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# Monthly Recollection for September

Resources to help you spend quiet time in reflection and conversation with God: meditation podcasts, spiritual reading, and examination of conscience.

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The best way to use these resources is to set aside an hour or two in a calm place —free of distractions— where you can pray. It is a good idea

to take note of inspirations and resolutions during the recollection. Above all, what is important is to place oneself in front of our Lord, to look at Him and to let Him look at you.

## I. Introduction

## II. Meditation: Making Christ our Center (30 minutes)

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

## IV. Holy Rosary (20 minutes)

## V. Examination of Conscience (5-10 minutes)

## VI. Meditation: When Prayer Finds Us (30 minutes)

# I. INTRODUCTION

"Newness often makes us fearful, including the newness which God brings us, the newness which God asks of us. We are like the Apostles in

the Gospel: often we would prefer to hold on to our own security, to stand in front of a tomb, to think about someone who has died, someone who ultimately lives on only as a memory, like the great historical figures from the past. We are afraid of God's surprises. Dear brothers and sisters, we are afraid of God's surprises! He always surprises us! The Lord is like that.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us not be closed to the newness that God wants to bring into our lives! Are we often weary, disheartened and sad? Do we feel weighed down by our sins? Do we think that we won't be able to cope? Let us not close our hearts, let us not lose confidence, let us never give up: there are no situations which God cannot change, there is no sin which he cannot forgive if only we open ourselves to him...

"Let the risen Jesus enter your life, welcome him as a friend, with trust: he is life! If up till now you have kept him at a distance, step forward. He will receive you with open arms. If you have been indifferent, take a risk: you won't be disappointed. If following him seems difficult, don't be afraid, trust him, be confident that he is close to you, he is with you and he will give you the peace you are looking for and the strength to live as he would have you do...

"Let us ask the Lord to give us a share in his Resurrection. May he open us to the newness that transforms, to the beautiful surprises of God. May he make us men and women capable of remembering all that he has done in our own lives and in the history of our world. May he help us to feel his presence as the one who is alive and at work in our midst. And may he teach us each day, dear brothers and sisters, not to look

among the dead for the Living One. Amen" (Pope Francis, homily, Easter Vigil 2013).

## II. MEDITATION

Jesus gave everything for us on the Cross, and stays with us in the Eucharist. What are we attached to? Listen to this meditation on detachment and temperance here:

Blessed Meditations · Making Christ Our Center (On Detachment and Temperance)

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 "Blessed Meditations." You can subscribe on SoundCloud.*

## 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 from Pope Francis' apostolic letter on the liturgical formation of the People of God, "Desiderio desideravi." Afterward, you can spend a few minutes with the New Testament, reading, for instance, the parable of the Good Samaritan from the Gospel of St. Luke.

#### **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**

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, weary from his journey, sat down at the well... A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink'"* (Jn 4:6-7). Am I aware that Jesus is also

on my journey "making himself available" to meet me, to quench my thirst (*Christ is Passing By*, n. 156)? Do I know that he is at my side, in my family, in my work, and in my moments of rest, both when I am alone and when I am with others?

2. The Samaritan woman said to Jesus, "*Lord, give me some of this water, so that I may not thirst or have to come all this way to draw it*" (Jn 4:15). How do I nourish myself with the living water of his Word, with the desire to know him better each day so as to love him more? As I read and listen to the Gospel, do I try to discover what God wants to tell me?

3. "*If you knew the gift of God...*" (Jn 4:10). Am I eager to accompany my friends towards a personal encounter with Christ? In what way do I follow the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to open out "like a fan to reach all souls" (*Furrow*, n. 193)?



4. Does contemplating Jesus' gentleness with the Samaritan woman lead me to foster affection for my loved ones and to have an attitude of respect and understanding toward them? How do I fill my heart with good desires, sentiments and feelings in order to cultivate this love and guard it in moments of difficulty, temptation or doubt?

5. *"Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house"* (Lk 19:5). Do I want to welcome God into my family life? Do I try to live a Christian lifestyle (with charity, justice, poverty, magnanimity, etc.) in my home?

6. *"Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything I give back four times as much"* (Lk 19:8). Am I generous in giving who I am and what I have to serve of others? How do I encourage

this generosity in my children from the time they are young?

7. Do I try to thank God for opportunities to contribute my talents, time, money, etc. to care for others? Do I actively seek to detach myself from that which prevents me from following the Lord with freedom?

## **VI. MEDITATION**

The Gospel shows us how Jesus turned to the Father in prayer after attending to the requests of the people around him. Listen to this meditation [here](#):

[Blessed Meditations](#) · [When Prayer Finds Us](#)

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  
"Blessed Meditations in Manhattan."  
You can subscribe to it on  
SoundCloud.*

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