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November Recollection Kit (2020)

A recollection is a “mini-retreat,” a few hours of quiet prayer in which we can look at our lives in the presence of God. As we continue to face a global pandemic, this guide for a “recollection-at-home” will help you spend an hour or two in loving conversation with God, right where you are.

11/14/2020

Who said you can't spend a few hours in quiet prayer in your very own home? Even if you are not with other people or cannot make it to an Opus Dei center, these materials can help you to do a "recollection" wherever you are. Find a quiet place that allows you to recollect interiorly, a few hours that you can set aside without distractions, and use the following kit.

I. Introduction

II. Meditation: Holiness and the Saints (30 minutes)

III. Spiritual Reading (10-15 minutes)

IV. Holy Rosary (20 minutes)

V. Examination of Conscience (5 minutes)

VI. Meditation: Working for Love (30 minutes)

I. INTRODUCTION

In November, the Church recommends that we consider the last things: death, judgement, hell, and heaven. For a Christian, death is nothing more than the door to *Life* with a capital letter. We are not afraid of it because our Lord, who we talk to every day and try to receive frequently in the Eucharist, is waiting for us there. Our life will not end at death; it will be transformed into a better one in which we will contemplate the God we love face-to-face.

With our heads in heaven and our feet on the ground, we cannot ignore the world and the very material realities that are the object of our sanctification. That is why in this recollection we will also meditate on work, through which we get closer to

our Lord and prepare for our entrance into His home. With our work we transform the world into a better one, more and more like the Heaven we so ardently desire.

A recollection is a “mini-retreat,” a few hours of quiet prayer in which we can look at our lives in the presence of God. It can be difficult to find this time in the rush of ordinary life, and now the extraordinary rhythm of life in this pandemic presents its own challenges — but 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

ourselves in front of our Lord, to look at Him and to let Him look at us.

II. MEDITATION (GUIDED PRAYER)

The month of November begins with the feast of All Saints, in which we celebrate and ask help from all our brothers and sisters in Heaven. In this meditation, we will consider how the path to Heaven is a path of happiness. You can listen [here](#):

[Opus Dei Ireland · Meditation for the Feast of All Saints](#)

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.

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 **this letter on All Saints' Day** from Mons. Javier Echevarría, then Prelate of Opus Dei, or **Christ's Death is the Christian's Life**, a homily of St. Josemaría.

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) with the new invocations to Mary recently added by Pope Francis **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. "Work in itself is not a penalty or a curse or a punishment: it is time for us Christians to shout from the rooftops that work is a gift from God" (*Christ Is Passing By*, no. 47). Am I passionate about shaping the world through my professional work? Do I know that through it I participate in Christ's redemptive

mission, even when I undergo pain and meet the Cross?

2. Do I know how to give my work a deep apostolic sense, seeing it as an instrument to serve souls? Do I finish my work well even when it is difficult, without leaving things half or poorly done?

3. Do I move through the world with the confidence of a beloved child? Do I take advantage of the opportunities my work offers me to share the source of my supernatural joy with others?

4. When I offer my work to God, do I also struggle to carry it out with love and to do the tasks entrusted to me with great respect for the dignity of the people it affects, love for their freedom, charity, justice, etc.?

5. "God, who is beauty and greatness and wisdom, declares that we are his, that we have been chosen as the

object of his infinite love. We need a strong life of faith to appreciate the wonder his providence has entrusted to us” (*Christ Is Passing By*, no. 32).

Do I try to discover the provident hand of my Father God in everything that happens to me? Do I transmit joy and serenity to those around me, commenting on the positive side of things, avoiding giving excessive importance to failures, and trying to encourage a vision of faith?

6. Does the thought of the happiness of Heaven fill me with hope to fight against what keeps me from being united to God now? When I feel discouraged, do I consider that God is even more determined than I am to take me to Heaven?

7. Does the reality that I will die one day help me to make the best use of the time God gives me? Do I understand that making the best use of time means living charity by

forgetting myself in service to God and others for His sake?

8. Do I realize that many small devotions to our Holy Mother Mary, such as the scapular, the Angelus, and the Hail Mary, prepare me to trust in her motherly protection at the time of my death?

9. “I ask the Mother of God to smile upon us if she wishes, if she can... She will indeed do so. Moreover, she will reward our generosity a thousandfold here on earth. A thousandfold, that’s what I am asking her for!” (*The Forge*, no. 281) Am I convinced that my Mother, the Virgin Mary, is pleased with the steps I am taking towards holiness, however small they may seem? Do I take refuge in her love for me?

VI. MEDITATION (GUIDED PRAYER)

The value of our work does not come from the type of work we do, but

from the love with which we do it. It is up to each of us to discover God in our ordinary daily activities. You can listen to the meditation [here](#):

[Opus Dei \(English\) · Recollection Nov 2020 Meditation 2 Working For Love](#)

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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