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December Recollection Kit (2021)

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.

12/08/2021

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: What Jesus Wants for His Birthday (30 minutes)

III. Spiritual Reading (10-15 minutes)

IV. Holy Rosary (20 minutes)

V. Examination of Conscience (5-10 minutes)

VI. Meditation: Jesus, King, Reign in My Heart (30 minutes)

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I. INTRODUCTION

"Let us make ourselves ready to celebrate Christmas by contemplating Mary and Joseph: Mary, the woman full of grace who had the courage to entrust herself totally to the Word of God; Joseph, the faithful and just man who chose to believe the Lord rather than listen to the voices of doubt and human pride. With them, let us walk together toward Bethlehem" (Pope

Francis, Angelus, December 22, 2013).

II. MEDITATION

What does Jesus want from us? Asking sincerely requires faith and real trust in God. You can listen to this meditation on preparing for Christmas, Jesus' birthday, 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.

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 St. Josemaria's homily "Marriage, a Christian Vocation." Afterward, you can spend a few minutes with the Gospel, reading, for instance, St. Luke's account of the Annunciation in chapter 1 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. "Advent is here. What a marvelous time in which to renew your desire, your nostalgia, your real longing for Christ to come — for him to come every day to your soul in the Eucharist. The Church encourages us: *Ecce veniet!* — He is about to arrive!" (*The Forge*, 548) How am I taking advantage of these days to renew my hope and seek a closer encounter with God, especially in the Eucharist?

2. "*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; they dwelt in a land and shadows of death, and a light shone on them*" (Is 9:1).

What aspects of my life could be filled more with God's light in this time of preparation for the Lord's coming?

3. Referring to Jesus, John the Baptist said: *"He must increase, and I must decrease"* (Jn 3:30). Do I also desire to let the Lord grow in me, in my life?

4. *"The Holy Spirit will descend upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you"* (Lk 1:35). How do I seek the light of the Holy Spirit in complex situations? How can I imitate Mary's availability?

5. *"I come to bring you good news of great joy: today in the city of David a Savior has been born to you, who is Christ the Lord"* (Lk 2:10). Does the arrival of a new Christmas fill me with hope, as it did the shepherds?

6. *"When a gentle silence enveloped everything and the night had reached the middle of its course, your almighty*

word burst forth from heaven" (Wis 18:14-15). Amid so much exterior noise, how can I find and protect the interior quiet that allows me to be with Mary, my Mother, and the Child Jesus?

7. "He has become so small — you see: a Child — so that you can approach him with confidence" (*The Way*, 94). Do I try to live Christmas with my family, simply, by adoring the Child together, singing Christmas carols, preparing the Nativity scene, carrying out works of mercy with other families, etc.?

VI. MEDITATION

Just before Advent, we ended the liturgical year with the feast of Christ the King. What does it mean to look forward to Jesus' coming? 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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