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February 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 "recollection-at-home" can help us spend an hour or two in loving conversation with God, right where we are.

02/12/2021

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: the Holy Mass (30 minutes)

III. Spiritual Reading (10-15 minutes)

IV. Holy Rosary (20 minutes)

V. Examination of Conscience (5-10 minutes)

VI. Meditation: Little Things (30 minutes)

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I. INTRODUCTION

"Yes," St. Josemaria preached in a homily in Lent of 1952, "God's grace can fill us this Lent, provided we do not close the doors of our heart. We must be well-disposed, we must really want to change; we cannot play with God's grace."

This February we begin the season of Lent, a period of penitential preparation for Easter. In this month's recollection, we ask for the

grace to open the doors of our hearts, to really want to change, in filial and loving conversations with the Most Holy Trinity, under the protection of Holy Mary and with the help of St. Joseph.

II. MEDITATION

The Holy Mass is an incredible gift from the God who loves us unconditionally. What can bring to Him in the Mass? You can listen to this meditation [here](#):

[Opus Dei \(English\) · Recollection Feb 2021 Med 1 Holy Mass](#)

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 a few chapters from this collection of Pope Francis' general audiences about the Holy Mass or the beginning of the Prelate of Opus Dei's October 28, 2020 letter.

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](#).

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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. "This is my body, which is given up for you. Do this in remembrance of me" (Mt 22:19). Am I aware of how great a gift the Eucharist, which God gives *me* and each of us, is? Do I participate in the Holy Mass and receive Holy Communion often?

2. "Whoever eats this bread will live forever" (Jn 6:58). Do I thank God after receiving him in the Eucharist? Do I treat Jesus as king, doctor, teacher and friend? Do I trust Him with my joys, sorrows and difficulties?

3. "For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Cor. 11:26). Am I aware that in the Holy Mass, the Sacrifice of Calvary is made

present for the benefit of humanity?
Do I try to be attentive and prayerful
as the celebration of the Mass
begins?

4. Do I seek God's forgiveness in the
sacrament of Confession on a
regularly basis, and more often when
I need it? When I can, do I try to help
others access this beautiful
sacrament before receiving
Communion?

5. The first disciples "continued
steadfastly in the apostles' teaching
and fellowship, in the breaking of
bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42).
Do I try to participate in Holy Mass
with my whole family? Do I pray for
them and for the whole Church, for
the Pope and the Bishops, for the
Work, for the people I know, and for
my own needs?

6. "The time is fulfilled and the
Kingdom of God is at hand; repent
and believe in the Gospel" (Mk 1:15).

Am I asking God for the grace to fall more in love with Him, especially during Lent? Does contemplating Christ's Passion move me to renew my desire not to sin anymore? Do I make atonement when I see that God is offended?

7. "But when you fast, perfume your head and wash your face, so that men will not know that you are fasting, but your Father, who is in secret, will reward you" (Mt 6:17-18). Do I look for small ways to sacrifice myself and make life more pleasant for others? Do I try to smile often? How do I react to difficulties?

8. "Bear with one another and forgive one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so do you also" (Col 3:13). Do I know how to let go of small quarrels and misunderstandings at home? Do I avoid quarreling in front of my

children so that they do not form the wrong judgment? Do I ask the guardian angels for help to discern what my spouse and my children need? Do I find it difficult to forgive?

9. "Whatever you do, do it heartily, as done for the Lord and not for men" (Col 3:23). In my job, do I try to finish my work well, for the love of God? Do I value of the hidden work that only God sees?

10. "Why do you worry about clothing? Look at the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, and I tell you that not even Solomon in all his glory could have clothed himself like one of them" (Mt 6:28-29). Am I too concerned about the things I have or want to have, buying the latest technology, or following trends? Do I know how to act temperately? Do I help my children to be responsible and encourage them to sacrifice

small comforts, preferences, and vanities from time to time? Do I pay attention to how they dress and help them to form an image that accurately reflects who they are?

11. The Gospel shows us Jesus having an intense conversation with a young man who "had many possessions," not afraid to ask him for a lot: "go, sell what you have... and come follow me" (Mk 10:17-23). Can others see the joy of a life generously given to God in the way I act? Do I talk about God to the people around me? Do I encourage others to show solidarity by giving some of their time to people in need? When I am afraid or ashamed to talk about God or live my faith, do I ask the guardian angels for help?

12. "Your own sword shall pierce" (Lk 2:35). Do I discover the presence of Our Lady, Mother of Jesus and our Mother, at Mass and

throughout my day, and do I love God's will as she does?

VI. MEDITATION

A journalist who asked Mother Teresa whether her vocation was to serve the poor was surprised to hear her answer, "No. My vocation is to belong to Christ... And because of that, I serve the poor." Our call to belong to Christ is made up of many small acts in specific moments. You can listen to this meditation on the great value of little things [here](#):

[Opus Dei \(English\) · Recollection Feb 2021 Med 2 Little Things](#)

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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