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January Recollection Kit

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.

01/08/2022

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: A Love Beyond Rights and Duties: Jesus' Baptism (30 minutes)

III. Spiritual Reading (10-15 minutes)

IV. Holy Rosary (20 minutes)

V. Examination of Conscience (5-10 minutes)

VI. Meditation: A Mother for God (30 minutes)

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I. INTRODUCTION

"We have always spoken of how God dwells in the hearts of those living in his grace. Today we can add that the Trinity is present in the temple of marital communion. [...] The Lord's presence dwells in real and concrete families, with all their daily troubles and struggles, joys and hopes. Living in a family makes it hard for us to feign or lie; we cannot hide behind a mask. If that authenticity is inspired by love, then the Lord reigns there, with his joy and his peace. The spirituality of family love is made up

of thousands of small but real gestures. In that variety of gifts and encounters which deepen communion, God has his dwelling place. This mutual concern “brings together the human and the divine”, for it is filled with the love of God. In the end, marital spirituality is a spirituality of the bond, in which divine love dwells.

"A positive experience of family communion is a true path to daily sanctification and mystical growth, a means for deeper union with God. The fraternal and communal demands of family life are an incentive to growth in openness of heart and thus to an ever fuller encounter with the Lord. [...] My predecessor Benedict XVI pointed out that “closing our eyes to our neighbor also blinds us to God”, and that, in the end, love is the only light which can “constantly illuminate a world grown dim.” If only we “love

one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us” (1 Jn 4:12).

"Those who have deep spiritual aspirations should not feel that the family detracts from their growth in the life of the Spirit, but rather see it as a path which the Lord is using to lead them to the heights of mystical union." (Pope Francis, *Amoris laetitia*, nn. 314-316)

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II. MEDITATION

In Jesus's Baptism we see Jesus doing something unnecessary and in a sense unfair. He takes on the role of a sinner, allowing John to baptize him with his baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. At the beginning of his public life, this event foreshadows our redemption at the end of Jesus's life--his death on the cross. Jesus loves us by lowering

himself, forgetful of his status and his rights, giving himself in a way that is beyond all necessity and human logic. Christian life is an invitation to do the same. 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 "Come Away by Yourselves". You can subscribe to that podcast on [Apple Podcasts](#), [Google Podcasts](#), [Spotify](#), [Pocket Casts](#), [Podcast Addict](#), or wherever you listen to your podcasts.

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 Pope Francis' letter to married couples. Afterward, you can spend a few minutes with the Gospel, reading, for instance, St. Luke's account of the Baptism of the Lord in chapter 3 of his Gospel.

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. "*You have received the Spirit of sonship by which we cry out: 'Abba, Father!'*" (Rom 8:15) How does the knowledge that God really loves me, as his child, show itself in the way I face problems? Am I convinced that he won't ever leave me on my own?

2. "God is a Father — your Father! — full of warmth and infinite love. — Call him Father frequently and tell him, when you are alone, that you love him, that you love him very much!, and that you feel proud and strong because you are his son" (*The Forge*, n. 331). How can I call on the Lord's tenderness and infinite love now?

3. "*I will be with you always, even to the end of the time*" (Mt 28:20). Do I realize that Jesus makes this promise to me, personally, too? Does this consideration give me peace and security in my daily life?

4. "*Have among yourselves the mind of Christ Jesus*" (Phil 2:5). Do I use my daily Gospel reading to get to know and love Jesus more, and to ask him to identify my heart more with his?

5. When there was no wine, the mother of Jesus said to him, "*They have no wine*" (Jn 2:3). "Mary, teacher of prayer. See how she asks her Son, at Cana. And how she insists, confidently, with perseverance. And how she succeeds. Learn from her" (*The Way*, n. 502). In the face of which needs might I turn to my Mother, the Blessed Virgin, asking for help to pray with daring and simplicity?

6. At Cana, Jesus performed the first of his miracles "*and his disciples believed in him*" (Jn 2:11). How do I make it easier for God to work through my actions and words?

VI. MEDITATION

God allows Mary and all of us to love him in the Christ child just as He has always loved us: with a mother's heart. 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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