

## **The Prayer of Recollection (from Teresa of Avila)**

Modified from The Institute of Carmelite Studies, 2015,

<http://ocdfriarsvocation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Carmelite-Prayer-of-Recollection.pdf>

- Choose a section of the Bible that describes some event or teaching from the life of Jesus, (for example, the story of Mary and Martha with Jesus in Luke 10:38-42), or consider working your way through one of the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John) with one section per day.
- Find a place where you can be alone. Have your Bible reading open in your lap. Put your phone on airplane mode, or do not disturb mode (maybe even leave it out of the room). Set your timer for 30 minutes. (If this is not feasible, do what you can.)
- Close your eyes and breathe deeply. Allow your body to relax. Quiet your mind. Close your eyes and minimize all noise and external distractions.
- As mental distractions come, acknowledge each thought. E.g., “I am \_\_\_\_\_ (worried about..., stressed by..., distracted by..., etc.). And then release it, “I release this to you, God,” or, “I trust you with this, Jesus.”
- After getting comfortably settled and acknowledging the first wave of distractions you are ready to start the practice.
- Imagine Jesus within you. The Jesus of this scripture is inside you. Picture him there. Look into his eyes with love and see him looking into your eyes with love.
- Allow your mind to deeply dwell on the scripture; consider looking back at one thought of the passage at a time. In each verse, be aware that the Jesus you read about is the Jesus within you, the Jesus that you are gazing at.
- Distracting thoughts are a natural part of this process. Each time they arise, continue acknowledging and releasing them.

- You can speak to him about any of the thoughts the scripture evokes in you. Perhaps you want to invite the Jesus with the Samaritan woman at the well to give you living water. You may desire to express your love or thanks to him. Or you may want to ask him to help you in a difficult situation. Alternatively, you may not have words to speak. Continue looking quietly at this Jesus within you with eyes of faith and love.
- You may wish to close your time with Jesus by reciting Psalm 23.

### **After finishing the prayer of recollection**

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- If it is helpful, journal any reflections or thoughts from your time with Jesus.
  - Invite this Jesus to stay in your heart and your awareness moment by moment.
  - Consider keeping the verse you have read in front of you throughout the day to look back on.
  - If you have tasks during the day that allow freedom of thought (driving, cleaning, exercise, etc.) you can bring each verse back to your mind one at a time, remembering this Jesus within you, appreciating him!
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