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

08/04/2022

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: Preparing for the Assumption of Mary, our Mother (20 minutes)

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

## IV. Holy Rosary (20 minutes)

V. Examination of Conscience (5-10 minutes)

VI. Meditation: Humility, the Foundation of Greatness (30 minutes)

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## I. INTRODUCTION

"Friends, you were not made 'to get by,' to spend your days balancing duties and pleasures, you were made to soar upwards, towards the most genuine, true and beautiful desires that you cherish in your hearts, to love God and to serve your neighbour. Don't think that life's great dreams are as unattainable as the sky above. You were made to fly, to embrace the courage of truth and the beauty of justice, to 'elevate your moral temper, to be compassionate, to serve others and to build relationships' (cf. *Inunnguiniq Iq Principles* 3-4). To sow seeds of peace

and loving care wherever you are; to ignite the enthusiasm of those all around you; to keep pressing forward and not to flatten everything out.

"But – you might say – to live like that is harder than flying! Certainly, it is not easy, because there is a kind of hidden 'force of spiritual gravity' that tries to drag us down, paralyze our desires, and lessen our joy. Keep thinking of the arctic swallow that in Spanish we call a 'charrán.' It does not let head winds or sudden changes in temperature stop it from flying from one end of the earth to the other. At times, it chooses alternate routes, accepts detours, adapts to certain winds..., but it always has a clear goal and it always arrives at its destination. You will meet people who will try to discount your dreams, who will tell you to settle for less, to fight only for what is in your interest. Then you will have

to ask yourself: Why do I need to go out of my way for what other people do not believe in? Or again: How can I “soar” in a world that seems constantly to be dragged down by scandals, wars, fraud, injustice, environmental destruction, indifference towards those in need, disillusionment from those who should be giving an example? Faced with these questions, what is the answer?

"Here is what I would tell you: young people, you my brother, and you, my sister, you are the answer! Not just because once you give up, you have already lost, but because the future is even now in your hands. The community that gave you birth, the environment in which you live, the hopes of your peers, of those who, without even asking, expect from you the irreplaceable treasure that you can bring to history: all these things are in your hands, because

'each one of us is unique' (cf. *Principle 5*). The world you are living in is the treasure you have inherited: love it, even as God, who gave you life and its great joys, loved you and created all this great beauty for you. God never ceases to have confidence in you, not for a second. He believes in your talents. When you seek him, you will come to realize how the path he calls you to follow always goes upwards. You will realize this when you look up at the sky as you pray, and especially when you contemplate him on the cross. You will come to realize that Jesus, from the cross, never points his finger at you; he embraces you and encourages you, because he believes in you even at those times when you stop believing in yourself. So never lose hope, fight, give it your all, and you will not be sorry. Go forward on your journey, 'step by step towards the best' (cf. *Principle 6*). Set the navigator of your lives on a great

destination: upwards!" (Pope Francis, Address, July 29, 2022).

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## II. MEDITATION

Christians around the world are preparing to celebrate the solemnity of the Assumption. Mary is our Mother and can help us become other Christs in our world. 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 "Meditations in Manhattan." You can subscribe to it on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify, Pocket Casts, Stitcher, Podcast Addict, or wherever you listen to your podcasts.*

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### 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 "The Saints Next Door," from Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation *Gaudete et exsultate*. Afterward, you can spend a few minutes with the New Testament, reading, for instance, St. Luke's account of Mary's visitation to her cousin Elizabeth, the Gospel the Church offers us in the liturgy of the solemnity of the Assumption.

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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](#).

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## **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. *"A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars"* (Rev 12:1). Is the Assumption and the Coronation of the Virgin Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth a sign of hope for me, since she is associated with the victory of her Son?

2. Do I entrust my life and my family's to Mary's maternal mediation? Do I ask her to intercede for vocations for the Church and for the Work?

3. "Grant that, always attentive to the things that are above, we may merit to be sharers of her glory" (Collect of the Mass of the Assumption). Do I try to live in such a way that the fruits of

my actions contribute to the glory of God?

4. *"There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that belongs to me' "*(Lk 15:11-12). Contemplating the story of the prodigal son, do I realize that sin robs me of happiness and separates me from God?

5. *"When he came to his senses, he said to himself..."* (Lk 15:17). Do I ask the Holy Spirit for the light to see the reality of my life with the perspective of faith? Do I go to confession with the assurance that he is waiting for me and welcomes me with joy?

6. The older son *"was indignant and would not go in, but his father went out to persuade him"* (Lk 15:28). Do my own shortcomings help me to understand and forgive others and not judge? Do I try to dialogue with my spouse, avoiding arguments that

only lead us to distance ourselves from each other? Do I correct my children with affection and patience?

7. The father in the parable replied: "*Your brother was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and has been found*" (Lk 15:31). Do I ask the Lord for a big heart everyone — even those I find it hard to deal with or who have hurt me — finds room in? Do the others' achievements make me happy?

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## **VI. MEDITATION**

If we want to climb very high in our love of God and professional ambitions, we must have a deep foundation in humility. Humility opposes pride, which is the root of sin and complicates our lives; it helps us understand others, accept difficulties as opportunities to grow,

and forget ourselves for the sake of God and others. 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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