

recollect at home





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in the season of Lent

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Introduction

"All of us are pilgrims in this life; each of us is invited to stop and ask how our lives reflect this fact. Am I really on a journey, or am I standing still, not moving, either immobilized by fear and hopelessness or reluctant to move out of my comfort zone? Am I seeking ways to leave behind the occasions of sin and situations that degrade my dignity? It would be a good Lenten exercise for us to compare our daily life with that of some migrant or foreigner, to learn how to sympathize with their experiences and in this way discover what God is asking of us so that we can better advance on our journey to the house of the Father. This would be a good 'examination of conscience' for all of us wayfarers" (Pope Francis, Message for Lent 2025).



A recollection is a period of time dedicated exclusively to God, with periods of mental and vocal prayer (the meditations and recitation of the Rosary), spiritual reading, and silence with God. As the name implies, it's an opportunity to recollect who we are in front of our loving Father, God, and to bring our whole selves and full attention to Him.

You may wish to pause between the different parts of the recollection to allow each one to make an impression. The Holy Spirit speaks quietly.

Paying full attention can be a challenge. It may be helpful to find a quiet place to sit, stand, or kneel before starting; somewhere you're not likely to be interrupted. Take some time to turn off any background noises, pause your notifications, and calm the chatter in your own mind. It can be helpful to make paper or digital notes to focus in the moment and to be able to come back to any ideas the Holy Spirit inspires later on.

Spiritual Reading

In "Amoris Laetitia" nos. 93-110, Pope Francis writes about humility, a virtue that allows us to rejoice with others and to forgive.



Afterwards, you can spend a few minutes with the New Testament. Click for today's Gospel and a short commentary.



Spiritual reading means thoughtfully reading spiritual texts like Sacred Scripture and the lives and writings of the saints in order to "build up a store of fuel" that later feeds our prayer (cf. The Way, no. 117).

 15 min

Meditation

Lent is a time of reflection, repentance, and renewal.



A meditation is short period of guided mental prayer with the preacher, a priest, talking to God out loud on a set topic, usually a theme from the Gospels. What matters most is your personal conversation with God. The preacher's goal is to inspire your prayer by giving you light and moving your heart. You may find it helpful to spend more time on certain ideas, follow your own train of thought when the priest's words inspire something particular in you, or choose an image to keep pondering after the recollection or in your next time of prayer.

L 30 min

Examination of Conscience

Our Lord gives us the gift of Lent each year, a time of prayer and penance to prepare for Easter. In this Jubilee year, entitled, "Hope does not disappoint," in which aspects of my life is the Lord asking me to turn my heart toward Him so that He can renew my faith and strengthen my hope?

"Pray then like this: Our Father..." (Mt 6:9). Do I enjoy my moments of dialogue with God, telling him what has happened to me, how I feel, what my hopes and dreams are, what my loved ones need, etc.? Do I really believe that God is my Father?

"But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is in

secret, and your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you" (Mt 6:6). In my prayer, do I try to speak from the depths of my heart to address our Lord? How do I foster recollection in order to dialogue peacefully with Jesus?

"Christian life is a continuous beginning again each day. It renews itself over and over. Christ gives us his risen life, he rises in us, if we become sharers in his cross and his death" (Christ is Passing By, no. 114). How can I accompany our Lord during this Lent? Do I live fasting and abstinence knowing that they are an invitation to remember that the food that satisfies man's hunger and thirst is not material, but God Himself?


"While he was yet far away, his father saw him and was moved with compassion and ran to

meet him, embraced him and kissed him" (Lk 15:20). God is continually waiting for us. Do I seek to turn with hope to the Lord's mercy, knowing that confession "fills us with joy and strength" (Friends of God, no. 214)?

In this Jubilee Year of Hope, the Church reminds us that the hope that "does not disappoint" is founded on the love flowing from the Heart of Jesus. How can I embody this hope in my daily actions, bearing witness to God's love and mercy in my environment?

Pope Francis describes examining our conscience as "the good habit of calmly rereading what happens in our day, learning to note in our evaluations and choices what we give most importance to, what we are looking for and why, and what we eventually find" (Audience, 5-X-2022). The questions in this examination of conscience are related to the themes of this month's

recollection and are meant to help us look past the surface and ask God how we have responded to his love for us. It can help to start by calling on the Holy Spirit, asking for light, and to end with an act of contrition, expressing sorrow for our sins and asking for help to stay close to God.

 5-10 min

Holy Rosary

The Rosary is a traditional Catholic prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary, our Mother, asking her to pray for all her children in their time of need. Through the different prayers that make up the Rosary, we tell our Lady that we love her and we contemplate Jesus' life.

Click the button below to go to a guide for praying the Rosary.



 20 min

Meditation

How do we turn the desires of our hearts from the things of the world to the things of God? How do we show our desire to be with God in deeds?



In this meditation, the preacher is praying aloud in order to inspire your personal conversation with God.

The touchstone of true prayer is that it changes us and makes us better, but not being able to carry your resolutions out immediately or even discovering new weaknesses is not a reason for discouragement: we grow over time, and falls can help us be humble and grateful to God. With perseverance in prayer, you will notice more peace and joy throughout the day, because you are sure God is with you even when the struggle is difficult.

 30 min