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February Recollection Kit (2022)

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 guide can help us spend an hour or two in loving conversation with God, right where we are.

02/05/2022

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: Fortitude to Follow Jesus (30 minutes)

III. Spiritual Reading (10-15 minutes)

IV. Holy Rosary (20 minutes)

V. Examination of Conscience (5-10 minutes)

VI. Meditation: Vocation and Charity (30 minutes)

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I. INTRODUCTION

"There can be any number of theories about what constitutes holiness, with various explanations and distinctions. Such reflection may be useful, but nothing is more enlightening than turning to Jesus' words and seeing his way of teaching the truth. Jesus explained with great simplicity what it means to be holy when he gave us the Beatitudes. The Beatitudes are like a Christian's identity card. So if anyone asks:

“What must one do to be a good Christian?”, the answer is clear. We have to do, each in our own way, what Jesus told us in the Sermon on the Mount. In the Beatitudes, we find a portrait of the Master, which we are called to reflect in our daily lives.

"The word 'happy' or 'blessed' thus becomes a synonym for 'holy.' It expresses the fact that those faithful to God and his word, by their self-giving, gain true happiness" (Pope Francis, *Gaudete et exsultate*, 63-64).

"The Beatitudes depict the countenance of Jesus Christ and portray his charity. They express the vocation of the faithful associated with the glory of his Passion and Resurrection; they shed light on the actions and attitudes characteristic of the Christian life; they are the paradoxical promises that sustain hope in the midst of tribulations; they proclaim the blessings and

rewards already secured, however dimly, for Christ's disciples; they have begun in the lives of the Virgin Mary and all the saints" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1717).

The beatitude we are promised confronts us with decisive moral choices. It invites us to purify our hearts of bad instincts and to seek the love of God above all else. It teaches us that true happiness is not found in riches or well-being, in human fame or power, or in any human achievement - however beneficial it may be - such as science, technology, and art, or indeed in any creature, but in God alone, the source of every good and of all love (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1723).

II. MEDITATION

A disciple is a person who follows and imitates the Master. What are we willing to do to be close to Jesus? 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.

This meditation is part of the podcast "In Your Presence." You can subscribe to that podcast on Apple Podcasts, Breaker, Castbox, Google Podcasts, Overcast, Pocket Casts, RadioPublic, or Spotify.

III. SPIRITUAL READING

“You write,” says St. Josemaria in *The Way*, no. 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 "Activity that sanctifies," points 25-31 of Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation *Gaudete et exsultate*. Afterward, you can spend a few minutes with the Gospel, reading, for instance, St. Luke's account of the preaching of the Beatitudes in chapter 6 of his Gospel.

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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](#).

V. EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

1. "*Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy*" (Mt 5:7). Does the experience of God's infinite mercy towards me move me to have "*a heart of flesh*" rather than "*a heart of stone*" (Ezek 36:26) towards those around me?

2. "*Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God*" (Mt 5:8). Do I protect and strengthen my heart in order to see people as God does, in all their integrity and dignity? Do I foster love and affection with the people around me?

3. "*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God*" (Mt 5:9). Are people at ease in my home? With what small actions do I cultivate serenity, welcome, and joyfulness?

4. "Perhaps we were blind, or deaf, or paralysed; perhaps we had the stench of death, and the word of our Lord has lifted us up from our abject state" (*Friends of God*, 262). Do I thank God for all that he has done for me? Am I convinced that he can do the same for other souls?

5. "*We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, whom he has called according to his purpose*" (Rom 8:28). Do I try to discover God's provident hand in all events, including unexpected ones? Do I ask our Lord for help to grow interiorly — in charity, hope and faith — under adverse circumstances?

6. *"Rejoice in the Lord always; I tell you again, rejoice"* (Phil. 4:4). Do I foster in my soul the joy of being a child of God, and try to pass it on to others?

7. *"Jesus said to him, 'I will come and heal him.' But the centurion answered him, 'Lord, I am not worthy that you should come into my house'"* (Mt 8:7-8). Am I bold like the centurion of Capernaum, who asks for a miracle with vibrant, living faith? Do I ask this same faith for my spouse, children, and friends?

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VI. MEDITATION

God has a plan for us. Listen to this meditation about vocation and purpose 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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