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December Recollection Kit (2020)

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

12/04/2020

A monthly recollection is a chance to step back from the whirlwind of daily tasks in a few hours of quiet prayer spent looking at God, the world, and ourselves. It is not always easy to find time to pray, especially in the unusual circumstances and additional work that comes with the pandemic and the coming Christmas holidays, 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: Stay Alert (30 minutes)

III. Spiritual Reading (10-15 minutes)

IV. Holy Rosary (20 minutes)

V. Examination of Conscience (5-10 minutes)

VI. Meditation: Can I Be a Contemplative in this World? (30 minutes)

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I. INTRODUCTION

In Advent, we remember God's promises to us and see them carried out. The Holy Trinity continues to save and love us in a surprising, wonderful way in the Incarnation of the Son of God. We are made children of God and He invites us to deepen this sense of divine filiation. Advent helps us to tap in to the

sacred humanity of Jesus, the Divine Person made Son of Mary and Joseph, perfect God and perfect man.

As we contemplate the infant Jesus in need of a family and a home, we can also give thanks for our own families and ask Jesus, Mary, and Joseph to help us renew our own lives of joyful self-giving at home.

II. MEDITATION

The Gospel (Mark 13:33-37) speaks about being alert and ready for the coming of the master. How does this actually happen in our life? You can listen to this meditation about staying awake [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.

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 part of "Marriage, A Christian Vocation" or "The Christian Vocation," both homilies of St. Josemaria.

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) with the new invocations to

Mary recently added by Pope Francis [here](#).

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. Do I thank God for the gift of divine filiation? Do I recognize God as a Father full of merciful love who has sent His Son to save us? Do I ask the Holy Spirit to help me live as a child of God?

2. Do I ask Jesus to help me to approach God the Father with complete trust? Do I see the model of my holiness in His words and deeds? *"All who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God"* (Rom 8:14). Do I invoke the Holy Spirit to call on my Father God with confidence?

3. Do I read and meditate on the Gospel every day? In my prayer, do I contemplate my life beside our Lord's? Do I invite my friends to read the Gospel?

4. Am I amazed by our Lord's hidden life, which illuminates my life as an ordinary Christian in the middle of the world? Do I realize that the hidden work of Jesus is a call to live face to face with God, with joy and generosity?

5. God always wants the best for me. Am I willing to do the will of my Father in everything, as Jesus did? Have I given my heart completely to

God? Is there anything that does not correspond to my condition as a Christian and prevents me from being closer to God?

6. The Blessed Virgin exclaims in the Magnificat: *"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior"* (Lk 1:46-47). Do I see Advent as a time of joyful preparation for the coming of the Lord?

7. *"And they came in haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger"* (Lk 2:16). How am I fostering an atmosphere of preparation for Christmas at home?

8. The Gospel says that Jesus lived subject to Joseph and Mary, and that his mother *"kept all these things carefully in her heart"* (Lk 2:51). Do I ask Mary, Mother of Jesus and our Mother, to help me purify my heart so that I may live Christmas joyfully?

VI. MEDITATION

Our Lord does not only want us to be nice or to get things done. He wants us to be contemplatives, people in constant conversation with Him.

How can we do that? You can listen 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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