

To be *Immersed in Christ*



A Way of Life

**Using the Liturgical Year to grow into
the fullness of your baptismal consecration as:**

***Christian
Disciple
Prophet
Priest
King***

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A Three-legged Stool

This booklet is meant to support you in your spiritual life. But there are three legs that support this booklet! If one is missing, the whole idea falls over. The three legs are:

An intentional spirituality: This plan only works if you have decided to take some control over your spiritual life: to be proactive rather than just reactive. Assuming you don't have a positive plan already, the choice is either to just keep going along as you are now or to choose deliberate, conscious, planned forward motion. Which do you want?

The Five-Step Plan: The suggestions in this booklet are meant to implement a specific five-step plan of spiritual growth, a “fitness program” for living the Christian life in its fullness. The Five Steps are simply five commitments that are implicit or explicit in the five mysteries and promises of our *Baptism*. These suggestions will help you if you decide you want to *simplify* your spiritual life — and at the same time *intensify* it — by concentrating on these five commitments. (These are explained in *Reaching Jesus: Five Steps to a Fuller Life*).

Using the liturgical seasons: Do you want to use the *liturgical seasons* (Advent, Lent, Easter, Ordinary Time) to help you focus successively on each of the Five Steps? And vice-versa, do you want to use the Five Steps to enter more fully into the spirit of each of the liturgical seasons? This booklet shows you how to “surf on the seasons” of the liturgical year in order to put unity and diversity into your efforts to grow spiritually. Follow the suggestions for daily prayer (they take almost no time), and with great freedom of spirit use the other suggestions in the measure that they help you.

If all three legs are under the stool, let's sit down and get started!

A Way of Life
During the Advent and Christmas Seasons
First Sunday of Advent to the Baptism of the Lord

***GOAL: To use the Advent and Christmas seasons
to appreciate more the Good News and grow into
constant interaction with Jesus as Savior***

**DOCTRINAL
FOCUS**

- To understand more clearly the *Incarnation* and *Grace*: God made flesh in Jesus — and in you — to save the world.

**LITURGICAL
FOCUS**

- To enter consciously and enthusiastically into the *prayer of praise* during the *Introductory Rites* at Mass.

**SACRAMENTAL
FOCUS**

- To understand and appreciate more the mystery of the Sacrament of *Baptism* as giving is a *new identity*.

Attitude Adjustment

Using the liturgical seasons is mostly a matter of *focus* and *awareness*. During each of the seasons you want to keep a particular focus, to cultivate an abiding awareness of one particular theme characteristic of our religion. This will help this element of our faith become part of you, an abiding element of your consciousness and a lived response.

During Advent and Christmas focus on the theme of *evangelization*; specifically, on the “good news” that Jesus is God who became human to be “*Emmanuel — God-with-us*” as the Savior of the world, and he is continuing his saving work *with, in and through you*. During Advent look forward to his coming. During the Christmas season look at who he is and what he wants to do for us. Consciously try to grow in *appreciation* of the Good News and of Jesus as Savior. Below are some helps to doing this:

Keep the season in the senses:

- *Color for Advent:* Dress and decorate using a lot of blue or the “bluer shades of purple” or violet — for anticipation, like the lightening of the sky before dawn.
- *Colors for the Christmas season* (ends on the Baptism of the Lord): the liturgical colors are white and red. Our culture adds green.
- *Make an Advent wreath* (or wreaths) and light one more of its four candles each week. Make smaller wreaths to put around the house, in your office, car etc. Or just use a sprig of greenery with a dark blue or purple ribbon.
- On *Christmas Eve* put up a Christmas tree. (If you put the tree up sooner, use only blue or purple lights until Christmas Eve; then add the others).
- *Sing*, hum or play Advent music during Advent, Christmas music during the Christmas season.

Prayer focus:

Prayers of Praise and Thanksgiving. Give time whenever you can to quiet, grateful dwelling on the mystery of our redemption through Christ’s birth. Reflect on the Good News with appreciation. Think about Jesus as Savior. In moments when your mind is unoccupied, gravitate to these thoughts. Try praying the *Psalms* of praise and thanksgiving.

At Mass during Advent and Christmas make a special effort to enter enthusiastically into the *Introductory Rites*. Give yourself to *the prayer of praise* — rejoicing in Jesus the *Savior* and *thanking* God for the Good News. Participate in Mass like a truly *evangelized Christian*. Recall the *Good News*, focus on it, proclaim it, celebrate it, echo it in your heart. *Sing* to get into the spirit of praise. To paraphrase St. John of the Cross: “Where you don’t find enthusiasm, put enthusiasm and you will find it.”

Interaction with Jesus:

Seasonal Practice: *Consciously let Jesus the Savior act with you, in you and through you all day long to save every activity and situation you are involved in from veering off toward destructiveness or distortion. Let him lift everything you do above mediocrity and meaninglessness. Take him with you wherever you go, trying to involve him in everything you do: at home, at school, at work. Talk to him, be conscious of what he thinks. Form the habit of remembering Romans 12:1 before every action: “Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice to God,” and say the WIT prayer all day long: “Lord, do this with me, do this in me, do this through me!”*

Meditation on Scripture: If you give just *five minutes* to this daily it will begin to transform your life. You can do it while you drink your coffee! Read and reflect on any Scripture passage you choose. You might want to use the passages read at Mass each day (see below, page 43).

Reading Scripture: In addition to meditating on Scripture, you may want to spend some time just *reading* Scripture reflectively. If you want to synchronize your reading with the Scripture passages read at Mass during this season, see the ***Guide to the Scripture Readings***, page 43. If you begin reading a book of the Bible when the Church begins reading it at Mass, and spend about fifteen minutes a day on it, you will usually finish it before the liturgy begins using another book.

Daily Mass: This is the greatest undiscovered treasure in the Catholic Church. For many people it is impossible because of scheduling. But for those who can make it, there is no better way to consecrate the day.

Daily Prayer: Punctuate your day with prayer. Take a very short “time out” at key moments of the day to acknowledge God in prayer. For example:

A Rhythm of Prayer Throughout the Day

It only takes a few minutes at a time to begin, interrupt and end the day with the prayers suggested below. Try them and see how easily they fit into your schedule — and transform your day.

Waking prayer:

- *As soon as you awake, recall your Baptism, Say “Our Father, who art in heaven,”* conscious that God is your Father. Grace (the gift of sharing in God’s own life) has made you divine. God is going to live his divine life in you today and do his divine work through you.

Say the rest of the *Our Father*. Its petitions were the priorities of Jesus’ life. Consciously make them your own.

- Say the WIT prayer (*WIT* is a memory aid — “with, in, through”):
“Jesus, I give you my body. Live this day with me; live this day in me; live this day through me. Let me think with your thoughts and speak with your words and act as your body on earth.” (If you are young and energetic, and are alone in your room, say this on your knees with your arms extended. This puts passion into your prayer).

- Call on the infinite Spirit of God to help you do this: *“Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful, and enkindle in us the fire of your divine love. Send forth your Spirit, Lord, and our hearts will be regenerated. And you will renew the face of the earth.”*

Morning prayer:

Once out of bed and dressed, *begin the day* by reciting with feeling the *Benedictus* (Luke 1:68-79). Let it set the tone of your day:

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel;

he has come to his people and set them free.

He has raised up for us a mighty savior,

born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets he promised of old

that he would save us from our enemies,

from the hands of all who hate us.

He promised to show mercy to our ancestors

and to remember his holy covenant.

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham:

To set us free from the hands of our enemies,

free to worship him without fear,

holy and righteous in his sight all our days of our life.

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High;

For you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,

to give his people knowledge of salvation

by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,

and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Add: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Prayer throughout the day:

Before every action recite Romans 12:1: “Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice to God” — which means that wherever your live body is, you will be “sacrificed,” dedicated, to doing God’s will and carrying out the mission of Jesus. Form the habit of saying the WIT prayer before every action: “*Lord, do this with me, do this in me, do this through me!*”

Noon prayer:

Sometime around noon, even if it is just walking down the hall, take time out to “check in with God” and review your day so far. See if, on some days at least, you can answer these questions:

- What do I have to be grateful for today? (Say thanks to God).
- Did I remember to say the WIT prayer? Did it make a difference?
- What is the best decision I made today? Did I involve Jesus in it?
- What is the worst decision I made today? Did I involve Jesus in it?
What have I learned from it?

Say the WIT prayer again: “*Jesus, I give you my body. Live this day with me; live this day in me; live this day through me. Let me think with your thoughts and speak with your words and act as your body on earth.*”

Evening prayer:

Before or after supper sit alone or with your family in front of the Advent wreath or Christmas tree. Light the candle(s) for the week. Sing an Advent hymn or Christmas carol. Take a moment of silence to ask yourself what is the best thing you have experienced today through your relationship (interaction) with Jesus Christ. If others are with you, then after reflecting let all share their experiences.

Recite reflectively the *Magnificat* (Luke 1:46-55):

*My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.*

*For he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed.*

The Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm, he has scattered the proud

in their conceit.

*He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,
and has lifted up the lowly.*

He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, for he has remembered his promise of mercy,

the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his children forever.

(Add the Hail Mary).

Night prayer:

Keep the Bible on your pillow. Promise God that every night, before you go to sleep, you will read *one line*. This is a commitment you can keep. Most nights you will probably read three or four lines. Then put the Bible on the floor, on top of your shoes, and when you get up in the morning, read another line and put the Bible back on your pillow.

Before you go to sleep, recite with peace and gratitude (Luke 2: 29-32):

*Now, Master you may let your servant go in peace;
according to your word,*

*for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you prepared in the sight of all the peoples,*

a light for revelation to the Gentiles

and glory for your people Israel. (Glory be to the Father...).

Sacramental Focus

Focus on living out the Sacrament of Baptism. as the “Incorporating Sacrament,” the sacrament that gave you a share in God’s divine life by making you a member of the Body of Christ. Try to *live out your Baptism every day* by consciously *being Christ* in everything you do. Specifically, try to let Christ the Savior, acting in you, raise everything you do to a higher level — a divine level — of truth and love. As often as you can, remember and recite to yourself the words of St. Paul: “Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice to God,” and say, “*Lord, I give you my body; do this with me, do this in me, do this through me!*”

Read: • *Experiencing the Mass: The Introductory Rites*

• *A Fresh Look at Confession: The Sacrament of Self-Identity*

• *Living the* • Chapter 1: A Conversion to Relationship

Sacraments: • Chapter 2: Do I Have a Friendship with Jesus?

Doctrinal Focus (Identity)

Read Vatican II’s document *The Church in the Modern World*. The Latin title of this document is *Gaudium et Spes*: “Joy and Hope.” Read it to grow in both. Read also Pope Paul VI’s Apostolic Exhortation *On Evangelization in the Modern World (Evangelii Nuntiandi)*.

Spiritual Focus (Awareness of Identity)

Recommended reading

• *His Way:* • Chapter 1: What Does It Mean to Be a Christian Today?

• Chapter 2: The Person of Christ in Your Life

• *Reaching Jesus: Five Steps...* Step One: The Choice to Be a Christian

• *The Nuts and Bolts of Daily Spirituality: The WIT Prayer*

• *The Five Promises of Baptism: First Promise: A New Identity*

• *Five Steps to the Father: Phrase, Phase One: Our Father: Awareness*

• **Matthew Series:** *Why Jesus?* (whole book).

A Way of Life

During Lent and the first weeks of Ordinary Time

From Monday after the Baptism of the Lord through Lent

GOAL: To use Lent and the Weeks of Ordinary Time before Lent to grow into deeper *conversion* through *discipleship* as *committed students* of the mind and heart of Jesus Christ

DOCTRINAL FOCUS

- To understand better Christian belief about divine *Revelation* (how to read and interpret the *Scriptures*).

LITURGICAL FOCUS

- To listen as attentive *students* during the *Liturgy of the Word* at Mass, determined to *learn* from the readings.

SACRAMENTAL FOCUS

- To understand and appreciate more the Sacrament of *Reconciliation* as a guide and incentive to *continual conversion*.

Attitude Adjustment

The Church uses the liturgical seasons to *focus our attention* successively on the major themes of our religion. To respond fully to each season, we need to *focus our minds* on the *truths* celebrated during each, and *focus our wills* on responding to each one's *invitation* and challenge. We let the "doctrine in focus" of each season activate our *faith*, our *hope*, our *love*.

During Lent focus on the theme of *discipleship*; specifically, on the call to "repentance" (*metanoia*, "conversion" of mind, heart and behavior, a radical change of attitudes and direction in life) that was the headline preaching of John the Baptizer, Jesus and the Apostles (Matthew 2:3; 4:17; Acts 2:38). During Lent look more closely at your life in the light of what Jesus calls you to be. Devote yourself to interaction with Jesus as

Teacher.

How can you do this? Here are some things that will help:

Keep the season in the senses:

- *Color for Lent:* Violet for “*metanoia*,” a change of mind, direction, pace.
- *Make a place for God* in your house: a table with symbols like a Bible, crucifix, candle, palms, or whatever you like. Be creative. Pray there.
- *Put a copy of the Bible* in a prominent place in your house (or office, if you can) to remind you that God’s word calls us to constant conversion.
- *Receive ashes and palms* on Ash Wednesday and Passion (Palm) Sunday. *Display palm in your house* as a symbol to say you reject the false power and promises of this world. You might put smaller pieces of palm in various places at work and at home where you will see them all day.
- *Abstain from meat on Fridays and fast* on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, and other times according to your health and devotion. The physical hunger is to express and be aware of spiritual hunger for God.
- *Filter the music* you listen to. Keep it quiet and reflective, not wild.

Prayer focus:

The “***Prayer of Discipleship***”: ***Meditation***. Practice meditating on Scripture. Use the “three R’s”: *Read* God’s words; *Reflect* about their challenge; and *Respond* with decisions. Check your attitudes, values and priorities; your goals and the means you use to achieve them. Change your mind, heart and behavior in response to the Gospel.

At Mass: *Listen attentively* — as a disciple, a learner — to the Scripture readings during the *Liturgy of the Word*, determined to “get something out of them.” You might read and reflect on the readings before or after Mass. Each Sunday, before you leave church, try to make *one concrete decision* in response to what you have heard in the readings and homily.

Learning from Jesus:

Seasonal Practice: Place the Bible where you will see it when you leave and enter your house. Let it remind you to live consciously by the word of God.

Form the habit of reciting John 8:12 before every action: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness.” Add the WIT prayer: “*Lord, do this with me, do this in me, do this through me!*” (Or as an alternative: “Lord, shine your light with me, shine your light in me, shine your light through me”).

Reading Scripture: During Lent there is no consistent pattern to the readings chosen for use in Mass, either on Sundays or on weekdays. If you want to follow the lectionary, use a missalette or the U.S. bishops’ site: www.usccb.org/bible/readings/

Meditation on Scripture: Give *five minutes* to this daily; extend the time if moved. Look for what challenges you, calls your values and priorities into question. Seek *metanoia*, a “change of mind,” in response to God’s word.

Daily Mass: This is a favored Lenten tradition in the Catholic Church. If you can adjust your schedule to make it possible for you, there is no better way to observe Lent.

Daily Prayer: “Reform” your *use of time*. Take a very short “time out” at key moments of the day to acknowledge God in prayer. For example:

A Rhythm of Prayer Throughout the Day

Waking prayer:

As soon as you awake, say the *Our Father*. Imagine yourself reciting each petition after Jesus, trying to make these priorities of his heart your own:

- that the Father should be *known and loved*, his name “hallowed”;
- his *kingdom* established;
- his *will done* on earth as perfectly as in heaven.

Ask God to hasten the “wedding banquet of the Lamb,” by giving us:

- our daily “bread of life” — Jesus today, every day, forever;
- the unity and peace of total, universal, mutual *forgiveness*;
- and to preserve us from “hard testing” as he delivers us from all evil.

Make this a prayer of longing for total conversion to all it asks for as the goal and desire of your life.

- Say the WIT prayer: “*Jesus, I give you my body. Live this day with me; live this day in me; live this day through me. Let me think with your thoughts and speak with your words and act as your body on earth.*”
- Call on the Holy Spirit to help you do this: “*Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful, and enkindle in us the fire of your divine love. Send forth your Spirit, Lord, and our hearts will be regenerated. And you will renew the face of the earth.*”

Morning prayer:

Once out of bed and dressed, *begin the day* by reciting with renewed hope the *Miserere* (Psalm 51). Let it set the tone of your day:

Have mercy on me, O God in your goodness; in your abundant compassion blot out my offense.

Wash away all my guilt; from my sin cleanse me. For I know my offense; my sin is always before me.

Against you alone have I sinned; I have done such evil in your sight, that you are just in your sentence, blameless when you condemn.

True, I was born guilty, a sinner even as my mother conceived me. Still, you insist on sincerity of heart; in my inmost being teach me wisdom.

Cleanse me with hyssop, that I may be pure; wash me, make me whiter than snow. Let me hear sounds of joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.

Turn away your face from my sins; blot out all my guilt. A clean heart create for me, God, renew in me a steadfast spirit.

Do not drive me from your

presence, nor take from me your holy spirit.

Restore my joy in your salvation; sustain in me a willing spirit.

I will teach the wicked your ways, that sinners may return to you.

Rescue me from death, God, my saving God, that my tongue may praise your healing power.

Lord, open my lips; my mouth will proclaim your praise.

For you do not desire sacrifice; a burnt offering you would not accept.

My sacrifice, God, is a broken spirit; God, do not spurn a broken, humbled heart.

Make Zion prosper in your good pleasure; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

Then you will be pleased with proper sacrifice, burnt offerings and holocausts; then bullocks will be offered on your altar.

Add: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit...

Prayer throughout the day:

Before every action recite John 8:12: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness.” And add the WIT prayer: “*Lord, do this with me, do this in me, do this through me!*” (Or as an alternative: “Lord, shine your light with me, shine your light in me, shine your light through me”).

Noon prayer:

Sometime around noon, take a time out to “check in with God” and review your day so far. See if you can answer these questions:

- Did I read Scripture today? Did it make a difference?
- When did I remember to say “Lord, shine your light with me, shine your light in me, shine your light through me”?
- What is the best decision I made today? Was it guided by Christ’s words?
- What is the worst decision I made today? Did I seek light from Jesus or his word?

Say the WIT prayer again.”

Evening prayer:

Before or after supper sit alone or with others in front of your “prayer corner” (shrine, God’s place in your home). Absorb the meaning of the symbols there. Then take a moment of silence to ask yourself what you have “changed your mind” about today through your reflection on God’s word or by comparing what Jesus says to what you have experienced while working or dealing with other people. If you are praying with others, then after reflecting let all share their experiences.

Recite reflectively Jesus’ prayer for his disciples (from John 17: 1-26):

Father, the hour has come. Give glory to your Son so that your Son may glorify you, just as you gave him authority over all people, so that he may give eternal life to all you gave him.

Now this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ....

I revealed your name to those whom you gave me out of the world. They belonged to you, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.

Now they know that everything you gave me is from you; because the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they accepted them and truly understood that I came from you....

Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are.

When I was with them, I protected them ... But now I am coming to you.

I speak this in the world so that they may share my joy completely. I gave them your word, and the world hated them, because they do not belong to the world, any more than I belong to the world.

I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one....

Consecrate them in the truth. Your word is truth....

I pray... for them... so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me.

And I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may be brought to perfection as one, that the world may know that you sent me and that you loved them even as you loved me.

Father, they are your gift to me. I wish that where I am they also may be with me, that they may see my glory that you gave me, because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me.

I made known to them your name, and I will make it known, that the love with which you loved me may be in them, and I in them.

Night prayer: Before you go to sleep, pick up the Bible from your pillow and read at least *one line*. Then recite with peace and gratitude

Psalm 130:

Out of the depths I cry to you, LORD; Lord, hear my cry!

May your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy.

If you, LORD, mark our sins, Lord, who can stand?

But with you is forgiveness, and so you are revered.

I wait with longing for the LORD, my soul waits for his word.

My soul looks for the Lord more than sentinels for daybreak.

More than sentinels for daybreak, let Israel, look for the LORD!

For with the LORD is kindness, with him is full redemption.

And God will redeem Israel from all their sins.

Add: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit....

Sacramental Focus

Focus on living out the Sacrament of *Reconciliation* as a sacrament of *continual conversion*. Don't just focus on sins; use Confession as a "progress report." Say what you think God is asking of you right now, how you have responded, what has helped or not helped, what you are thinking of doing next. Talk about any changes, good or bad, in your attitudes and values. Identify the roots out of which your choices grow. Reveal, not just what you have done, but the kind of person you find yourself becoming at this moment in your life. (Be sure you choose a priest capable of responding to this kind of Confession).

Read: • *Experiencing the Mass: The Liturgy of the Word*

- *A Fresh Look at Confession: The Sacrament of the Examined Life*
- *Living the Sacraments:*
 - Chapter 3: A Conversion to Growth
 - Chapter 4: Can I Communicate with Jesus?
 - Chapter 5: Is My Interaction with Jesus Real?

Doctrinal Focus (Discipleship)

Read Vatican II's document on *Divine Revelation*.

Spiritual Focus (Commitment to Discipleship)

Recommended reading:

- *His Way*: Chapter 3: Reaching an Adult Level of Prayer
Chapter 4: A Practical Method for Praying Over the Scriptures
- *Reaching Jesus: Five Steps...* Step Two: The Choice to Be a Disciple
- *The Nuts and Bolts of Daily Spirituality*: • Put the Bible on Your Pillow
• The Nuts and Bolts of Prayer
- *The Five Promises of Baptism*: Second Promise: Enlightenment
- *Five Steps to the Father*: Phrase, Phase Two: *Hallowed...* Commitment
- Matthew Series**: • *A Change Within* (whole book)
• *Make Me a Sabbath of Your Heart* (whole book).

A Way of Life
During the Easter Season
Holy Thursday to Pentecost

GOAL: To use the Easter Season to commit yourself more deeply to bearing witness according to your baptismal consecration as prophet.

**DOCTRINAL
FOCUS**

- To understand *being Church*, the risen body of Christ, empowered by the Gift of the Holy Spirit to bear *witness* and manifest the *fruit of the Spirit*.

**LITURGICAL
FOCUS**

- During the *Presentation of Gifts*, place yourself symbolically on the altar with the bread and wine. Reaffirm your Baptism and dedicate yourself to mission.

**SACRAMENTAL
FOCUS**

- To appreciate *Confirmation* as the sacrament that ratifies our acceptance into the Church and commissions us to participate in her mission.

Attitude Adjustment

During the Easter Season focus on the theme of *witness*. This means to visibly live and act in a way that raises questions that cannot be answered without the Gospel. Be aware that you are the risen body of Jesus. Commit yourself to *being Church* and participating in her *mission*, especially through the witness of your lifestyle. Draw joy and confidence from the Resurrection of Jesus and the sending of the Holy Spirit.

How can you do this? Here are some things that will help:

Keep the season in the senses:

- *Color for the Easter Season: White to express renewed life, hope and joy in the risen life; or red for the Holy Spirit.*
- *Wear something white or red each day to remind you that you are “clothed in Christ” as his risen body on earth (see Galatians 3:27; Colossians 3:10).*
- *Put a small container of water (or a “holy water font”) on your desk and where you will pass it frequently during the day. When you do, bless yourself with the water as a reminder and renewal of Baptism and of your intention to embody Christ’s values in all you do.*
- *During your main meal, keep a “paschal candle” lit. (Decorate any candle).*

Prayer focus:

Practice ***Affective Prayer***: in which we just appreciate something, long for it, or spend our time willing it intensely; for example, just resting in the awareness of some truth or some desire; making acts of praise, thanksgiving, faith, hope and love; offering ourselves to God for his service.

At Mass during the *Presentation of the Gifts*, use “Affective Prayer” to recommit yourself intensely to Christ in the Church by placing yourself in will and desire on the altar with the bread and wine. Ask to be transformed more and more into the perfect image of Christ, whose body you became at Baptism. Renew the commitment of your Baptism. Pledge *continual conversion* and changes in your lifestyle. Resolve to ask about everything, as a *prophet*. “How does this in bear *witness* to the values of Christ’s? Ask what *changes* you have made in your *lifestyle* during the past week.

Interaction with Jesus:

Seasonal Practice: Every morning, before you leave your house or start work, bless yourself with the sign of the cross, (You can use plain water). Then *renew your baptismal commitment*, conscious of your desire to give physical expression to it:

I reject sin, so as to live in the freedom of God's children.

I reject the glamour of evil and refuse to be mastered by sin.

I reject Satan, father of sin and prince of darkness.

As Christ was anointed Prophet, Priest and King, so I commit myself, to live always as a member of his body and continue his mission on earth.

Lord, I give you my body. Live this day with me, live this day in me, live this day through me. Amen.

Form the habit of reciting before every action:: “I live now, not I, but Christ lives in me!” (Galatians 2:20). Say the WIT prayer: “*Lord, live this day with me, live this day in me, live this day through me,*” and add, “Lord, let me think with your thoughts and speak with your words and act as your body on earth!”

Meditation on Scripture: Give *five minutes* to this daily. Try to respond to the passage you read with a *concrete decision* to do something that day that is explicitly motivated by faith in what you have read.

Daily Mass: This is the most empowering element in the Catholic Church. If your schedule makes it possible for you, there is no better way to unite yourself to Christ so that he can bear witness within you and through you.

A Rhythm of Prayer Through the Day

Waking prayer:

As soon as you awake, recall your Baptism and say the *Our Father*, the WIT prayer, and the “*Come, Holy Spirit...*”

Morning prayer:

Once out of bed and dressed, *begin the day* by reading Jesus’ promise of the Spirit (John 14: 15-26). Let it be the foundation of your day:

If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever.

This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you.

...You will see me; because I live, you also will live.

On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me;

and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.

...Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them,

and we will come to them and make our home with them....

I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything,

and remind you of all that I have said to you.

Prayer throughout the day:

Before every action and as often as you can remember recite Galatians 2:20: “I live now, not I, but Christ lives in me!” Say the WIT prayer and add, Lord, let me think with your thoughts and speak with your words and act as your body on earth!”

Noon prayer:

Sometime around noon, take a break moment to “check in with God” and review your day so far. Ask and answer these questions:

- What in my life today bore visible witness to the values of Christ?
- When did I remember to say “*I live now, not I, but Christ lives in me!*”?
- What is the most prophetic decision I made today? To what did it bear witness?
- What is the least prophetic decision I made today? What kept me from bearing witness through it?

Say the WIT prayer: “*Jesus, I give you my body. Live this day with me; live this day in me; live this day through me. Let me think with your thoughts and speak with your words and act as your body on earth.*”

Evening prayer:

Before or after supper sit alone or with others in front of your “paschal candle.” Take a moment of silence to ask yourself what is the most prophetic act of witness you have done today. If others are with you, then after reflecting let all share their experiences.

Close by reading reflectively *John* 13: 1-12:

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.

In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again

and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.

And you know the way to the place where I am going."

Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?"

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied."

Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me?

Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?

Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?

The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works.

Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me;

but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves.

Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do

and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.

(Add the Our Father).

Night prayer:

Before you go to sleep, pick up the Bible from your pillow and read at least *one line*. Then read with peace and gratitude Acts 2: 16-21 and 44-47:

This what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.

Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy....

Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved...

Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him...."

So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles.

All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need.

Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people.

And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

(Add the Come, Holy Spirit...).

Sacramental Focus

Focus on living out the Sacrament of *Confirmation* every day. Your baptismal consecration as *prophet* commits you to *be Church* consciously as an adult, “working member” of the Church, dedicated to the *mission* of bearing *witness* by a lifestyle empowered by the *Gift of the Holy Spirit*.

Read:

- *Experiencing the Mass: The Presentation of Gifts*
- *A Fresh Look at Confession: The Sacrament of the Spirit*
- *Living the Sacraments:*
 - Chapter 6: A Conversion to Maturity
 - Chapter 7: Does My Life Bear Witness...?

Doctrinal Focus (Witness)

- **Read Vatican II's** document, *Constitution on the Church*.

Spiritual Focus (Dedication to Mission)

Recommended reading

- *His Way:*
 - Chapter 5: The Meaning of Christian Conversion
 - Chapter 6: Connecting Christianity With Life
- *Reaching Jesus: Five Steps...* Step Three: The Choice to Be a Prophet
- *The Nuts and Bolts of Daily Spirituality: Never Ask Again*
- *The Five Promises of Baptism: Third Promise: Power*
- *Five Steps to the Father: Phrase, Phase Three: Thy Kingdom come!:*

Dedication

Matthew Series:

- *Saving Presence* (whole book).

A Way of Life During Ordinary Time I

GOAL: To use Weeks 10 to 21 in *Ordinary Time* to commit yourself more deeply to *ministry* according to your baptismal consecration as *priest in the Priest*.

DOCTRINAL FOCUS

To understand more clearly the doctrine of *Redemption*, through which Jesus as “Lamb of God” does not just forgive but *takes away* the sins of the world by joining us to himself in his death.

LITURGICAL FOCUS

To unite yourself intensely to the *Eucharistic Prayer* at Mass, offering yourself with Christ as *priest in the Priest* and *victim in the Victim* for the life of the world.

SACRAMENTAL FOCUS

To understand your particular vocation and ministry in the Church in the light of the sacraments of *Matrimony* and *Holy Orders* (whether or not you are married or ordained).

Attitude Adjustment

During Sundays 10 to 21 in *Ordinary Time* focus on the theme of *ministry*. Specifically let your *body be the instrument* for communicating the life of God to others. You do this by giving *physical expression* to the invisible life of grace (faith, hope and love) in your heart. Let *Christ in you* express himself to others through your body.

How can you do this? Here are some things that will help:

Keep the season in the senses:

- *Color for Ordinary Time:* Favor *green* in dress and decoration to express *renewed life and hope*.
- *Use the crucifix* as a symbol for ministry: “dying to yourself” in service to others. When you give five minutes of your time you give five minutes of your life. To *express* faith, hope or love in your body is to offer “your flesh for the life of the world.” Feature a big crucifix in a special place, and use smaller ones as reminders — e.g. in your car, where you work, in your pocket, etc.

Prayer focus:

Practice the ***Prayer of Union:*** Concentrate on consciously *being united with Christ in ministry* to others. Try to remain aware of Christ’s presence within you. Be attentive to his inspirations in responding to people. Above all, show respect, appreciation and love to every person you deal with, recognizing them also as the body of Christ.

At Mass during the *Eucharistic Prayer* make a special effort to follow closely all the words and gestures of the presider, echoing them in your heart. Join yourself to Christ as he offers his body to the Father for the life of the world. Offer your body with him and in him to *mediate the life of God to others* by dedicating yourself to the ministry of giving *physical expression* to God’s life in you. *Express* your faith, your hope, your love.

When the host is lifted up at the first Elevation, say silently, together with the presider, “This is *my body*, given up for you — *my flesh* for the life of the world, offered to you in ministry.” Say it to the whole human race with Christ, as “priest in the Priest” and “victim in the Victim.” Recognize this as the most passionate moment of your week.

At the second Elevation, pledge yourself with the whole Church to give “all glory and honor” to the Father, by acting “through Christ, with him and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,” as the risen body of Jesus.

Interaction with Jesus:

Seasonal Practice: Stand before a crucifix every day before you leave the house or begin work, and ask Jesus to unite you to himself in ministry. Decide that wherever your live body is, you will be “sacrificed” (Romans 12:1) to carrying out his mission by showing life-giving love to every person you meet — through smiles, kind words, small favors, willing service and compassionate thoughtfulness. During the day, frequently touch the crucifix on your table or in your pocket, saying (silently) to the people you deal with: “This is my body, given up for you.”

Form the habit of saying before every action: “This is my body, given up for you. — *Lord, give yourself with me, give yourself in me, give yourself through me to everyone I meet.*” When you are with other people, be aware of Christ in them and pray, whatever you are doing: “*Lord, do this with us, do this in us, do this through us!*”

Meditation on Scripture: Just *five minutes* given to this daily will prepare you to minister as Christ, united with him in mind and heart and action.

Daily Mass: Eucharist is the “source and summit” of Catholic life. If you can adjust your schedule to make it possible for you daily, there is no better way to unite yourself to Christ so he can minister through you.

A Rhythm of Prayer Through the Day

Waking prayer:

As soon as you awake, offer your body as a “living sacrifice to God” (Romans 12:1). After saying the *Our Father*, the WIT prayer, and the “*Come, Holy Spirit...*” add the *Hail Mary*, asking Mary to pray that the “fruit of your life” today, will be blessed. Like her, give your body, that Jesus might continue in you the work of redemption.

Morning prayer:

Once out of bed and dressed, *begin the day* by reciting St. Paul's *Hymn to Love* (1Corinthians 13: 1-13). Let it set the tone of your day:

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge,

and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

If I give everything I have to feed the poor, and hand over my body to be burned, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude.

Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful.

It does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Add: *Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.*

Love never ends.

But as for prophecies, they will come to an end;

as for tongues, they will cease;

as for knowledge, it will come to an end.

For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part;

but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end.

When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways.

For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face.

Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known.

And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Prayer throughout the day:

Before every action and as often as you can remember say: “This is my body, given up for you. — *Lord, give yourself with me, give yourself in me, give yourself through me.*” Let Jesus in you express himself through your body by giving *physical expression* to the way you perceive others in *faith*, to your *hope* for them, and to the *love* for them that you share with Jesus living in you.

Noon prayer:

Sometime around noon, take a break moment to “check in with God” and review your day so far. Ask and answer these questions:

- To whom have I ministered today?
- When did I remember to say “This is my body, given up for you”?
- What is the best act of ministry I did today?
- When did I miss a chance to minister today? What have I learned from it?

Say the WIT prayer: “*Jesus, I give you my body. Live this day with me; live this day in me; live this day through me. Let me think with your thoughts and speak with your words and act as your body on earth.*”

Evening prayer:

Before or after supper sit alone or with others in front of the crucifix. Light a candle. Take a moment of silence to ask yourself what was the most satisfying and generous thing you did today in your attempts to minister as the presence and body of Jesus on earth. If others are with you, then after reflecting let all share their experiences.

Close by reciting reflectively the *Magnificat* (Luke 1:46-55)

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

For he has looked with favor on his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed.

The Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation. He has shown the strength of his arm, he

has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, for he has remembered his promise of mercy, the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his children forever.

(Add the Hail Mary).

Night prayer:

Before you go to sleep, pick up the Bible from your pillow and read at least *one line*. Then recite Paul's prayer for love (Ephesians 3: 14-21):

I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name.

I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may strengthen me in my inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in my heart through faith, that I may be rooted and grounded in love.

I pray that I may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and

length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge,

so that I may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Sacramental Focus

Focus on living in relationship with Christ and other people in the Church and in the family of the human race.

Live out Matrimony by constantly *ministering* to all your brothers and sisters in Christ and trying to form *Christian community*.

Build a relationship of *spousal love* with Jesus by seeking the union of mind, will and heart with him that spouses pledge to seek with each other.

Live out Holy Orders every day, even if you are a layperson, by *ministering constantly to everyone*, seeing all of your sacrifices as extensions of the offering of your body with Jesus in the Mass.

Read:

- *Experiencing the Mass: The Eucharistic Prayer*
- *A Fresh Look at Confession: The Sacrament of the Flesh*
- *Living the Sacraments:*

- Chapter 8: A Conversion to Community
- Chapter 9: A Conversion to Being Christ

Doctrinal Focus (Ministry)

Read Vatican II's document on *The Sacred Liturgy*.

Spiritual Focus (Surrender to Ministry)

Recommended reading

- *His Way:*
- Chapter 7: The Support of A Community of Faith
- Chapter 8: How Faith Community Happens
- Chapter 9: Facing the World Together in Prayer
- *Reaching Jesus: Five Steps...* Step Four: The Choice to Be a Priest
- *The Nuts and Bolts of Daily Spirituality:* Everyone You Meet
- *The Five Promises of Baptism:* Fourth Promise: Posterity
- *Five Steps to the Father:* Phrase, Phase Four: *Thy will be done:*
Surrender

Matthew Series: • *No Power But Love* (whole book).

A Way of Life *During Ordinary Time II*

GOAL: To use Weeks 22 to 34 in *Ordinary Time* to gain renewed hope and *perseverance* in *leadership*: working to *bring about changes* in the world. This is your baptismal commitment as “king” or *steward of the Kingship of Christ*.

DOCTRINAL FOCUS

- To understand more clearly Christian belief about the “end time” — the value of Christian death and the doctrine of *Christ’s triumph* and coming in glory.

LITURGICAL FOCUS

To unite yourself intensely to Jesus in the *Communion Rite* at Mass, looking forward with anticipation to the “wedding banquet of the Lamb.”

SACRAMENTAL FOCUS

- To appreciate and draw strength from the Sacrament of *Anointing*, not only when sick, but in all the fears, hopes and challenges of daily life.

Attitude Adjustment

During Sundays 22 to 34 in *Ordinary Time* focus on the theme of *stewardship*; that is, *taking responsibility* for bringing every area and activity of human life on earth under the life-giving reign of God.

How can you do this? Here are some things that will help:

Keep the season in the senses:

- *Color for Ordinary Time:* Favor *green* in dress and decoration to express *renewed life and hope*.
- *Use a candle* or lamp as a symbol for leadership. To be a “steward of Christ the King” is to *persevere* in taking *responsibility* for bringing about changes in family and social life, Church and school, business and politics. “Be dressed for action; have your lamps lit; be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet” (Luke 12:35-36).
- *Keep a copy of the Bible on top of your newspaper* (tool box, briefcase, professional journal, operator’s manual) to remind you that the news in the world calls for Christian responses in the marketplace.

Prayer focus:

Practice the ***Prayer of Anticipation:*** Look forward with hope to the coming of Christ in triumph. Be conscious of this theme whenever you say the *Our Father*. (Be aware that all of its petitions ask for the “coming of the kingdom” and the final and complete triumph of Christ). Let *hope* move you to persevere as a faithful steward, working to establish God’s reign on earth.

At Mass during the *Rite of Communion* draw courage and peace from the “eschatological” focus on Christ’s victory and his coming in glory at the end of the world. Notice the theme of “waiting,” and the recurring mention of “peace” as the fruit of final and universal reconciliation.

When the host is lifted up in the third Elevation with the proclamation, “Happy are those who are invited to the wedding banquet of the Lamb,” rejoice that Jesus as “Lamb of God” has taken all threat out of death: to die is to arrive at the party! In Communion unite yourself to Jesus within you. Try to experience the “foretaste of heaven” that Communion is.

Interaction with Jesus:

Seasonal Practice: Whenever you turn a light on or off repeat: “I have set you to be a light for the Gentiles, so that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth” (Acts 13:47). Commit yourself to *lead*.

Form the habit of saying before every action: “In the world you will have trouble. But take courage; I have overcome the world! (John 16:33).

Add: “Lord, send forth your Spirit and our hearts shall be regenerated — and you will *renew the face of the earth!*”

Meditation on Scripture: Persevere in giving *five minutes* to this daily. Draw hope from Jesus’ words, “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you” (John 15:7). To use the readings from the Mass of the day, see the ***Guide to the Scripture Readings***, page 43.

Daily Mass: Christian tradition finds in the Mass, not only the promise, but the reality of heaven previewed now in the Eucharist. In Communion we experience the “wedding banquet of the Lamb” (*Revelation 19:9*). Mass empowers perseverance by focusing us on “the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ” (*Titus 2:13*, paraphrased in the *Rite of Communion*).

A Rhythm of Prayer Through the Day

Waking prayer:

As soon as you awake, offer your body as a “living sacrifice to God.” Say the *Our Father*, the WIT prayer, and emphasize “*Come, Holy Spirit fill the hearts of your faithful, and enkindle in us the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit, Lord, and our hearts shall be regenerated. And you shall renew the face of the earth.*”

Morning prayer:

Once out of bed and dressed, *begin the day* by reciting *Psalm 95*:

Come, let us sing to the LORD and shout with joy to the rock who saves us.

Let us approach him with praise and thanksgiving and sing joyful songs to the Lord.

The LORD is God, the mighty God, the great King over all gods. He holds in his hands the depths of the earth and the highest mountains as well.

He made the sea; it belongs to him, the dry land too, for it was formed by his hands.

Come, then, let us bow down and worship, bending the knee before the LORD, our Maker!

For he is our God, and we are his people, the flock he shepherds.

Today, listen to the voice of the Lord!

Do not grow stubborn, as your fathers did in the wilderness, when at Meribah and Massah they challenged me and provoked me, although they had seen all of my works.

Forty years I endured that generation. I said, "They are a people whose hearts go astray, and they do not know my ways."

So I swore in my anger, "They shall not enter into my rest."

Add: "Glory to the Father..."

Prayer throughout the day:

***Before every action* recite John 16:33: "In the world you will have trouble. But take courage: I have overcome the world!... Lord, send forth your Spirit and our hearts shall be regenerated. And you will *renew the face of the earth!*"**

Wherever you are, let Jesus in you continue his mission of establishing the reign of God. As a faithful steward, draw on the divine *hope* that empowers you to confront every difficulty with courage and with peace.

Noon prayer:

Sometime around noon, take time out to answer these questions:

- What have I tried to change today (at home, at work, with others...).
- When did I remember to say “*In the world...*” and “*Lord, send forth your Spirit...*” (as above)?
- What is the best decision I have made today? (Don’t judge by visible results, but in the light of Christian hope).
- What is the worst decision I have made today? What have I learned from it? (Were you consciously relying on God?)

Say the WIT prayer.

Evening prayer:

*Before or after supper sit alone or with others in front of a lit candle. Take a moment of silence to ask how you tried to bring the light of Christ to bear on situations you were in today. If others are with you, then after reflecting let all share their experiences. Close with the **Te Deum:***

God, we praise you, we acknowledge you as Lord. You all the angels, all the powers of heaven, Cherubim and Seraphim, with never-ending voice are praising: Holy, holy, holy, Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

You the glorious college of Apostles; you the splendid fellowship of prophets; you the white-robed company of martyrs; you the holy assembly of the Church throughout the world acclaim: Father immense in majesty, Son only and true, worthy of all worship, Holy Spirit,

Comforter and Guide.

You Christ, are King of Glory, you the eternal Son of the Father. You, to free the human race, took flesh in the womb of the Virgin. You, by drawing the sting of death opened to believers the Kingdom of heaven. You the Judge whose coming we await are seated at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father.

Therefore we beg you: Come to the aid of your family, redeemed by your precious blood. And count us forever with your Saints in glory.

Amen.

Night prayer:

Before sleeping, pick up the Bible from your pillow and read at least *one line*. Then read with confidence the promise of Jesus (John 15: 1-8):

I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower.

He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit.

You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you.

Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.

I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me

and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.

Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

Say the Our Father.

Sacramental Focus

Focus on living out the Sacrament of *Anointing*, which reminds us that, if God is going to be present to strengthen us to embrace even death, he will also be present now whenever we need his strength to persevere in working for change in the world.

Live out *Anointing* by consciously acting as a *steward of Christ's kingship*. Act confidently as Christ for the transformation of policies and priorities, attitudes and activities. Take responsibility by *noticing* everything around you that calls for change. Do whatever you can.

Read:

- *Experiencing the Mass: The Rite of Communion*

- *A Fresh Look at Confession: The Sacrament of Stewardship*
- *Living the Sacraments:*
 - Chapter 11: A Conversion to Courage
 - Chapter 12: A Conversion to Love
 - Chapter 13: Am I Working for the Kingdom of God

Doctrinal Focus (Leadership)

Read Vatican II's document on *The Apostolate of the Laity*.

Some principles:

Everyone should exercise leadership. Only a few people are given authority; but anyone who sees what needs to be done should exercise leadership by suggesting it..

This calls for holiness: The bishops declared: “*The success of the lay apostolate depends upon the laity’s living union with Christ. We need to take seriously the call to holiness.*”

If every Christian seriously tries to become able to hear God’s voice, persevering in a plan of spiritual growth, God will answer our prayer: “Send forth your Spirit, and *our hearts will be regenerated. And you will renew the face of the earth.*”

Spiritual Focus (Abandonment to Stewardship)

Recommended reading

- *His Way:*
 - Chapter 10: The Key to Lay Spirituality: *Monk or Martyr*
 - Chapter 11: How to Walk Alone Together
 - Epilogue: Take One Step to Begin With
- *Reaching Jesus: Five Steps...* Step Five: The Choice to Be a Steward
- *The Nuts and Bolts of Daily Spirituality:* Just Notice
- *The Five Promises of Baptism:* Fifth Promise: Victory
- *Five Steps to the Father:* Phrase, Phase Five: *Give...and Forgive:*
Abandonment and The Phrase That Is Not a Phase: *Save... Deliver*
Matthew Series: • *Until He Comes* (whole book).

Guide to the Scripture readings used during the *Liturgy of the Word*.

If you wish to profit more from the readings at Mass, each year read the Gospel that is being read at Mass during that year. And begin each New Testament reading (letter of the Apostles) on the Sunday when selections from it begin to be read at Mass. Use the chart below to pace yourself.

Advent-Christmas: There is no consistent pattern for the readings. To keep in the spirit of the season ***read John's Gospel*** and

- For Advent Sundays 1-4: *Isaiah*, chapters 1-39
- For Christmas Sundays: *Isaiah*, chapters 40-66
- For Advent Weekdays: *Isaiah*
- For Christmas Weekdays: the *First Letter of John*.

Lent: There is no consistent pattern for the readings.

Easter season: Read the ***Gospel of John*** and the ***Acts of the Apostles***.

Sundays of Easter: also read:

- Year A: *1 Peter* • Year B: *1 John* • Year C: the book of *Revelation*.

Ordinary Time, Sundays:

SUNDAYS, YEAR A: Read Matthew's Gospel. And also:	
Sunday 2-8	Read <i>1 Corinthians</i> chapters 1- 5 (continued in Year B)
Sunday 9-24	Read <i>Romans</i>
Sunday 25-28	Read <i>Philippians</i>
Sunday 29-34	Read <i>1 Thessalonians</i>

Ordinary Sundays of the Year:

SUNDAYS, YEAR B: Read Mark's Gospel. And also:

Sunday 2-6	Read <i>1Corinthians</i> chapters 6-11 (continued in Year C)
Sunday 7-14	Read <i>2Corinthians</i>
Sunday 15-21	Read <i>Ephesians</i>
Sunday 22-26	Read <i>James</i>
Sunday 27-34	Read <i>Hebrews</i> ch 1-10 (continued in Year C).

SUNDAYS, YEAR C: Read Luke's Gospel. And also:

Sunday 2-8	Read <i>1Corinthians</i> chapters 12-15
Sunday 9-14	Read <i>Galatians</i>
Sunday 15-18	Read <i>Colossians</i>
Sunday 19-22	Read <i>Hebrews</i> chapters 11-13
Sunday 23	Read <i>Philemon</i>
Sunday 24-26	Read <i>1Timothy</i>
Sunday 27-30	Read <i>2Timothy</i>
Sunday 31-34	Read <i>2Thessalonians</i>

Ordinary Time, Weekdays:

Weeks 1-9: Read *Mark's* Gospel.

Weeks 10-21: Read *Matthew's* Gospel.

Weeks 22-34: Read *Luke's* Gospel.

- And for the *first reading* each weekday, use the charts below:

YEAR I (odd-numbered years):

Weeks 1-4	Read Hebrews (ch. 1-13)
Weeks 5-6 (Fr)	Read Genesis (ch. 1-11)
Week 6 (Sa)	Read Hebrews (ch. 11:1-7)
Weeks 7-8	Read Sirach
Week 9	Read Tobit
Weeks 10-11	Read 2Corinthians
Weeks 12-14	Read Genesis (ch. 12-50)
Weeks 15-17 (Th)	Read Exodus
Week 17 (Fr - Sa)	Read Leviticus (ch. 23-25)
Week 18 (Mo -Th)	Read Numbers (ch.11-20)
Week 18 (Fr) - 19 (We)	Read Deuteronomy
Week 19 (Th - Sa)	Read Joshua
Week 20 (Mo -Th)	Read Judges
Week 20 (Fr - Sa)	Read Ruth
Weeks 21 –22 (Tu)	Read 1Thessalonians
Weeks 22 (We) - 23 (Th)	Read Colossians
Weeks 23 (Fr) to 25	Read 1Timothy
Week 25 (Mo - We)	Read Ezra
Week 25 (Th - Fr)	Read Haggai
Weeks 25-26 (Sat -Tue)	Read Zechariah
Week 26 (We -Th)	Read Nehemiah
Week 26 (Fr - Sa)	Read Baruch
Week 27 (Mo - We)	Read Jonah
Week 27 (Th)	Read Malachi
Week 27 (Fr - Sat)	Read Joel
Week 28-31	Read Romans
Week 32	Read Wisdom
Week 33 (Mo)	Read 1Maccabees, ch 1
Week 33 (Tu - We)	Read 2Maccabees, ch. 6-7
Week 33 (Th - Sat)	Read 1Maccabees, ch 6 on
Week 34	Read Daniel

YEAR II (even-numbered years):

Weeks 1-2 (Fr):	Read 1Samuel
Weeks 2 (Sa) - 4 (We):	Read 2Samuel
Weeks 4 (Th) - 5:	Read 1Kings, ch. 1-16
except Week 4 (Fr):	Read Sirach, ch. 47
Weeks 6 - 7:	Read James
Week 8 (Mo-Fr)	Read 1Peter
Week 8 (Sa)	Read Jude
Week 9 (Mo - Tu)	Read 2Peter
Week 9 (We - Sa)	Read 2Timothy
Weeks 10 -11 (Tu)	Read 1Kings, ch 17 on
Week 11 (We) - 12 (Fr)	Read 2Kings
except Week 11 (Th)	Read Sirach, ch 48
except Week 11 (Sa)	Read 2Chronicles, ch. 24
Week 12 (Sa)	Read Lamentations
Week 13	Read Amos
Week 14 (Mo - Fr)	Read Hosea
Week 14 (Sa) - 15 (Fr)	Read Isaiah
Week 15 (Sa) - 16 (Tu)	Read Micah
Weeks 16 (We) -18 (Th)	Read Jeremiah
Week 18 (Fr)	Read Nahum
Week 18 (Sa)	Read Habakkuk
Week 19 - 20	Read Ezekiel
Week 21 (Mo-We)	Read 2Thessalonians
Week 21 (Th) – 24	Read 1Corinthians
Week 25 (Mo – We)	Read Proverbs
Week 25 (Th – Sa)	Read Ecclesiastes
Week 26	Read Job
Week 27 - 28 (We)	Read Galatians
Week 28 (Th) - 30 (Th)	Read Ephesians
Week 30 (Fr) – 31	Read Philippians
Week 32 (Mo - We)	Read Titus
Week 32 (Th)	Read Philemon
Week 32 (Fr)	Read 2John
Week 32 (Sa)	Read 3John
Week 33 - 34	Read Revelation

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