

GUIDE FOR MAKING A MONTHLY DAY OF RECOLLECTION

A monthly Day of Recollection is a time set aside specifically for a Christian to seriously go deeper into his or her relationship with God. Although we spend time in prayer each day, *recollection* is a time to withdraw a couple of hours from the noise and cares of this earthly life in order to spend some quality time in conversation with God guided by meditation, spiritual reading, and an examination of conscience. All who are truly serious about deepening their love and friendship with Jesus Christ will benefit from this monthly time of recollection and prayer.

In some parishes and dioceses, it is possible to join a monthly Day of Recollection for men or women given by a priest of Opus Dei and lay members, which you are encouraged to take advantage of since you will also have the opportunity for confession and Adoration and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. However, because it is not always possible to participate in person, the St. Josemaria Institute is helping to make available the resources to make a recollection on your own each month.

HOW DO I PREPARE TO MAKE A GOOD RECOLLECTION?

1. Find a time in the month when you are able to set aside two hours for this deeper reflection. Think of it as a time for conversation with God, as if he is personally coming to your home.
2. Ideally you could do the Recollection in front of the Blessed Sacrament in a church or chapel. But, if it is not possible, search online (such as on YouTube) to stream a live video of a chapel or church.
3. If you are making the recollection at home, set up a place that will be conducive to this visit. You might want to have a table, chair, crucifix, image of Our Lady, etc.
4. Dress appropriately. Remember this is your appointment with Our Lord. Make yourself presentable, dress in a clean and neat manner... all the way to your shoes!
5. Be sure to have on hand a notebook and pen for notes and inspirations.
6. Be serious about minimizing any distractions. Let your family know that you want two hours of uninterrupted time. Silence your phone or remove it from the area completely.

WHAT DO I NEED FOR THE RECOLLECTION?

Each month, the St. Josemaria Institute will provide on the website (www.stjosemaria.org) the following resources based on the theme for the month:

1. Two meditations by a priest of Opus Dei
2. An article for 10 - 15 minutes of spiritual reading
3. An examination of conscience

HOW DO I ORGANIZE MY TIME?

1. **First Meditation:** Listen to the first meditation by playing it online or downloading it. As you listen, take notes. By taking notes, you will know the theme of the meditation, you will cut down on distractions, and you will stay on track.
2. **Silent Prayer:** When the meditation ends, take about 5 - 10 minutes and look over your notes and think about what Our Lord is saying to you: Are there things you could work on to deepen your love for him? Are there concrete things about which you can make a resolution? Jot those down.
3. **Spiritual Reading:** Spend 10 - 15 minutes reading the suggested article and continue your conversation with God.
4. **Second Meditation:** Listen to the second meditation the same way as step one and two.
5. **Examination of Conscience:** Listen to each question and reflect on what you need to work on in your life. Pause the audio as you listen if you'd like more time to reflect on a specific question.

At the end of the examination of conscience, pray the Act of Contrition:

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you, and I detest all my sins because of your just punishments, but most of all because they offend you, my God, who are all-good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.

HOW SHOULD I CONCLUDE MY TIME OF PRAYER?

Come away from this time of prayer with profound gratitude for what Our Lord has done for you and make two or three concrete resolutions that you can give Our Lord for the month.

When your Recollection has ended, remember that these are themes for the entire month. Once a week during the month, perhaps on a Sunday, review your notes in your time of prayer, or replay a portion of any of the recordings. Work on these resolutions and themes throughout the entire month.

If you take this sacred time seriously, with the help of the Holy Trinity and our Blessed Mother, you will find yourself progressing deeper into your interior life.



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