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January Recollection Kit (2025)

A recollection is time spent in silence with God, talking to Him and “recollecting” who we are before Him. This is a package of resources for a recollection in your own home, including a downloadable PDF.

01/01/2025

“O Lord, here I am beginning, beginning, always just beginning! I will try, however, to push forward each day with all my heart.’ May He

bless those efforts of yours” (*The Forge*, no. 378).

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Introduction

In this new Jubilee year, the Pope invites us to be “tangible signs of hope” (*Spes non confundit*, no. 10) for our world, caring for people who need love in our own families, offering forgiveness and serving our friends, and spearheading or joining social initiatives that foster peace and justice.

This recollection is an opportunity to reflect on the reasons for our hope and the way we bring it to others: “At times we may encounter complicated moments in our life. But we can always turn our eyes to the Child Jesus and entrust to Him our concerns and desires. We are never alone at any moment, because Christ wants to share his peace with us – a peace that, as happened in Bethlehem, does not always mean the absence of problems, but rather the certainty of faith in God’s love for

each of us. This is the foundation of our hope” (Msgr. Fernando Ocáriz, Message, 16-XII-2024).

A recollection is a period of time dedicated exclusively to God, with periods of mental and vocal prayer (the meditations and recitation of the Rosary), spiritual reading, and silence with God. As the name implies, it’s an opportunity to recollect who we are in front of our loving Father, God, and to bring our whole selves and full attention to Him.

You may wish to pause between the different parts of the recollection to allow each one to make an impression. The Holy Spirit speaks quietly.

Paying full attention can be a challenge. It may be helpful to find a quiet place to sit, stand, or kneel before starting; somewhere you’re not likely to be interrupted. Take some time to turn off any background

noises, pause your notifications, and calm the chatter in your own mind. It can be helpful to make paper or digital notes to focus in the moment and to be able to come back to any ideas the Holy Spirit inspires later on.

Spiritual Reading

In “Spes non confundit,” (“Hope does not disappoint”), Pope Francis unpacks the central message of the Jubilee of 2025.

Afterwards, you can spend a few minutes with the New Testament. Click for today’s Gospel and a short commentary.

Spiritual reading means thoughtfully reading spiritual texts like Sacred Scripture and the lives and writings of the saints in order to “build up a store

of fuel” that later feeds our prayer (cf. The Way, no. 117).

Meditation: Beginning and Beginning Again

“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am humble and lowly in heart and you will find rest for your souls” (Mt 11:29). What does it mean to be ready to learn and convert at the start of a new year?

A meditation is short period of guided mental prayer with the preacher, a priest, talking to God out loud on a set topic, usually a theme from the Gospels. What matters most is your personal conversation with God. The preacher’s goal is to inspire your prayer by giving you light and moving your heart. You may find it helpful to spend more time on certain ideas, follow your own train of thought

when the priest's words inspire something particular in you, or choose an image to keep pondering after the recollection or in your next time of prayer.

Examination of Conscience

- Does Jesus' charity for everyone — just and unjust, healthy and sick — encourage me? Do I try to care for all the people around me without excluding anyone, fighting temptations to resentment or bitterness?
- “Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart,” our Lord tells us (Mt 11:29). Have I experienced Jesus' peace and serenity? Do I ask Him to help me not to lose patience in the face of contradictions, great or small? Do I know how to rest in

the Lord and confidently place my tribulations in His hands?

- The Lord stopped to attend to the needs of each person: the woman with hemorrhage, Jairus, the Samaritan woman. Do I try to notice what others need? Do I try to set aside time to talk calmly with my spouse and each of my children? Do I listen to them?
- “Truly, I say to you, whatever you did to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me” (Mt 25:40). Do I see the Lord in others, especially in the sick?
- “When you stand up to pray, forgive anyone against whom you have a grievance” (Mk 11:25). Do I ask forgiveness when I make mistakes or offend others? Do I know how to forgive with all my heart, repeatedly? Do I realize that God has forgiven me much

more than I have to forgive others?

- In the Holy Mass we participate in Jesus' sacrifice: He gives himself to the Father out of love for all men. Do I struggle to love the people I find it more difficult to get along with, as Jesus teaches? Do I allow myself to remain cold or distant with certain people?
- Through baptism, God takes possession of our soul, and helps us to fulfill his command to love one another "as He has loved us" (Jn 13:34). Do I show my love for my family in concrete ways and work with everyone in the family to take care of our home? Am I ready to sacrifice myself joyfully for others? Do I trust that the grace of the sacrament of marriage helps me love my spouse?
- Philip tells Nathanael about his encounter with Jesus and

invites him to meet Jesus himself: “Come and see” (Jn 1:44). Do I have many friends? Do I share the joyful wonder of my personal encounter with Jesus, perfect God and perfect man, with my friends? Do I pray for them regularly?

- “And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary, his mother, and they fell down and worshipped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh” (Mt 2:11). Do I see Jesus Christ in those who are most in need, and do I try to help them? Have I spent money wisely and proportionately over Christmas?
- “To be happy, what you need is not an easy life but a heart which is in love” (*Furrow*, 795). Do I set my heart on the goods I have or want to have? Can others see the value of poverty

in the example I set? In times of scarcity or economic difficulty, do I seek peace by turning to Jesus on the Cross?

- Do I ask Holy Mary to help me put my hope in the Lord?

Pope Francis describes examining our conscience as “the good habit of calmly rereading what happens in our day, learning to note in our evaluations and choices what we give most importance to, what we are looking for and why, and what we eventually find” (Audience, 5-X-2022). The questions in this examination of conscience are related to the themes of this month’s recollection and are meant to help us look past the surface and ask God how we have responded to his love for us. It can help to start by calling on the Holy Spirit, asking for light, and to end with an act of contrition, expressing sorrow for our sins and asking for help to stay close to God.

Holy Rosary

The Rosary is a traditional Catholic prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary, our Mother, asking her to pray for all her children in their time of need. Through the different prayers that make up the Rosary, we tell our Lady that we love her and we contemplate Jesus' life.

Click to go to a [guide for praying the Rosary](#).

Meditation: Life in Nazareth

The Holy Family (Jesus, Mary, and Joseph) teaches us not only to accept but to embrace God's will with love.

In this meditation, the preacher is praying aloud in order to inspire your personal conversation with God.

The touchstone of true prayer is that it changes us and makes us better, but not being able to carry your resolutions out immediately or even discovering new weaknesses is not a reason for discouragement: we grow over time, and falls can help us be humble and grateful to God. With perseverance in prayer, you will notice more peace and joy throughout the day, because you are sure God is with you even when the struggle is difficult.