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Introduction

"St. Josemaría used to tell us: 'Welcome the Pope's words with a religious, humble, internal and effective acceptance. And pass them on!' (The Forge, no. 133). May the example of Pope Francis lead us to echo this witness, to continue walking as apostles of mercy in a world pierced by the wounds of indifference and violence... Let us turn to Our Lady, Mater Spei – as Francis liked to call her – in whom 'everything in her life was shaped by the presence of mercy made flesh' (Misericordiae Vultus), so that we too may one day be able to contemplate God face to face" (Msgr. Fernando Ocáriz, Message, 21 April 2025).

The theme of the recollection this May is docility to the Holy Spirit, accompanied by our

Mother Mary. This is the way of the saints, who have allow God to transform their lives from within, listening attentively to his promptings and trustingly allowing themselves to be led, like our Lady did.

This month, marked as it is by gratitude for Pope Francis who has left us to go to the Father's house, is also a time of special prayer for the Church: we ask God to assist the next Conclave with the light of the Holy Spirit, and to grant us a new Successor of Peter who will guide the Church with fidelity, strength and joy.

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.

Spiritual Reading

In his first apostolic exhortation, "The Joy of the Gospel," Pope Francis wrote about Mary, mother of evangelisation.



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).

L 15 min

Meditation

What does it mean to be “filled with the Holy Spirit,” like our Mother Mary?



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

"Mary arose and went with haste to the mountain" (Lk 1:39). The Virgin Mary, while pregnant, did not hesitate to set out to visit her cousin Elizabeth. Do I also try to anticipate others' needs, helping at home and doing favours or services that others need? Am I flexible and willing to change my plans when people or circumstances require it?

"It is not enough just to know she is our Mother and to think and to talk about her as such. She is your Mother and you are her son. She loves you as if you were her only child in this world" (Friends of God, no. 293). Do I treat Mary with the confidence of a little child in need of affection and security?

"Come, O Holy Spirit: enlighten my mind to know your commands; strengthen my heart against the snares of the enemy; inflame my will..." (Prayer composed by St. Josemaría in 1932). Do I count on the Holy Spirit's help in discovering how I can become more like Christ? How do his inspirations help me to improve my character and thus treat all those around me better and better?

"You have taken me by the right hand, for I am always with you; you will guide me with your counsel, and lead me to glory" (Ps 73:23-24). Do I allow myself to be accompanied and helped in spiritual direction? When I meditate on the advice I receive, do I try to understand what the Lord wants from me?

"The wind blows where it wills," Jesus tells Nicodemus (Jn 3:8).

Do I try to learn, like Nicodemus, that God can speak to me through others and through what happens in my day?

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.

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.



L 20 min

Meditation

Mary is the Mother of God and our mother, and she shows us how to be good disciples of her Son.



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.