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April Recollection Kit (2022)

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.

04/04/2022

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: Christ's Presence in Christians (30 minutes)

III. Spiritual Reading (10-15 minutes)

IV. Holy Rosary (20 minutes)

V. Examination of Conscience (5-10 minutes)

VI. Meditation: Purification, Penance, Conversion (30 minutes)

I. INTRODUCTION

“Et resurrexit tertia die secundum Scripturas: On the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures.’ Every Sunday, with the Creed, we renew our profession of faith in Christ's Resurrection, a surprising event which is the keystone of Christianity. Everything in the Church is understood on the basis of this great mystery which changed the course of history and becomes present in every Eucharistic celebration.

“However, there is one liturgical season in which this central reality of

the Christian faith is presented more vividly to the faithful, with its doctrinal richness and inexhaustible vitality, so that they may discover it ever better and live it more faithfully: it is the Easter Season. Every year, in the 'Most Holy Triduum of the Crucified, dead and Risen Christ,' as St Augustine calls it, the Church relives the last events of Jesus' earthly life in an atmosphere of prayer and penance: his condemnation to death, his ascent to Calvary carrying the Cross, his sacrifice for our salvation, being laid in the tomb. Then on the 'third day' the Church relives his Resurrection: it is the Passover, Jesus' passing from death to life in which the ancient prophecies were completely fulfilled. The entire liturgy of the Easter Season sings the certitude and joy of Christ's Resurrection.

“(...)It is important to reaffirm this fundamental truth of our faith whose

historical veracity is amply documented even if today, as in the past, there are many who in various ways cast doubt on it or even deny it. The enfeeblement of faith in the Resurrection of Jesus results in weakening the witness of believers. In fact, should the Church's faith in the Resurrection weaken, everything will come to a halt, everything will disintegrate. On the contrary, the adherence of heart and mind to the dead and Risen Christ changes the life and brightens the entire existence of people and peoples.

“Is it not the certainty that Christ is risen which instils courage, prophetic daring and perseverance in martyrs of every epoch? Is it not the encounter with the living Jesus that converts and fascinates so many men and women who from the beginnings of Christianity have continued to leave all things to follow him and put their own lives at the

service of the Gospel? 'If Christ has not been raised,' the Apostle Paul said, 'then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain' (1 Cor 15: 14). But he was raised!

“(...)And after his Ascension, Jesus also continued to be present among his friends as he had promised: 'Lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age' (Mt 28: 20). The Lord is with us, with his Church, until the end of time. Illumined by the Holy Spirit, the members of the early Church began to proclaim the announcement of Easter openly and fearlessly. And this announcement, passed on from one generation to the next, has come down to us and every year at Easter rings out with ever new power. (...) May Mary help us to be messengers of the light and joy of Easter for all our brethren” (Benedict XVI, General audience, March 26, 2008).

II. MEDITATION

"*Christ is alive.* This is the great truth which fills our faith with meaning. Jesus, who died on the cross, has risen." You can read or listen to "Christ's Presence in Christians," an Easter homily of St. Josemaria, [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*, 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 Pope Francis' homily for the celebration of the Sacrament of Penance and Act of Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on March 25, 2022. Afterward, you can spend a few minutes with the Gospel, reading, for instance, St. John's account of the Last Supper.

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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. Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "*Peace be with you*" (Jn 20:19-20). Do I face the challenges of each day with peace? How do I try to create an atmosphere of serenity around me, with my spouse, children, colleagues, etc.?
2. "*Whoever is born of God overcomes the world*" (1 Jn 5:4). What is my attitude when facing society's challenges? Is Jesus the constant point of reference in my commitment to transform the world?
3. "A good sportsman doesn't fight to gain just one victory, and that at the first attempt (...) He keeps trying again and again, and if he doesn't succeed at the first attempt, he keeps on trying

with determination until the obstacle is overcome" (*The Forge*, n. 169). How do I turn to the sacraments to increase my desire to continue walking with our Lord, with the certainty that he helps me again and again each day?

4. The Resurrection of Christ introduces us into a new life. How is this reality transformed into joy and optimism in my family when difficulties arise?
5. "*Hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us*" (Rom 5:5). What professional, social, or family projects can I entrust more fully to the Holy Spirit, so that he may bring them to completion?
6. "*While they were conversing and discussing, Jesus himself came and walked with them*" (Lk 24:15-16). Do I share my life

with Christ? Do I ask the Holy Spirit for help to take my practices of piety encounters with the living Jesus?

7. *"He went in to stay with them. And when they were at table together, he took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him"* (Lk 24:29-31). Do I allow myself to be amazed by the Eucharist? Do I try to share this great gift with my family?
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VI. MEDITATION

A deeper conversion means a turning away from ourselves and towards God and others. Our struggle to turn outwards involves promoting peace among family, friends and colleagues; praying

tirelessly for others; and seeking to do good for others in all circumstances. 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 that podcast on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify, Pocket Casts, Stitcher, Podcast Addict, or wherever you listen to your podcasts.