

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES WEEK TEN

DAY ONE...

GRACE TO BEG FOR: Beg for the grace of **INTENSE AND OVERFLOWING JOY**—because Jesus has truly risen from the dead and He wishes to share with us freedom from sin, peace, joy, and eternal life in Heaven!

SEE MEDITATION AFTER INTRODUCTION

Rejoice!

JESUS IS TRULY RISEN AND APPEARS TO HIS MOTHER...

“This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.” (Ps 118:24) Alleluia!!! The celebration of Easter is the Solemnity of all Solemnities in the Church Liturgical Year, the most sublime and glorious of all Feast-days, the day that gives true meaning to all human existence. It is a day of immense and overflowing joy.

HISTORICAL REALITY. The rock-foundation of Christianity is that of Easter Day and all that flows from it. Every Sunday, after the Readings and the homily, all stand to profess our faith, the Creed, in which we pray with firm hope and faith: *“Jesus suffered, died, and rose from the dead...”* After the Consecration in Holy Mass, we acclaim: *“Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.”* Jesus died on Good Friday and was buried, but on the third day Jesus rose from the dead! This gives total and complete meaning to our short human existence on earth. Saint Paul expresses it succinctly: *“If Jesus is not risen from the dead, then our faith is in vain. Let us eat, drink and be merry.”* (1Cor 15:14,32) In other words, life has no real meaning aside from the historical reality of the Resurrection—that Jesus really and truly did rise from the dead on the third day as He promised.

CATHOLIC TRADITION: JESUS FIRST APPEARS TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

For countless years, the Church has always maintained that the first to experience the joy of Jesus’ Resurrection was the Blessed Virgin Mary. In fact, in the midst of the darkness of the death and burial of Jesus, on Holy Saturday Our Lady was the brightest light in the world. Even Jesus’ best friends were scandalized, confused, and uncertain about the future after Good Friday. Not true with the Blessed Virgin Mary! Nobody suffered more than Mary, aside from

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Jesus Himself, such that Mary is given as one of her titles *Queen of Martyrs*; at the same time, nobody experienced more joy than Our Lady at the Resurrection of Jesus. Her heart was pierced with the lance on Good Friday, but her heart exploded with the joy of Jesus truly risen from the dead on Easter Sunday!

FRUIT/GRACE TO BEG FOR. With the Blessed Virgin Mary, from the depth of our heart and with great and intense fervor, we want to beg for a very special grace as we celebrate Jesus who truly rose from the dead—the grace of JOY, AND OVERFLOWING JOY that reaches to the ends of the earth, in time and in eternity! Actually in the Spiritual Exercises, Saint Ignatius insists that we beg for this grace, beg for this fruit—JOY, but not just JOY, rather a most intense Joy! However, it must be highlighted the reason for this immense and overflowing joy. It is because Jesus has truly risen from the dead and will never die again, and He wishes to share with us freedom from sin, peace, joy, and eternal life in heaven! This is the reason for this intense and overflowing joy!

BIBLICAL PASSAGES AND JOY. The Bible, the Word of God, offers us countless passages and reasons why we should be overflowing with joy. Just a few verses:

“Rejoice in the Lord always. I say it again: Rejoice in the Lord.” (Phil 4:4)

“My soul does magnify the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.” (Lk 1: 46-47) (From Mary’s Magnificat)

“The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.” (Jn 20:20)

CONTEMPLATION OF JESUS APPEARING TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

BEG FOR THE GRACE. Let us now beg for the grace to imagine and contemplate that first early Easter morning and the first of Jesus’s apparitions—to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Let us beg most fervently that we will attain, through the intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, most intense joy, a joy that will overflow into our relations with others! Our joy is not meant to be kept to ourselves but to be shared with the whole world.

1. **THE FAITH OF MARY.** Though the others fell into confusion, sadness, and even doubt, Our Lady never doubted for an instant that Jesus would not rise from the dead. Even in the midst of her most intense sorrow at the foot of the cross and at the tomb, there was always a glimmer of hope burning in the depths of her heart. So it should be with us. In the midst of our sorrows, there should always be flickering a glimmer of hope because we believe in the purpose and meaning of the Glorious Resurrection of

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Jesus from the dead. Talk to Mary and beg her for a deep, dynamic, and vibrant faith and hope in the Risen Lord Jesus!

2. **IMAGINE MARY DEEPLY ABSORBED IN PRAYER AND HOPEFUL WAITING.** Our Lady is deeply absorbed in prayer, in contemplation, and in hopeful waiting for the coming and appearance of Jesus. Unite your prayer with the prayer of Mary. Accompany Mary in these moments preceding the Apparition of the Risen Lord Jesus. Contemplate the poise, the dignity, the humility, the purity, the nobility of Mary the Mother of the Risen Lord. Enter into her Heart and pray with her as she awaits the coming of the Risen Jesus.
3. **THE SUN RISING AND JESUS THE SUN OF GOD APPEARS TO MARY.** As the first streaks of the Sunday morning sun break through the windows, so Jesus appears to Mary. Strive to contemplate His appearance and the overflowing joy of Mary. As the sun rises so does Jesus the *Sun of God* rise and appear to Mary, who is also known as the *Morning Star*. Saint Ignatius highlights that one of the chief actions of the Risen Lord Jesus is that He comes to console. Now contemplate Jesus consoling Mary, the Sorrowful Mother who is now overflowing with joy as she contemplates her Risen Son. Be present with Mary and derive much fruit, great fruits of Joy at this Glorious Easter scene!
4. **TEARS OF JOY.** Contemplate the beautiful countenance of Mary, the Mother of Jesus and your Mother too. Her intense sorrow has been transformed into a superabundant joy. Jesus told the Apostles that nobody would be able to take this joy from them. Contemplate Mary as the tears well up in her eyes and trickle down her cheeks. These are tears of consolation; these are tears of joy! Mary turns and looks at you with great love as you share this moment with her. Now talk to Mary and offer her all that you are: your joys and sorrows, failures and successes, fears and doubts, plans and projects, your dreams, your past, your present, and your future. Mary is never too busy to listen to you, to speak to you, to advise you, to console you, to bring you closer to Jesus, the Risen Lord.
5. **SHALOM!!!** The word of greeting traditionally was SHALOM—which means *Peace be to you!* You can imagine this word issuing from the mouth and Heart of Jesus—*Shalom, peace be with you. Jesus is the Prince of Peace and Mary, the Queen of Peace.*
6. **HIS WOUNDS.** Jesus shows Mary His wounds—in His hands, His feet, and

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His open side revealing His Sacred Heart. This was the Heart that Mary, His Mother, formed within her most pure womb for nine months. Mary heard the Sacred Heart of Jesus beating within her inmost being. With Mary, you are invited to contemplate these wounds of Jesus. These wounds caused by the hammer blows in His hands and feet, and the lance piercing His side and Sacred Heart, are clear signs of Jesus' infinite love for all of humanity and His love for you and me. Both the Prophet Isaiah and Saint Peter refer to the wounds of Jesus: *"He was wounded for our offenses... like a lamb led to the slaughter He opened not His mouth... and by His wounds we are healed."* (Is 53:5,7) Have no fears nor inhibitions; bring your wounds to Mary and to Jesus. Beg both Jesus and Mary to heal your wounds. Either we will be *wounded wounders* or we will be *wounded healers*. Let us bring our wounds to Jesus and Mary so that we will be *wounded healers* in the midst of a wounded and broken world.

7. **REDEEMER AND CO-REDEMPTRIX.** Jesus is the Redeemer of all of humanity. His Incarnation, life, suffering and death on the cross, and Resurrection was precisely for this purpose: to save as many as want to be saved. That being said, Jesus purposely chose Mary His Mother to collaborate with Him in the redemption of the world. Contemplate your Redeemer, now risen in Glory bearing the wounds of our Redemption and next to Him is Mary, the Co-Redemptrix. Beg both Jesus and Mary for the grace of your own salvation and to work with them for the salvation of a multitude of souls. Pray for the grace to love what Jesus and Mary love most in the whole created universe—the conversion and salvation of souls.
8. **LISTEN ATTENTIVELY TO THEIR CONVERSATION.** Imagine now that you are seated at table next to Jesus and Mary. What do you think the Risen Lord and His Mother are talking about? What might Jesus say to His Mother? What might Mary say to her Son? Imagine their conversation. Listen to the tone of their voices. Contemplate their faces. Behold two of the best communicators the world has ever known! Enter into their hearts. Draw close to them as your Best Friends.
9. **WHAT ABOUT YOU?** The Risen Lord Jesus looks kindly and attentively at His Mother, whose eyes are overflowing with joy, and now they both turn to you and ask you to open up your heart to them. These are three

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questions they might ask you and you can respond to them now. Never forget, they are the best of listeners. 1) Do you love God with all of your heart, mind, and soul? If not, would you like to? 2) Jesus and Mary look at you with love and comment: “We both suffered much for the salvation of souls, as this was the will of the Heavenly Father. Tell us about your sufferings... 3) Tell us what is most heavy on your heart right now... *“Come to us all you who are weary and heavy of heart and we will give you rest. We are meek and humble of heart. You will find rest for your soul... our yoke is easy and our burden is light.”* Contemplate the Risen Lord Jesus and Mary, Mother of Jesus, Mother of the Church, and your Mother—talk to them in your own words. Fear nothing! Speak to them with trust and confidence!

- 10. JESUS’ MESSAGE TO MARY AND TO US.** In a relatively short time Jesus will ascend to be seated at the right hand of God the Father. He will not leave the Apostles nor the nascent Church alone as orphans. He promises that He will be with us until the end of time. He promises to send the Paraclete—the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier, the Sweet Guest of our soul. However, Mary will also have an essential role in the Church. Among the many titles of Mary are the following in her relationship to the Church: Mother of the Church; First disciple of Christ; Queen of the Apostles; Mother of Consolation; Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope! We can imagine Jesus talking to Mary and encouraging her in her role as Mother, as Consoler, as Teacher, as Contemplative, as anchor of hope for the early nascent Church. As you listen to the words of comfort, light, and instruction that Jesus gives to His Mother, beg both Jesus and Mary to enlighten you as to how you can be a source of light, energy, and strength to build up the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ.

Beg for the fruit of this most-consoling contemplation of the Risen Lord Jesus appearing to Mary the Mother of God, the Mother of the Church, and your Mother. The fruit of this contemplation is that of *JOY!* Not a simple joy, rather a most intense joy! Never forget that true joy can only be attained in an authentic relationship of Friendship with Jesus, Mary, the angels and the saints. A joy that no one can take from us. Saint Paul warmly exhorts us: *“Rejoice in the Lord always. I say it again: Rejoice in the Lord!”* (Phil 4:4) Mary teaches us: *“My soul rejoices in God my Savior.”*

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DAY TWO...

GRACE TO BEG FOR: Beg for the grace of **INTENSE AND OVERFLOWING JOY**—because Jesus has truly risen from the dead and He wishes to share with us freedom from sin, peace, joy, and eternal life in Heaven!

MEDITATION: READ JOHN 21:1-14 FISHERMEN BEING LED BY THE TRUE FISHER OF MEN...

After Jesus rose from the dead, Peter decided that he would go back to his profession and said: “I am going fishing!” Being a natural leader, some of the others volunteered to follow him. From this vantage point, let us dive into the Sea of Galilee and catch an abundant array of fish.

FRUIT: Beg humbly for the grace or the fruit of a most intense joy in the encounter with the Risen Lord Jesus. As Saint Ignatius reminds us: in the Easter contemplations Jesus comes to console the downhearted and the afflicted. Turn to Jesus in your desolation and He will lift you on high. Beg Our Lady to be with you in the contemplation of our Risen Lord, God, and Savior!

1. **VALUE OF WORK.** Peter did not want to sit around doing nothing but rather to be useful and use his time profitably. How important it is for us to work out our salvation in fear and trembling and not to presume upon God’s grace without doing our part. Still our work should be done with purity of intention—doing all *for the honor and glory of God*, the Ignatian motto *A.M.D.G.—Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam!* As Saint Paul reminds us: *“Whether you eat or drink, do all for the honor and glory of God.”*
2. **NOTHING IN THE NETS, NOTHING IN THE BOAT!** Despite their efforts, despite their expertise as fishermen, and despite their knowledge of Lake Galilee, still that night they caught nothing. The reason for this failure to catch any fish can be derived from one simple fact, one thing lacking: Jesus was not in the boat with them. Stop and reflect over your life in the past, and possibly even your life in the present. Our spiritual failures can be traced to one principle cause: Jesus is not in the boat working with us. We beg for joy based on the reality of the Risen Lord Jesus. If Jesus is absent from our lives, then despite all the human means that we have at our disposal, we will not experience true happiness or joy. Spiritual blessings and interior joy come from union with and sharing our lives with

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Jesus. Before undertaking any enterprise, let us never forget to invite Jesus to accompany us. He is the Best of Friends. May Jesus be with us as our Best Friend all the days of our lives!

3. **THE STRANGER ON THE SEASHORE.** As the dawn starts to break forth and the wearied bodies of the Galilean fishermen are ready to haul their nets ashore, a clear and resounding voice breaks through the wilderness and can be heard through the calm lapping of the waves. *“Little children, have you caught anything?”* The response is concise and to the point: **NO!!!**
4. **SOME TIMELY ADVICE.** The stranger now offers the forlorn and tired fishermen some timely advice—why not throw the nets on the other side of the boat and possibly they will find fish there. Apostolically, sometimes it is useful to change gears, try new programs, undertake new initiatives. However, this should only be done through the process of spiritual discernment, spiritual direction, with prudence and intelligence, and always with the utmost purity of intention.
5. **OBEDIENCE.** Tired as they are, the fishermen obey the voice of the stranger, who is really the Person of Jesus. Our efforts will come to fruition only inasmuch as we work under obedience to our commander, Jesus the Lord. Jesus was obedient even to death and death on the cross. (Phil. 2) Choosing our own will is a sure path to disaster; choosing to act in obedience the will of God is a sure path to perfection. Lucifer said **NO** and disobeyed God, and this brought disaster upon us all. Jesus and Mary obeyed God and brought to the whole world salvation and redemption.
6. **HUGE CATCH OF FISH.** The catch of fish went way beyond their wildest imagination—153 big fish! Why? It was done under the command and in obedience to Jesus the Lord. Fishing alone we will only catch the breeze. Fishing with Jesus, the catch goes beyond our wildest dreams. Apostolic endeavors without Jesus, despite the best infrastructure, result in disaster and total failure. Apostolic endeavors with Jesus produce an abundant catch of fish, harvest to the max, an abundant salvation of souls.
7. **EAGLE-EYE JOHN, THE MYSTIC AND TRUE FRIEND OF JESUS.** The youngest Apostle, the Virgin Apostle, the great Evangelist and writer, the mystic known as the Eagle due to his depth of thought, is the first to detect who this stranger on the shore really is—this is **SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST.**

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How often have we been blind to Jesus as He walks among us? How often has Jesus spoken to us and we have been deaf to His call? How often has the Lord sought us out and we have avoided His company? It is to the pure of heart, the innocent, the simple, the humble and docile that Jesus reveals His Person. Jesus expressed this in the Beatitude: *“Blessed are the pure of heart, for they will see God.”* (Mt 5:8) Like Saint John the Evangelist, talk to Jesus as your Best of Friends. May the Risen Lord Jesus call you; talk to you, and befriend you!

8. **PETER THE IMPULSIVE, PETER THE SPONTANEOUS.** As soon as he is aware that the stranger is really Jesus, Peter launches himself into the sea, but first he covers himself because he was poorly clad. We should definitely admire and even strive to imitate Simon Peter in this positive attribute: his unabashed enthusiasm and desire to be with Jesus, and to reach Jesus in whatever way possible and as quickly as possible! Indeed, what is truly lacking in the followers of Jesus is an ardent and zealous enthusiasm, fervor, and desire to be with Jesus. Instead of placid mediocrity we should pray for a fiery enthusiasm to meet the Lord Jesus. Peter could not wait for the boat to anchor, even though they were close, only about 100 yards from the shore. Love knows no limits! May Peter’s immediate diving into the lake and swimming motivate us in our pursuit of the Risen Lord Jesus!
9. **PETER CLOTHING HIMSELF.** It may seem to be a small detail that Peter clothes himself before diving into the lake, and how strange! But what a wonderful lesson for the modern world! It is the importance of the virtue of modesty in our dealings with Jesus and the Church—the Mystical Body of Christ. Jesus is challenging us to come to a keen awareness of our dignity and our destiny. Through Baptism we are Temples of the Holy Spirit, as well as Temples of the Blessed Trinity. Saint Paul reminds us of this truth and exhorts us to glorify God in our bodies. The Risen Body of Jesus challenges us to use our bodies to glorify the Lord Jesus in all times, places, and circumstances. Saint Paul tells us that we are *ambassadors of Christ*. By this, Paul reminds us of our sublime mission—to bring others to Jesus, the Lord of Lords and the King of Kings.
10. **THE RISEN LORD JESUS LOVES AND CARES FOR THE APOSTLES AND US.** One beautiful lesson from this Biblical-Easter contemplation is that Jesus watches over us and cares for us; Jesus wants to help us. Moreover, Jesus

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knows the most efficacious way, manner, and technique to help us with our problems. Indeed, Jesus is our Teacher, Lord God, and Best Friend! Turn to Jesus and talk to Him as you reflect on the miracle of the catch of the 153 big fish in Lake Galilee. Beg Jesus for the grace to rise above your human limitations; beg Jesus for the grace to know how, when, and where to lower the nets. Beg Jesus to stay with you in your apostolic endeavors. Beg the Lord Jesus to give you joy in being with Him, who truly did rise from the dead to give you life and life in abundance!!!

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DAY THREE...

GRACE TO BEG FOR: Beg for the grace of INTENSE AND OVERFLOWING JOY—because Jesus has truly risen from the dead and He wishes to share with us freedom from sin, peace, joy, and eternal life in Heaven!

SEE MEDITATION & BIBLE VERSE AFTER INTRODUCTION...

PART ONE: JOY IN KNOWING THAT HEAVEN AWAITS US!!!

In the beginning of the Spiritual Exercises, in the consideration *Principle and Foundation*, Saint Ignatius of Loyola clearly states the real purpose of our existence in the first few words: *“We are created to praise God, to reverence God, to serve God and by means of this to save our soul.”* (*Spiritual Exercises #23*). All throughout our life, even on a daily basis, we want to call to mind this all-important spiritual truth that should really motivate all of our thoughts, decisions, and actions. Succinctly summarized: we are created for Heaven. We are pilgrims sojourning in a foreign land heading towards our eternal destiny and that is HEAVEN.

Being honest with ourselves, we probably do not think enough about the reality of Heaven—what it really is and as a follow-up what are the concrete steps we should take so as to get to Heaven. The great woman Doctor of the Church, Saint Teresa of Avila, states that if we focused our lives on Heaven and its joy, beauty, and glory, then all of the crosses that God allows us to carry indeed will be very light. Life is short, Heaven and eternity is forever and ever and ever.

SAINT PAUL AND HEAVEN. Saint Paul expresses the reality of Heaven in these short but poignant words: *“Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it entered into the mind of man the glory that God has prepared for those who love Him.”* (1 Cor 2:9) And again: *“The sufferings of the present time are nothing in comparison to the glory that awaits the sons and daughters of God.”* (Rom 8:8) May these words of the Apostle Saint Paul console us and motivate us to attain and live out our own Principle and Foundation in order to attain eternal life in Heaven.

WHAT IS HEAVEN??? In this meditation/contemplation we will strive with the help of God’s grace to express at least to a limited degree some of the highlights of what we might expect once we reach Heaven.

BEG FOR THESE GRACES. Humbly place yourself in the presence of God and beg

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for these graces. 1) An overflowing and intense joy at the absorbing thought of Heaven and arriving there one day. 2) An ardent and fervent yearning for Heaven. Perhaps the words of the Psalmist can spur you on: *“As the deer yearns for running streams, so my soul longs for you my God.”* (Psalm 42:1) 3) Beg Mary, known under the title *“Cause of our joy”*, to pray for you to experience a deep inner peace and joy at the thought of Heaven to animate your desire for Heaven.

Therefore, let us enter into the very consoling and joyful consideration of what we can honestly expect to experience when we pass from this life to the next, from time into eternity, and are welcomed into our true home, Heaven!!! We will explain what is not there (the negative), and the joys that we can expect to experience and delight in for all eternity.

MEDITATION: READ BIBLE VERSES: The following are many Biblical passages that refer to Heaven. *** John 14:1-4/ I Cor 2:9/ I Cor 13:12/ I Cor 15:41-42/ Rom 8:18/ Mt 13:43)

1. **SUFFERING.** While on earth suffering is our constant lot. Physical, mental, emotional, moral, spiritual, cultural, familial—all of these are areas in which we often experience the acute reality of suffering. When we pass from earth to Heaven, we will no longer have to suffer even in the most minimal fashion. There will be no more suffering, no more tears! In your prayer, beg the Lord for patience in your suffering, to accept your suffering, and unite your suffering with the cross of Jesus for your own sanctification and the conversion of countless sinners. You might make the prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi your prayer: *“We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.”*
2. **SADNESS AND DESOLATION.** Our state of soul might be compared to the unpredictable changes in the weather. On one day there is cold wind, drizzle, rain, and sleet beating at the door of our lives, and the sun never breaks through the clouds! Then the following day, the sun breaks forth, the sweet scent of flowers fills the air, the birds are singing, and a gentle, soft breeze caresses our face. What a marked contrast within a few hours. Thus it might be with respect to the state of our soul. One day we are in the dumps, almost on the brink of despair, ready to throw in the towel and call it quits. Then the following day a powerful consolation takes hold

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of our whole being and we are both elated and elevated toward the things of Heaven. In the reality of Heaven we will no longer experience a moment of sadness or desolation, not in the least, impossible!

- 3. SICKNESS.** As a result of Original Sin, one of the effects is weakness of the body and eventual sickness, deterioration, and decay. Like an old car, the body eventually falls apart, and as an elderly man once said: one piece at a time! In Heaven we will have a glorified body incapable of suffering sickness, injury, or death! No more health problems. No need for Doctors. In the meantime, sickness is part of our daily staple!
- 4. CONFUSION, MISUNDERSTANDINGS.** Due to Original Sin there came about confusion and misunderstandings among people. We say one thing but we are understood in a totally different way, which at times causes intense suffering. Moreover, with the Tower of Babel languages were confused, which adds even more to the suffering among peoples. In Heaven clarity, transparency, understanding, and love will reign totally.
- 5. DARKNESS AND DEATH.** While on earth, the sun declines and hides its face every day, and darkness descends. So too the phantom of death will knock at the door of every person living now, and life and breath will end—a result of Original Sin. “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom 6:23) In Heaven the Face of Jesus will be our Perpetual Light as we participate in life, eternal life!

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DAY FOUR...

GRACE TO BEG FOR: Beg for the grace of **INTENSE AND OVERFLOWING JOY**—because Jesus has truly risen from the dead and He wishes to share with us freedom from sin, peace, joy, and eternal life in Heaven!

PART TWO: JOY IN KNOWING THAT HEAVEN AWAITS US!!!

Let us pass from the negative now to the positive. Let us seriously meditate upon the incredible reality of the magnificent glory that awaits the sons and daughters of God in their Heavenly Home. *“Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it entered into the mind of man the wonderful things that God has prepared for those who love him.”* (1 Cor 2:9)

MEDITATION: READ REVELATION CHAPTER 21 and 22... Meditate prayerfully for they present a vision of Heaven!

1. **INEXPRESSIBLE JOY.** In Heaven we will all experience an ineffable and inexpressible JOY that our limited human language cannot define or explain. Perhaps the best way to catch a mere glimpse would be to carry out this exercise. Call to mind the happiest day of your life, then the happiest hour, then the happiest moment of your entire life. Now multiply that joy a thousand times, then add to that joy eternity---forever and ever and ever!!! There you have a mere glimpse, a mere speck of Heaven! O how this thought should motivate us and spur us on to long for Heaven!!!
2. **UNALTERABLE PEACE.** Our life is constantly beset with tension, anxiety, uncertainty, confusion, and doubt, not to mention fears about the future. All of these stark realities often rob us of the peace that our hearts so ardently long for. In Heaven the word *SHALOM—PEACE BE WITH YOU* will reign forever. As Augustine reminds us: *“Peace is the tranquility of order.”* In Heaven, perfect order will reign in our total being perpetually.
3. **LOVE.** The greatest of all the virtues in our supernatural life is that of love or charity—supernatural love for both God and our brothers and sisters. Saint John of the Cross asserts: *“In the twilight of our existence we will be judged on love.”* In Heaven God is love, and all will love God and each other with the very love of God. How extraordinary and different from our experience in the present human plight.

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4. **FRIENDSHIP.** The Bible teaches us that if indeed we find one true friend, it is a real treasure. Furthermore, even the best of friends can fail us or even betray us—as we see in the person of Judas Iscariot. Once we reach Heaven, we will find a place of total friendship among all of inhabitants of Heaven. Anger, jealousy, rivalries, pride and selfishness—none of these will exist in Heaven! Instead we will rejoice and delight in each other!
5. **THE SAINTS.** Our friends in Heaven will be the saints. Of course, it must be stated that for us to arrive safely in Heaven we all must become saints—likely anonymous and not officially canonized, but saints nonetheless! Even now reflect upon a few of the saints that you most admire—perhaps you have read their lives, prayed and talked to them. Once in Heaven, you will be sharing eternity with them—forever and ever and ever. Just to mention a few: Saint Joseph, Saint John the Baptist, Saints Peter and Paul and all of the Apostles, Saint Stephen, Saint Augustine, Saint Thomas Aquinas, Saint John Bosco, Saint Teresa of Avila, Saint Therese, as well as Saint Faustina, Saints Jacinta and Francisco, Saint Dominic Savio, and countless others. Why not spend some time in the course of your meditation talking to your favorite saints and beg them for the grace to avoid sin, to grow in holiness, and to attain the grace of all graces—to die in the state of grace!!!
6. **ALL OF THE ANGELS.** If that were not enough, you will be in the presence of the Heavenly Hosts—you will have as Eternal Heavenly Companions the ANGELS. You will love them and they will love you! United with the angels, individually and in choir, you will be able to praise Almighty God. Enter into conversation with Saint Michael, Saint Gabriel, and Saint Raphael, as well as your own Guardian Angel! Beg for their intercession so that you will avoid sin and be faithful to God’s Heavenly inspirations now and always.
7. **MARY: THE QUEEN OF ANGELS AND SAINTS, AND QUEEN OF OUR HEARTS.** While on earth we talk to the angels, saints, Mary, and God through the veil of faith. But it will not be that way in Heaven. We will be able to contemplate the beauty and the glory of the Face of Mary and the Face of God Himself in Heaven. *“Now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.”* (1 Cor 13:12) Our Lady who is their Queen will be surrounded by the Saints, the Martyrs, the Virgins, the

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Confessors, the Shepherds of souls, the Doctors of the Church, and of course, the angels. We will see Mary's total love for the Trinity. She is the Daughter of God the Father, the Mother of God the Son, and the Mystical Spouse of the Holy Spirit. How inexpressibly great it will be to live with Mary in heaven as our life, our sweetness, and our hope, our Queen and Heavenly Mother for all eternity! Saint John Berchmans, S.J. exclaimed: *"I want to keep my eyes pure in this life so as to contemplate with utmost purity the beauty of Mary in Heaven."* May this be our ardent yearning too!!!

8. **CONTEMPLATE THE CAPTIVATING AND AWE-INSPIRING BEAUTY OF HEAVEN...** To capture and live out this point it might be of great efficacy to call to mind some natural phenomenon that seems to captivate you most in nature. Some ideas to spark your imagination: the beauty of a sunrise or sunset, God's painting of a rainbow in the sky, the multi-colored foliage of New England in mid-October—truly an arbor rainbow for miles on end, the snow-covered mountains, babbling brooks and torrential waterfalls, meadows decked and arrayed with a multitude of flowers and their celestial fragrance, the night sky speckled with starry brilliance pointing to Jesus the Light of the World, even the variety of fish in an aquarium or animals in a zoo—all of these are a mere and very pale glimpse of the beauty we will experience in Heaven and for all eternity! Allow the realm of natural beauty to raise your mind and heart to a real longing for Heaven.
9. **UNION AND FRIENDSHIP WITH JESUS.** Of course, of great importance to us when Heaven is mentioned is the reality of being with the Lord Jesus for all eternity. Jesus called the Apostles His FRIENDS and He calls us His friends as well. However, the sad truth is that sometimes we have failed Jesus, though He has never failed us. In fact, Jesus longs for us to be in Heaven with Him where He will be our Best Friend, where we will be able to talk to Him and love Him for all eternity! Right now enter into a dialogue of Friendship with Jesus. Among many things that you can talk to Jesus about should be your ardent desire to be with Him forever in Heaven. Beg Jesus for this grace.
10. **THE BLESSED TRINITY.** Of course in Heaven, most important will be total union with our Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit! Jesus will point us to the Father. Then the love between the Father and the Son

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is actually the Holy Spirit. For that reason, the Apostle John stated ***GOD IS LOVE!!!*** We will be transfixed by the glory of God! Our eyes, our mind, our affections, our will, and our total being will be irresistibly drawn to the Beatific Vision of the Blessed Trinity to love and praise the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit for all eternity. May we form the habit of praising the Trinity now while on earth, so that we may do it forever in Heaven. Amen.

Reflect on these words of Sacred Scripture one more time:

REV 21: 1-5

Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, *“Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”*

He who was seated on the throne said, *“Behold, I am making all things new!”* Then he said, *“Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”*

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DAY FIVE...

GRACE TO BEG FOR: Beg for the grace of INTENSE AND OVERFLOWING JOY—because Jesus has truly risen from the dead and He wishes to share with us freedom from sin, peace, joy, and eternal life in Heaven!

THE LORD JESUS LOVES HIS OWN & US

Because the Apostles obeyed the Word of Jesus who is the Logos/the Eternal Word of the Father, they caught a huge number of big fish. Astounded at the huge catch of fish, Peter launches into the sea to meet the Lord. His enthusiasm is so great that he cannot even wait an instant. Let us continue our Easter contemplation and observe attentively the gestures of Jesus, the Risen Lord, and rejoice intensely because we can be with the Lord in prayer. The lessons from this Biblical passage are numerous and can help to transform our own lives. Therefore, let us delve deeply into this infinite reservoir of graces that the Word of God offers us.

MEDITATION: READ JOHN CHAPTER 21 – A FOLLOW UP...

- 1. JESUS ON THE SHORE WATCHING AND CARING FOR HIS FRIENDS.** As the Apostles floundered through the night into the morning daylight without catching a fish for their nets, Jesus must have felt their frustration and sadness. They worked hard but caught nothing. So it was Jesus that transformed their apparent failure into a huge victory. Not only did they catch fish by obeying the Word of Jesus, but it was a huge catch of 153 fish, and sizeable fish, not tiny minnows! Why not enter into conversation with Jesus and tell Him your own frustrations or failures of the past and maybe even the present. He will listen to you and respond.
- 2. THE DELICACY OF CHARITY.** Knowing full well that these strong and hard-working fishermen had eaten nothing the whole night through, Jesus knows they are definitely hungry now. So Jesus takes the initiative to prepare a simple meal—bread and fish on the grill. Jesus knows you and your needs even more than you know them yourself. He knows your true hunger. Jesus knows that in the very depths of your heart, your hunger is really for Him and a deep Friendship with Him—the only Friend who will fully understand you and never fail you. Talk to the Lord now about the inner yearnings of your heart.

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3. **JESUS FEEDS THEM, BUT FIRST HE ASKS THEM TO BRING THE FISH THEY CAUGHT.** Jesus is always ready to come to our aid, but He wants us to work with Him, to collaborate with Him, and truly become *Fishers of men*. The Risen Lord Jesus wishes to call generous souls, so as to prepare them and then send them out into the deep, to drop their nets and make an abundant catch of fish. Jesus wants to save souls, but He is looking for friends to help Him in such a noble task. Talk to Jesus about your own apostolic life. Ask Jesus with great sincerity and honesty what He wants of you, and then try to be docile and obey what Jesus asks you to do.
4. **HIS WOUNDS.** They know that this is Jesus; because they can see His wounds. These are the clearest signs of the love of Jesus—His gaping wounds. The fact that Jesus was willing to suffer so much for them speaks clearly of how much Jesus really loves them. Jesus suffered these wounds for you also. How much the Lord Jesus really does love you and desires the salvation of your immortal soul! Enter into dialogue with Jesus and tell Him thanks a million times for all that He willingly suffered for you. Jesus died for you, then He rose from the dead. One day you will die, and you will be raised from the dead. If you have lived your life loving Jesus and obeying His Commandments, the Lord Jesus will take you to be with Him forever in Heaven! Open up your heart and talk to Jesus about your desire to be with Him now and in Heaven, and many other things that might occur to you.
5. **JOY IN BEING WITH JESUS.** The Apostles experience an overflowing joy in simply being with the Risen Lord Jesus. This should be the same for you. Indeed, you should rejoice in being drawn to prayer and sharing quality time with the Lord Jesus. How ironic this statement is: *“Jesus is never too busy for us; but we are at times too busy for Him.”* Find time, make time to be with the Risen Lord Jesus and talk to Him as your Best Friend. He wants to be your Best Friend, but how about you? Friendship is a two-way street. Jesus knocks at the door of your heart, but you have to open up and invite Him to sit down and dine with you.
6. **JESUS AND PETER WALKING ON THE SHORE.** Imagine now this scene. After the Apostles have eaten their fill, Jesus purposely takes Peter apart from the rest and walks with Him on the shore of Galilee. Still fresh in the mind of Peter is the prophecy that Jesus made at the Last Supper. Jesus said that all of them would leave Him alone, and Peter firmly asserted

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that he alone would be faithful to Jesus. Then Jesus made this stark prophecy: *“Amen I say to you, before the cock crows, you will have denied me three times.”* (Mt 26:34) And sure enough it happened. Jesus was arrested and Peter, who was outside in the courtyard warming himself at the fire, very clearly denied Jesus three times, insisting that he did not know Jesus.

7. **THE ALL-IMPORTANT QUESTION OF JESUS TO PETER.** Peter is still hurting because of his triple denial of Jesus that Holy Thursday night. Jesus asks Peter the simple question: *“Do you love me?”* Without hesitation Peter responds in the affirmative, upon which Jesus charges Peter with a very important mission: *“Feed my lambs.”*
8. **THE QUESTION A SECOND TIME.** Jesus asks Peter a second time the same question: *“Peter, do you love me?”* Once again Peter responds *YES*. Then Jesus charges Peter with the mission to tend His sheep.
9. **THE QUESTION A THIRD TIME.** When Jesus asks Peter if he loves Him yet again, Peter is hurt because it is now the third time. Peter says, *“Lord, you know all things, you know that I love you.”* Jesus tells Peter to feed his sheep. It may be obvious but it must be said, Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him three times because just a few days earlier Peter had denied Him three times. In other words, Peter sinned; Peter hurt Jesus by his triple denial, and Peter had to repent and do penance—repair the triple denial by a triple affirmation of love. In truth, Peter would not have been at peace with his conscience if he did not repair for his denial by telling Jesus that he really loved Him those three times. Both forgiveness and reparation are part of God’s Mercy!
10. **NOW IT IS YOUR TURN.** Imagine now that is no longer Peter, but it is you walking side by side with Jesus along the shore of Lake Galilee. As you walk next to the Good Shepherd of your soul, as you walk side by side with the Person who loves you most in the world, as you walk shoulder to shoulder with your Best Friend, the Lord Jesus, He asks you a very sincere and honest question: *“(Your Name), do you love me???”* How are you going to respond to this all-important question? Jesus wants to ask the question again, and what will you say to Him? As in the case of Peter, Jesus would like to ask you a third time if you really love Him, and what will you respond?

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- 11. YOUR FAILURES AND JESUS' LOVE, MERCY, AND FORGIVENESS.** Perhaps you have failed the Lord Jesus more than three times. Irrespective of the many times that you have fallen, Jesus always loves you and His mercy has no limits! The Word of God teaches us this basic but profound truth: *"Love covers a multitude of sins."* (1 Pt 4:8) In a word, like the sinful woman who wept at the feet of Jesus, her many sins are forgiven because she has loved much. Now it is your turn! Like Peter, walk with Jesus and enter into a deep conversation with Him, the Risen Lord Jesus who is the true Shepherd of your soul; reaffirm your love for Him and your desire to be faithful to Him until death! Not that you will never sin again, though you will sincerely try not to sin, but that you will run to His loving and merciful arms if you do!
- 12. LOVE AND FORGIVENESS LEADS TO MISSION.** Despite Peter's triple denial and apparent failure, Jesus does not give up on Peter, much less abandon him. *NO!* Jesus forgives Peter and then Jesus charges him with a very important mission—that is to be the first Vicar of Christ, the Pontiff or Pope! Peter is called to be the Chief Shepherd of the lambs and the sheep. Now it is your turn. Jesus has forgiven you for all of your failures. Jesus loves you more than you can comprehend! But now Jesus commissions you with a responsibility, and that responsibility is to be a Shepherd of sheep and of lambs. You are called to be a good shepherd to the flock that Jesus has given to you. Talk to Jesus and ask Him what He wants you to do to bring the many wandering sheep back to the fold. Ask Jesus what is the best way to protect, to defend, to heal, to nourish, and to love the flock that has been entrusted to you. Talk to Jesus from the very depths of your heart, but with great love and trust. One last point of great importance. Never forget: For you to be a good shepherd to your sheep, you must first be a good sheep of the Good Shepherd, and that Good Shepherd is Jesus the Lord!!! *"The Lord is my Shepherd, there is nothing I shall lack."* (Ps 23:1)

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DAY SIX...

GRACE TO BEG FOR: COME HOLY SPIRIT, FILL THE HEARTS OF YOUR FAITHFUL, AND ENKINDLE WITHIN US THE FIRE OF YOUR DIVINE LOVE!

SEE MEDITATION & BIBLE VERSE AFTER INTRODUCTION...

The culmination of the Easter Season, which lasts fifty days, is the Solemnity of Pentecost—which is the Coming of the Holy Spirit upon Mary and the Apostles united in prayer in the Upper Room called The Cenacle. In this Mass, the priest wears a red chasuble in honor of the Fire of the Holy Spirit.

BEG FOR SPECIAL GRACES. In this powerful contemplation we can beg for many special graces to embellish our minds, our hearts, and our souls. Beg with fervor, faith, and frequency for special graces and Gifts. We can beg for the following:

- **OVERFLOWING JOY.** The Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Church and upon us must be an infinite reservoir of joy. Indeed, one of the special fruits of the Holy Spirit is precisely that--- JOY!
- **THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.** The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that the *Holy Spirit is the Gift of Gifts*. This being said, let us beg for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit manifested by the operation of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
- **THE SEVEN GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:** Wisdom, Knowledge, Understanding, Counsel, Piety, Fortitude, and Fear of the Lord. Beg that these Gifts will be powerfully operative in your daily life.
- **THE FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.** If indeed the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit are not stagnant but operative in us, then as from a healthy tree, we will experience the 12 fruits of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Saint Thomas Aquinas states that if we correspond to the Gifts then we are blessed with the interior sweetness of the fruits in the depths of our soul—charity, joy, faith, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, forbearance, gentleness, modesty, self-control, and chastity.
- **AUTHENTIC LOVE FOR GOD AND NEIGHBOR.** An evident manifestation of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives is an ardent desire to love God more fully and from this flows out the love that we manifest towards our neighbor.

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- **LOVE FOR MARY.** It must be said that one of the beautiful fruits of Pentecost is the presence of the Blessed Virgin Mary with the Apostles and with us! Obviously Mary is present on Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit. For that reason, Saint Louis de Montfort states that Mary is truly the Mystical Spouse of the Holy Spirit, as well as the Daughter of the Father, and the Mother of the Son.

MEDITATION: READ ACTS CHAPTER 2 PENTECOST: THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT UPON MARY AND THE APOSTLES

1. **JESUS' COMMAND AT THE ASCENSION.** Before ascending into Heaven, Jesus commands His Apostles to go into the Upper Room to pray for nine days and nine nights. His message? We must first be deeply rooted in prayer before we launch out into Apostolic activity. Venerable Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen summarizes it perfectly: *"First come, and then go."* First we must establish a deep union in Friendship with Jesus, and then we will be capable of bringing others to Jesus. So true: you cannot give what you yourself do not have! First we must talk to Jesus, and then we can talk to others about Jesus.
2. **FIRST AND MOST POWERFUL NOVENA.** This prayer meeting, this prayer experience will not be a few minutes or a few hours, but rather a full nine days. Here we have the model of what we call *The Novena—meaning nine days!* Jesus' teaching is the very simple truth: if we want to learn how to pray, then we must give time and energy to prayer. Saint Teresa of Avila, blunt and to the point, asserted: *"The best way for us to learn how to pray is by praying."* Practice makes perfect!
3. **PLACE FOR PRAYER: THE CENACLE.** The Cenacle is the prayer room where it all takes place. Yes, there must be some specific place where we can pray—a prayer corner, a prayer place, a prayer-sanctuary. If possible in front of the Blessed Sacrament is the ideal. If not possible, some quiet room in your home where you will not be disturbed. Jesus had a special place where He would pray—the Garden of Gethsemane.
4. **WHO IS PRESENT IN THIS FIRST PENTECOST?** Those present are the members of the early Church—the first priests, the first Bishops, and a very special presence in Mary—the Mother of God, the Mother of the Church, the Queen and Mother of the Apostles, and our Mother. The

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presence of Mary will be very important for the facilitating and coming of the Holy Spirit.

5. **SILENCE AND PRAYER: AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT.** God revealed His PRESENCE to the Prophet Elijah on the mountain not in the thunder, nor in the lightning, nor in the earthquake. Rather, God revealed His Presence to Elijah in the gentle breeze—a Symbol of the Holy Spirit and His Presence in our lives! Therefore, imagine that you are present in the Cenacle with the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Apostles absorbed in contemplative silence. Your prayer might be the prayer of young Samuel in the Temple: *“Speak, O Lord, for your servant is listening.”* (1 Sam 3:10)
6. **THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.** It might seem paradoxical and contradictory, but after these nine days and nine nights in deep prayer with Mary, the Mother of God, and the Apostles, now a powerful wind seems to shake the room, the Cenacle, to its very foundation. It can almost be compared to an earthquake. This is the early, nascent, primitive Church in its very beginnings. Now, more than 2000 years later, the Church is in dire need of an earthquake—one that will shake the Church to its very foundations!!! The Church today is in dire need of conversion!!! The Church is an enormous, sleeping giant that must be awakened. (Close to 1.2 billion members in total.) The Church members need an earthquake in their lives, or a powerful electric shock, really a shock-treatment that will awaken them! The Holy Spirit desires to work in us in a powerful way, but to do so, we must allow Him to penetrate and permeate our lives in their totality!
7. **POWERFUL WIND.** The Holy Spirit can come through a gentle breeze, but He can also be manifest in a powerful wind. By this powerful wind the Holy Spirit desires so ardently to blow away all the chaff in our lives, the weeds in our gardens, the cob-webs in our minds, the weakness in our spiritual muscles, the inertia in our souls. He wants to transform us into saints! For this reason, the newly canonized Pontiff, Saint Pope John XXIII asserted with clarity and truth: *“The true masterpieces of the Holy Spirit are the saints!”* In your prayer, as you are present with Mary and the Apostles in the Cenacle, beg the Holy Spirit with great power to blow away from your life all that is displeasing to the Blessed Trinity.
8. **THE FIRE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.** Furthermore, the Holy Spirit manifests His

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Presence through the symbol of FIRE. Indeed, as the Apostles are praying with the Blessed Virgin Mary this first Pentecost, there is wind and shaking, but also there is FIRE. Upon the heads of the Apostles can be seen TONGUES OF FIRE. Imagine you are present and that same FIRE descends upon you. Be present and allow the Holy Spirit to come upon you! Fire can accomplish many things. First of all, fire can enlighten the darkness in our minds. Beg most fervently that the dark clouds of ignorance still present in your mind will be dispelled and cast out by the FIRE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. Second, another property of FIRE is that it heats. How easy it is for our love for God to grow cold. The Book of Revelation, the last Book of the Bible, states with stark truth: *“You have lost your first love... Return to your first love; otherwise, I will take your candelabra from you.”* (Rev 2:4-5) Also from Revelation: *“You are neither hot nor cold, I wish you were, but you are lukewarm; therefore, I will vomit you from my mouth.”* (Rev 3:15-16) Though Biblical, these are very strong words!!! Therefore, we want to beg the Holy Spirit for ardent fire, to enkindle our hearts with the Fire of His Divine Love! In the words of Jesus: *“I have come to cast fire on the earth and I am not in peace until that fire be enkindled.”* (Lk 12:49) Finally, *“Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire.”* (St. Catherine of Siena)

9. **SPEAKING IN TONGUES.** As a result of the coming of the Holy Spirit in Tongues of Fire, upon the Apostles is conferred a very special gift—the ability to speak in other languages without any formal preparation or study. It is a gratuitous Gift from God so that they can preach the Word of God to the entire world and save a multitude of souls for the Kingdom of God. Now it is your turn. Beg the Holy Spirit for the Gift of Tongues for yourself in this sense, beg for the ability to speak and communicate God’s Word must powerfully and efficaciously so that you can be a powerful instrument in God’s hands to save countless souls! The words of Jesus are more pertinent now than ever: *“The harvest is rich but the laborers are few. Ask the Lord of the Harvest to send more laborers into the vineyard.”* (Mt 9:37-38)
10. **UNITY, LOVE, PEACE, JOY, AND STRENGTH—THROUGH THE PRESENCE AND INTERCESSION OF MARY.** Mary has many beautiful titles. Among the many are the following: Mary as Mystical Rose, Queen of the Apostles, Mystical Spouse of the Holy Spirit, Queen of Peace, Mary as our life, our

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sweetness, and our hope! During the Public Life of Jesus, that lasted about three years, the Apostles were very imperfect to put it mildly. However, after these nine days of prayer, silence, and fasting with the presence of the most Blessed Virgin Mary, there is a radical transformation in all of them. Such that all, with the exception of Saint John, will die by shedding their blood as martyrs for love of Jesus, their Best Friend, after spreading the Gospel truth for the salvation of countless souls. Beg Our Lady, the Queen of the Apostles, to pray fervently for you, for your intentions, and for your life that you too will be transformed into a fiery Apostle to save countless souls. Mary, Mystical Spouse of the Holy Spirit, Queen of the Apostles, pray for me now and at the hour of my death. Amen.

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DAY SEVEN...

GRACE TO BEG FOR: COME HOLY SPIRIT, FILL THE HEARTS OF YOUR FAITHFUL, AND ENKINDLE WITHIN US THE FIRE OF YOUR DIVINE LOVE!

MEDITATION... GET TO KNOW THE HOLY SPIRIT—GOD’S GIFT TO YOU!

Common sense teaches us that it is almost impossible for us to really love a person if we do not know that person. This principle can be applied to our relationship with God, to our relationship with the Blessed Trinity, to our relationship with Jesus, to our relationship with the Holy Spirit.

GET TO KNOW GOD AND JESUS. In the Diary *Divine Mercy in My Soul*, Jesus points out to Saint Faustina that one of the ways that she can get closer to God, get to know God better, is to meditate upon one or more of His attributes. By attribute is meant, a descriptive quality. Such as Omnipotence, Omniscience, Wisdom, Eternal, Infinite, Love—these are a few of the attributes given to God. With respect to Jesus, there are many we can glean from the Gospel text: Lord, God, Savior, Way, Truth, Life, Good Shepherd, Bread of Life, Lamb of God, Light of the World, the Alpha and Omega, etc. Following up on this line of thought, let us apply this now to the Person of the Holy Spirit. There are many titles that can be attributed to the Holy Spirit, especially in the prayer called “*The Sequence*” that the Church prays on the Solemnity of Pentecost, as well as in the prayer that the Church calls “*Litany of the Holy Spirit.*”

TITLES FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT. This brief meditation has as its thrust and purpose to highlight ten of the most noteworthy titles given to the Holy Spirit to know the Holy Spirit better and deeper, speak more often to the Holy Spirit as a Best-Friend, and most important to fall in love with the Person of the Holy Spirit! In fact, it is the Holy Spirit Himself who can teach us to sincerely love!

- 1. THE SANCTIFIER.** Let us initiate our meditation on the Holy Spirit with the title “*The Sanctifier*”. What this word really means is that the Holy Spirit is the one who makes us holy! Saint Pope John XXIII stated: “*The saints are the masterpieces of the Holy Spirit*”. Indeed, you are called to become a saint. Therefore, why not entrust your goal and mission to the Person of the Holy Spirit. Pray this simple prayer every day: “*Holy Spirit make me a saint!!!*” By way of biographical note, we encourage you to read the spiritual masterpiece of the saintly Bishop of Mexico City, Luis Martinez,

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in his work on the Holy Spirit with the title (you can probably guess it?)
“The Sanctifier”!

2. **CONSOLER.** Life can be tough! The cross at times can be exceedingly heavy and burdensome. Trials, contradictions, and even persecutions can visit us frequently. With the cross weighing heavy on our shoulders, we all need at times some consolation from a Good Friend. That consolation can come from the Holy Spirit who is invoked as *The Consoler*. In the classical prayer to the Holy Spirit we pray: *“May we always rejoice in His consolation.”*
3. **COUNSELOR.** Not only is the Holy Spirit known as the *Consoler* but also as the *Counselor!* When in doubt, when the heavy cloud of uncertainty descends upon you, when weariness, frustration and confusion seem to darken your reasoning powers, then it is time to recoil from the battle-field and to fervently invoke and pray to the Holy Spirit for light, for counsel, for insight so that you can make the right decision for the honor and glory of God and for the salvation of immortal souls. Pray as such: *“Holy Spirit, cast out my darkness and give me light!”*
4. **INTERIOR MASTER OF PRAYER.** Anyone who takes their spiritual life and their prayer life seriously, sooner or later will encounter obstacles on the road to progress. This is par for the course in the spiritual life! Therefore, when it seems as if your prayer life is stagnant or even paralyzed, that you are on a spiritual tread-mill going nowhere fast, then it is most certainly the time and moment to invoke the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Even the great Apostle Saint Paul, in his Letter to the Romans, expressed his struggle in prayer with these words: *“We do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Holy Spirit intercedes with ineffable groans so that we can say Abba-Father.”* (Rom 8: 36) Indeed the Holy Spirit is the Interior Master of your soul and He is most willing to help you to pray if you have an open and docile heart.
5. **THE GIFT OF GIFTS.** One of the simplest but sublime titles that is given to the Holy Spirit in the Catechism of the Catholic Church is that of *The Gift of Gifts!* The nature of the theology of Gift is that it is given freely, free of charge. We simply have to open our hearts to receive it! If God wants to give *The Gift of Gifts* to you, the *Holy Spirit*, then open up your heart in humble gratitude and receive it!

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6. **THE BOND OF LOVE.** In the Mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity, the Holy Spirit is the bond of love between the Father and the Son. In a word, the Holy Spirit is uncreated love. Saint Paul states that charity—supernatural love—is the bond of perfection. Why not beg the Holy Spirit right now to set your heart on fire with the love of God! Saint John of the Cross writes most beautifully: *“In the twilight of our existence we will be judged on love.”*
7. **SWEET GUEST OF THE SOUL.** One of the most poetic and beautiful titles found in the Prayer to the Holy Spirit on Pentecost called *The Sequence* is the following: *“Holy Spirit: Sweet Guest of the Soul.”* In essence, its meaning is the following: through Baptism we became living Temples of the Blessed Trinity, and this of course includes the Presence of the Holy Spirit. Not only is He a Guest in the most intimate part of our being, which is our soul, but still more, He is the SWEET GUEST! As honey is to the tongue, as the fragrance of spring roses is to the nostrils, so is the Holy Spirit to the docile, humble, and loving soul. In the midst of the bitter valleys and dark tunnels that we must all traverse, in the depths of our being we can invoke the Holy Spirit as *The Sweet Guest of our soul.*
8. **THE SOUL OF THE CHURCH.** With respect to basic Ecclesiology, the study and knowledge of the Church, the Holy Spirit has a primary and essential role. Jesus is the Head of the Mystical Body, the Church. We are the Members of the Mystical Body, the Church. The Holy Spirit is the SOUL of the Mystical Body, the Church. By definition the soul is the *life-giving principle!* Indeed, if we truly want to experience life and life in abundance in the Lord and His Church we must constantly invoke the Presence of the Holy Spirit. *“In Him we live and move and have our being.”*
9. **THE PURIFIER.** One of the most common symbols or images for the Holy Spirit is that of FIRE. On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles with Tongues of Fire. Our God is a devouring Fire. By drawing close to this devouring Fire—which is the Holy Spirit—He will burn away in us anything that is not pleasing to God. Saint John of the Cross uses the image of a piece of rusty metal cast into an ardent and scathing fire. In time all the rust falls off and the metal becomes like the fire. So the Holy Spirit, this consuming Fire, works efficaciously to burn and purify from us all the sins and residual effects of sin. Until we can say with Saint Paul: *“It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.”* (Gal 2:20)

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10. THE MYSTICAL SPOUSE OF MARY. Finally, the Holy Spirit in His relationship to the Blessed Virgin Mary is that of being the Mystical Spouse. It was through the powerful intervention of the Holy Spirit that the Blessed Virgin Mary conceived Jesus—the sublime accomplishment of the Incarnation of the Son of God. Saint Louis de Montfort makes this interesting connection: *“Those who love Mary, the Holy Spirit flings Himself into their souls.”*

In conclusion, by praying and meditating upon these ten titles or names or descriptions of the Holy Spirit, you will get to know this *Sweet Guest of your soul*, then you will enter into more frequent conversation with your *Interior Master*, and finally you will learn the art of truly loving God with your whole being, and your neighbor, created in the image and likeness of God. *Come Holy Spirit, come through the Heart of Mary.*

CONTINUING FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES:

- 1) *Repeat the Spiritual Exercises Ten Week Course*, especially if this is your first time through the course! There is too much material to absorb the first time through. Take the course again and go deeper!
- 2) *Discernment of Spirits Class* – Notification by e-mail.
- 3) *Daily Perseverance Class* – Father Ed’s on-going formation class. Daily 7:30 am to 8:30 am live stream on his Facebook.
- 4) *On-Line and Electronic Formation Opportunities in English and Spanish:*
 - Father Ed publishes blog articles, records podcasts, and posts YouTubes on his website www.fatherbroom.com
 - Father Ed daily live streams: Masses, homilies, and various classes which can be accessed at www.facebook.com/frbroom
- 5) *Annual 8-Day Silent Ignatian Retreat* the last week of July at the Carmelite Sacred Heart Retreat House – sells out every year! Registration usually begins in January. Notification by e-mail.
- 6) Father Ed schedules a *Holy Hour and Mass* approximately every five to six weeks for those who have gone through the Spiritual Exercises. Notification by e-mail.

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7) *Other Special Events*. Notification by e-mail.

PLEASE NOTE: If you have not received an e-mail from us, you are not on our e-mail list. Request to be added by e-mailing lovegodssavesouls@gmail.com

Beg for the grace to *PERSEVERE IN YOUR DAILY HOLY HOUR!* Meditation ideas:

- 1) The Gospel and Epistle of the Day
- 2) Commentaries by Magnificat or On-Line sources: Catholic Exchange, Aleteia, etc.