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November Recollection Kit (2023)

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.

11/03/2023

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: Living the Communion of the Saints (30 minutes)

III. Spiritual Reading (10-15 minutes)

IV. Holy Rosary (20 minutes)

V. Examination of Conscience (5-10 minutes)

VI. Meditation: Choosing God Above All Things (30 minutes)

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I. INTRODUCTION

"Today I would like to focus on an important article of faith that can enrich our Christian life and also shape our relationship with the saints and with our deceased loved ones in the best possible way: I am talking about the *communion of saints*. We often say, in the Creed, 'I believe in the communion of saints.' But if you ask what the communion of saints is, I remember as a child I used to answer immediately, 'Ah, the saints receive Communion.' It is something that... we do not

understand what we are saying.
What is the communion of saints? It is not the saints receiving Communion, it is not that. It is something else.

"What, then, is the communion of saints? The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* affirms: 'The communion of saints is the Church' (no. 946). What a beautiful definition this is! 'The communion of saints is the Church.' What does this mean? That the Church is reserved for the perfect? No. It means that it is the community of *saved sinners*. The Church is the community of saved sinners. This is a beautiful definition. No one can exclude themselves from the Church. We are all saved sinners. Our holiness is the fruit of God's love manifested in Christ, who sanctifies us by loving us in our misery and saving us from it. Thanks always to him we form one single body, says Saint Paul, in which Jesus is the head

and we are the members (cf. 1 Cor 12:12). This image of the Body of Christ and the image of the body immediately makes us understand what it means to be bound to one another in *communion*: 'If one member suffers,' writes Saint Paul, 'all suffer together; and if one member is honoured, all rejoice together. Now you are the body of Christ and, individually members of it' (1 Cor 12:26-27). This is what Paul says: we are all one body, all united through faith, through baptism, all in communion: united in communion with Jesus Christ. And this is the communion of saints.

"Dear brothers and dear sisters, the joy and sorrow that touch my life affect everyone, just as the joy and sorrow that touch the life of the brother and sister next to us also affect me. I cannot be indifferent to others, because we are all parts of

one body, in communion" (Pope Francis, Audience, 2-II-2022).

II. MEDITATION

In the month of November, we recall the deep bond we have - known as the communion of saints - with the three branches of the Church: the Church militant, the Church triumphant, and the Church suffering. Here on earth we are part of the Church militant, working out our salvation. We pray for the Church suffering, the souls in purgatory, undergoing final purification. And we enjoy the help and prayers of the Church triumphant, the souls in heaven. Let us deepen and foster these ties, supernatural bonds, rooted in our Lord Jesus Christ. 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.

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 Prelate of Opus Dei's letter on fraternity, from 16 February 2023. Afterward, you can spend a few minutes with the New Testament, reading, for instance, the beatitudes in St. Matthew's Gospel (the Gospel reading for All Saints' Day in liturgical year A).

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. *"The elect will see the face of God and bear his name on their foreheads"* (Rev 22:4). Do I seek Christ in the Tabernacle and in prayer? Do I discover his face in serving others or in caring for the sick?

2. "'For what does it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and suffers the loss of his own soul?' What use to

man are all the things of the earth, all that our intelligence and will can aspire to? What is the point of all that, if it is all to come to an end and sink out of sight; if all the riches of this world are mere theatre props and scenery, and if after all this there is eternity for ever, and ever, and ever?" (*Friends of God*, 200).

3. "*God himself will be with them and wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain, for all these things are passed away*" (Rev 21:3-4). How does the thought of God's love in heaven comfort and encourage me?

4. Does the conviction that God is counting on me to help many people get to heaven enthuse me? Am I aware that my spouse and family are part of my path to God?

5. "Jesus wants to reign first of all in your heart, in your heart" (*Christ is*

Passing By, 31). How do I let Christ live and reign in me and ask him to reign in my family?

6. Do I want to contribute, through my work and apostolate, in the "*recapitulation of all things in Christ*" (Eph 1:10)? Do I take an interest in what is happening in society and fulfill my civic duties? How can I make God's love more present in my environment?

7. Do I passionately love others' freedom in all matters of opinion, without provoking unnecessary confrontation or tension? How do I value the richness of getting to know different types of people? Do I realize how much I learn from them?

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VI. MEDITATION

Jesus was born in a stable, and warned his apostles how hard it is for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. To follow Christ, we must live a spirit of detachment from material things and even from our own likes and preferences. We must choose God above all things, allowing Christ to show us the way. 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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