

opusdei.org

June Recollection Kit (2024)

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.

06/01/2024

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: Valuing Our Communion (30 minutes)

III. Spiritual Reading (10-15 minutes)

IV. Holy Rosary (20 minutes)

V. Examination of Conscience (5-10 minutes)

VI. Meditation: Gifted to Become Gifts (30 minutes)

I. INTRODUCTION

"Through the sacrament of the Eucharist, Jesus (...) shows us the bond that he willed to establish between himself and us, between his own person and the Church. Indeed, in the sacrifice of the Cross, Christ gave birth to the Church as his Bride and his body. A contemplative gaze "upon him whom they have pierced" (Jn 19:37) leads us to reflect on the causal connection between Christ's sacrifice, the Eucharist and the Church. The Church "draws her life from the Eucharist." Since the Eucharist makes present Christ's redeeming sacrifice, we must start by

acknowledging that "there is a causal influence of the Eucharist at the Church's very origins." The Eucharist is Christ who gives himself to us and continually builds us up as his body. Hence, in the striking interplay between the Eucharist which builds up the Church, and the Church herself which "makes" the Eucharist, the primary causality is expressed in the first formula: the Church is able to celebrate and adore the mystery of Christ present in the Eucharist precisely because Christ first gave himself to her in the sacrifice of the Cross. The Church's ability to "make" the Eucharist is completely rooted in Christ's self-gift to her. Here we can see more clearly the meaning of Saint John's words: "he first loved us" (1 Jn 4:19). For all eternity he remains the one who loves us first.

"This is why Christian antiquity used the same words, *Corpus Christi*, to designate Christ's body born of the

Virgin Mary, his eucharistic body and his ecclesial body. This clear datum of the tradition helps us to appreciate the inseparability of Christ and the Church. The Lord Jesus, by offering himself in sacrifice for us, in his gift effectively pointed to the mystery of the Church. It is significant that the Second Eucharistic Prayer, invoking the Paraclete, formulates its prayer for the unity of the Church as follows: "may all of us who share in the body and blood of Christ be brought together in unity by the Holy Spirit." These words help us to see clearly how the *res* of the sacrament of the Eucharist is the unity of the faithful within ecclesial communion. The Eucharist is thus found at the root of the Church as a mystery of communion.

"The Eucharist, as the sacrament of charity, has a particular relationship with the love of man and woman united in marriage. The mutual

consent that husband and wife exchange in Christ, which establishes them as a community of life and love, also has a eucharistic dimension. Indeed, in the theology of Saint Paul, conjugal love is a sacramental sign of Christ's love for his Church, a love culminating in the Cross, the expression of his "marriage" with humanity and at the same time the origin and heart of the Eucharist. For this reason the Church manifests her particular spiritual closeness to all those who have built their family on the sacrament of Matrimony. The family – the domestic Church – is a primary sphere of the Church's life, especially because of its decisive role in the Christian education of children. In this context, the Synod also called for an acknowledgment of the unique mission of women in the family and in society, a mission that needs to be defended, protected and promoted. Marriage and motherhood represent essential realities which

must never be denigrated" (Pope Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis: On the Eucharist*, 14-15 and 27).

II. MEDITATION

Jesus promises: "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day." How do we respond to this call to trust in God? Listen to this meditation here:

Blessed Meditations · Valuing Our Communions

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 "Blessed Meditations." You can subscribe on SoundCloud.

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 article "I Have Called You Friends," by Andrés Cárdenas, on fraternity and friendship, or Pope Francis' May 29, 2013 audience on the Church as the family of God. Afterward, you can spend a few minutes with the Gospel, reading, for

instance, the discourse on the Bread of Life in St. John's 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. "*Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent*" (Lk 24:29). Jesus Christ remained in the Eucharist out of love

for mankind. Do I listen and pray before the Tabernacle with the same fervent desire as the disciples of Emmaus?

2. *"I am the Bread of Life; he who comes to me shall never hunger, he who believes in me shall never thirst"* (Jn 6:35). I find my strength in the Eucharist. How can I live more fully by the Eucharist?

3. *"Devoutly I adore you, O hidden God"* (*Adoro te devote*). Do I try to adore the Lord present in the Eucharist? How can I share this desire with my family and friends?

4. *"Make me believe more and more in you, hope in you, and love you"* (*Adoro te devote*) How do I try to live in faith, hope and charity in my family and in my daily occupations?

5. *"If we love one another, God abides in us, and his love is made perfect in us"* (1 Jn 4:12). How can I grow in

love with those around me? Do I realize how much they need my understanding and encouragement?

6. Fraternity is expressed in friendship, "which achieves maturity when the good that is desired for the other person is their happiness, their faithfulness and their holiness" (Mons. Fernando Ocáriz, Pastoral Letter, 1-XI-2019, n. 14). How do my time, prayer, interests, affections, etc. manifest my friendships?

7. St. Josemaría told his children that he loved us "with the heart of a father and a mother" (Letter, 6-V-1945, no. 23). Do I feel strengthened by his affection and intercession? Do I try to accompany others with this affection and closeness? Do I know their needs?

VI. MEDITATION

God wants to make our hearts like his, and Jesus' prayer for unity — recounted in the Gospel — reveals what is in his heart. Listen to this meditation here:

Blessed Meditations · Gifted to Become Gifts

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 "Blessed Meditations." You can subscribe on SoundCloud.