

## **Reflection**

How can I let go of control and trust God with my health and healing?

“

***Eat with intention.  
Live with virtue.  
Rebuild with Christ.***

**-MARTY LANGLOIS**



# Additional Resources



## Books

Delay & Pray by, Beth Bubik; Clean Eating for Dummies; Back to Virtue by, Peter Kreeft

## Scripture

1 Corinthians 10:31; Proverbs 25:28; John 6:35; Psalm 34:8; Matthew 5:6; Daniel 1:8; Galatians 5:1; Proverbs 16:3; Ecclesiastes 3:1

## Catholic Prayers

Lectio Divina; Our Father; The Catholic Prayer Before Meals (Bless us O Lord...)

## Catholic Podcasts

Rebuild the Body; The Catholic Coaching Podcast; Cycles and Sanctity; The Catholic Fasting Coach




# Next Steps

This journey doesn't end here. Here are a few simple ways to keep growing:

- Pray before meals – Ask for grace and thank God for the gift of food.
- Pick one habit – Start with something small: drink more water, cook one meal from scratch, or observe one day of fasting.
- Reflect and journal – Revisit the Scripture meditations and questions to stay grounded.
- Share the journey – Invite a friend or faith group to join you.
- Keep going with grace – When you fall, get up. God is with you in every step.

For more faith-filled fitness inspiration, visit [www.catholicfitnesscoaching.com](http://www.catholicfitnesscoaching.com) or connect with me through The Rebuild the Body podcast.

Let's keep rebuilding—body and soul.



**THE 4 CATHOLIC  
TEMPERAMENTS &  
WORKING OUT:**  
DEVELOPING A HEALTHY BODY IMAGE AND  
GETTING FIT

**Did you know your Catholic temperament affects  
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temperament can help you find a  
workout routine that's sustainable,  
fulfilling, and spiritually enriching

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