

First Day



FAITH, A SOURCE OF LIFE



Daily Meditation



INVITATION TO CONTEMPLATION

I take a few moments to compose myself. I put myself in the present moment. . . . I breathe calmly. I put aside all worries and stress, and I confidently welcome God's presence. He is here, close to me, and he loves me.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Holy Spirit, you who are light, you who are the consoler, come and guide my prayer today. Come fill me with your soft presence; awaken my heart to God's love. Make trust and faith grow in me.

MEDITATION FROM FR. JACQUES PHILIPPE

During this retreat, we are going to meditate on faith and ask God to grow our faith. This is the most important thing for each one of us.

Faith is a reality that's a little paradoxical. On the one hand, it's a simple thing, a disposition of the heart, often lived through poverty and dryness. But on the other hand, it's a very beautiful, fruitful reality, because faith, the act of faith, truly puts us in contact with God and opens us little by little to all the richness and depth of the mystery of God. Any progress in faith brings progress in hope and in love. Faith is the only light that never deceives us. It is, in fact, our true strength. It allows us to lean on God.

We could say that, in a sense, all our sins and all our faults come from a lack of faith. We don't believe enough in God's power and love, and in the end that is our real problem.

It's true that we sometimes live through difficult and painful circumstances, which can be tough to confront. We also often experience our own weakness and frailty. Nevertheless, these

difficulties are not our real problem. Our only problem is our lack of faith. If we live through our difficulties and personal limits with faith, if we put them in God's hands with full trust, he will take care of us, and even those events in our lives that seem to be the most negative will wind up being positive.

In the Gospels, Jesus insists on the importance of faith:

If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you would say to this mountain, "Move from here to there," and it would move (cf. Mt 17:20; similar in Lk 17:6). What Jesus most reproaches the disciples for is not their human weakness, but their lack of faith.

When we read the Gospel of John, we find a whole list of the benefits that come from faith: He who believes is not judged but passes from death to life, walks in light, has eternal life, is never thirsty; even if he dies he will live, will see the glory of God, is already resurrected, will do works like Christ did and even still greater ones, and is victorious over the world (cf. 1 Jn 5:4).

At the end of his gospel, John says, “Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name” (Jn 20:30–31).

You will have life in his name!

This is essential: Faith gives us life, real life on this earth, the eternal life of the Kingdom. It puts us in true contact with God, lets us touch God. And our God is the God of life!



PRAYER

Let us entrust ourselves to the Virgin Mary, guardian of our faith.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women and blessed
is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary,
Mother of God, pray for us, sinners, now and
at the hour of our death. Amen.

A GRACE TO REQUEST

I reflect on all the times I've lacked faith, and how that is my principal problem. I ask Jesus to make me grow in faith.

LIGHT FROM A FAITHFUL WITNESS

“He who has faith penetrates into God and rivers of life flow from his being: this is spiritual fruitfulness.”

—Bl. Marie-Eugène of the Child Jesus, OCD

MEDITATE ON THE WORD

In chapter 11 of John's Gospel, before resurrecting Lazarus, Jesus speaks to Martha:

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” She said to him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.” (Jn 11:25-27)

I memorize these words and repeat them to myself often during the day:

“Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.”

BLESSING

May the almighty and merciful God bless us and keep us. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.