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## **April Recollection Kit (2021)**

A recollection is a “mini-retreat,” a few hours of quiet prayer when we look at our lives in God's presence. As we continue to face a global pandemic, this "recollection-at-home" can help us spend an hour or two in loving conversation with God, right where we are.

04/05/2021

A monthly recollection is a chance to step back from the whirlwind of

daily tasks for a few hours of quiet prayer spent looking at God, the world, and ourselves. It is not always easy to find time to pray, but it is always worthwhile.

The best way to enjoy this recollection is to find a time that you can commit to spending with our Lord, and a calm place—free of distractions—where you can pray. Set aside other tasks, switch your phone to “do not disturb,” and grab a notebook. It is a good idea to make note of resolutions and ideas throughout the recollection, but the most important thing is to put yourself in front of our Lord, to look at Him and to let Him look at you.

### I. Introduction

### II. Meditation: Loving Much (30 minutes)

### III. Spiritual Reading (10-15 minutes)

IV. Holy Rosary (20 minutes)

V. Examination of Conscience (5-10 minutes)

VI. Meditation: Easter and the Invincible Love of God (30 minutes)

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## I. INTRODUCTION

"I arose and now I am still with you,' he says to each of us. My hand upholds you. Wherever you may fall, you will always fall into my hands. I am present even at the door of death. Where no one can accompany you further, and where you can bring nothing, even there I am waiting for you, and for you I will change darkness into light" (Homily of Pope Benedict XVI, Easter 2007).

"It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2:20). We no

longer stand against or even beside each other: He passes through every door. This is the reality of Baptism: he, the Risen One, comes to you and joins his life with yours, drawing you into the open fire of his love. You become one, with him and with each other.

"At first this can sound rather abstract and unrealistic. But the more you live the life of the baptized, the more you can experience the truth of these words. Believers – the baptized – are never truly cut off from one another. Continents, cultures, social structures or even historical distances may separate us. But when we meet, we know one another on the basis of the same Lord, the same faith, the same hope, the same love, which form us. Then we experience that the foundation of our lives is the same. We experience that in our inmost depths we are anchored in the same identity, on the

basis of which all our outward differences, however great they may be, become secondary. Believers are never totally cut off from one another. We are in communion because of our deepest identity: Christ within us. Thus faith is a force for peace and reconciliation in the world: distances between people are overcome, in the Lord we have become close (cf. Eph 2:13)" (Homily of Pope Benedict XVI, Easter 2008).

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## **II. MEDITATION**

Mary Magdalene's encounter with the Risen Christ can be a model for us to deal with loss, love God, and put prayer first. You can listen to this meditation [here](#):

The most important part of the meditation is your personal conversation with our Lord. You can

use the priest's prayer to inspire your own.

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### III. SPIRITUAL READING

“You write,” says St. Josemaria in *The Way*, pt. 117: “In my spiritual reading I build up a store of fuel. It looks like a lifeless heap, but I often find that my memory, of its own accord, will draw from it material which fills my prayer with life and inflames my thanksgiving after Communion.”

We suggest spending 10-15 minutes reading "Love in Marriage," Chapter IV of the apostolic exhortation *The Joy of Love (Amoris Laetitia)* or "The promises we make to children," part of Pope Francis' catechesis for families in October 2015.

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## **IV. HOLY ROSARY**

The Holy Rosary is an ancient Christian prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary, our Mother, asking her to pray for all her children in our time of need. You can find a description of how to pray the Rosary [here](#), and download the Litany of Loreto (traditionally prayed at the end of the Rosary) [here](#).

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## **V. EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE**

The questions below can help us consider in the presence of God how we've responded to His love in our acts and omissions. It may help to begin by invoking the Holy Spirit and to end with an act of contrition, expressing our sorrow for our sins and imploring God's grace to return and remain close to Him. The act of contrition can be any we like,

including one as simple as Peter's words to Jesus after the Resurrection: *"Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you"* (Jn 21:17).

1. *"Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you'"* (Jn 20:19-20). Do I face the challenges of each day with peace? How do I try to create an atmosphere of serenity around me, with my spouse, children, colleagues, etc.?

2. *"Whoever is born of God overcomes the world"* (1 Jn 5:4). What is my attitude in front of the challenges of our society? Is Jesus always the point of reference in my commitment to transform the world?

3. "A good sportsman doesn't fight to gain just one victory, and that at the first attempt. He has to build himself up for it, training over a long period of time, calmly and confidently. He keeps trying again and again, and if he doesn't succeed at the first

attempt, he keeps on trying with determination until the obstacle is overcome." (The Forge, n. 169). How do I have recourse to the sacraments to increase my desire to continue walking with our Lord, with the certainty that he is going to help me again and again every day?

4. The Resurrection of Christ gives us new life. How is this reality transformed into joy and optimism in my family when difficulties arise?

5. *"Hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us"* (Rm 5:5). What projects in my family, professional and social life can I entrust more fully to the Holy Spirit, so that he may help me bring them to reality?

6. *"While they were conversing and discussing, Jesus himself came and walked with them"* (Lk 24:15-16). Do I share my life with Christ? Do I ask

the Holy Spirit for help so that my practices of piety may be an encounter with the living Jesus?

*7. "He went in to stay with them. And when they were at table together, he took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him" (Lk 24: 29-31). Do I try not to lose my amazement at the Eucharist? How do I share this great gift with my family?*

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## **VI. MEDITATION**

The Resurrection proves that God's love for us is undefeated and truly invincible. In any battle that God wants us to fight, we can be fully confident of eventual and joyful victory. You can listen to this meditation [here](#):

The most important part of the meditation is your personal conversation with our Lord. You can use the priest's prayer to inspire your own.

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