

A man with a beard and glasses is kneeling on a rocky mountain peak. His arms are raised high in the air, palms facing forward, in a gesture of prayer or praise. The background is a vast landscape of rolling mountains under a warm, golden sunset sky. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a strong backlight effect on the man's silhouette and the mountains.

WHO DO YOU SAY I AM?

REVELATION 5: TRANSFORMED WITNESSES
OF JESUS
WEEK 2, DAY 1

PRACTICING JOY

MICHAEL FONSECA, D. MIN



MORNING *Prayer*



Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God in three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that your divine Son became man and died for our sins, and that He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the holy Catholic Church teaches because in revealing them you can neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.

Act of Hope

O my God, relying on your almighty power and infinite mercy and promises, I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of your grace, and life everlasting through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer. Amen.

Act of Charity

O my God, I love you above all things with my whole heart and soul because you are all good and worthy of all my love. I love my neighbor as myself for the love of you. I forgive all who have injured me and ask pardon of all whom I have injured. Amen.

Morning Offering

O Jesus, through the immaculate heart of Mary, I offer you my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day in union with the holy sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world. I offer them for all the intentions of your Sacred Heart: the salvation of souls, reparation for sin, the reunion of all Christians. I offer them for the intentions of our bishops and of all the apostles of prayer, and in particular for those recommended by our Holy Father this month. Amen.



Preparing for the Journey

listen



In Revelation Five, Week Two, we will continue to examine how Jesus' witnesses testify to His identity and mission as the Son of God. On Days One and Seven we continue to offer Helps to Prayer. On Day One, we will consider Practicing Joy. Joy is the experience of Jesus as our Lord and God. Jesus is Lord and God because He suffered and died and rose from the dead. He vanquished permanently the dominion of Satan and the darkness of sin. Jesus Christ is our permanent security. He is our Way, Truth, and Life. We are, therefore, joyful!

On Day Seven, we will reflect on Practicing the Presence of God. The Practice of the Presence of God throughout the day has been a long-standing tradition among holy men and women. As we move deeper into covenant union with the Blessed Trinity through Jesus, we put on the mind and heart of Jesus. The practice of the presence of God becomes our normal state of soul and lifestyle. We are truly living in the Resurrection and Life of Jesus.

On Day Two, we will ponder The Magdalene's Witness. Before she met Jesus, Mary was a demoniac who was oppressed by seven demons, a number signifying total dominance by Satan. Through Jesus, she experienced health of body and mind, and her spirit was healed. Jesus became her Lord and Messiah. Only Jesus could recognize God's own image and likeness in Mary, and snatch it out of the hands of Satan, claiming her as His own.

On Day Three, we will reflect on The Appearance to the Disciples. Jesus, the Risen Lord, breathes into them His own divine life through His Holy Spirit. Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus gives His apostles the power to forgive and retain sin. Twenty centuries of chosen humans, our bishops and priests, exercising this power in Jesus' name, has turned out to be an immense grace. The breathing of the Holy Spirit upon us by Jesus is our re-creation. We are begotten of the Spirit who will guide us to all truth, and in doing so will give glory to Jesus!



Preparing for the Journey

On Day Four, we will ponder The Appearance in Jerusalem. Jesus allays whatever doubts His disciples might have had about His resurrection. Jesus still has His body in His risen state. As proof, He asks them to look at His hands and feet, and to touch Him, so that they know He is truly risen and is no ghost! As further proof, He ate a piece of baked fish in their presence. The Risen Lord is God-with-us, in the truest sense of the word!

On Day Five, we will reflect on The Doubting Thomas. Thomas was stubbornly unwilling to believe the eyewitness accounts of his colleagues. A week later, Jesus appeared to the group and Thomas was with them. Jesus invited Thomas to probe the nail marks with his hand so that he might believe. Instead, Thomas exclaimed in astonished belief: "My Lord and my God!" The chasm was finally bridged, from despairing disbelief to sublime adoration!

On Day Six, we will reflect on The Disciples on the Road to Emmaus. Luke describes them as disbelieving and downcast. They were not willing to accept the witness of some women in their community even though they were astounded by the revelation. Jesus opened their minds and hearts to see how all the prophecies about the Messiah would reach their climax in His resurrection. In doing so, Jesus prepared them to recognize Him in the breaking of the bread. They experienced a profound change that sent them back to their community with intense peace and burning joy!



Face to Face WITH GOD



PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Come, Holy Spirit, and overshadow me with your gentle wisdom and power as I endeavor to sit at the feet of Jesus during this period of prayer. Purify my mind and heart as I seek to make the teachings of Jesus my priority in life, thinking, speaking, and doing as He desires. You are the Keeper of my soul, leading me into God's heart. May I be docile and submissive to your wisdom and guidance, and may my life be a pleasing offering in your sight, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Joy is the experience of Jesus as our Lord and God. Jesus is Lord and God because He suffered and died and rose from the dead. In doing so, He vanquished permanently the dominion of Satan and the darkness of sin. We are established firmly in the victory of the Risen Lord who will “give the victor the right to sit with me on my throne, as I myself first won the victory and sit with my Father on his throne” (Revelation 3: 21). No matter what the challenging circumstances of our lives might be, our joy is the grace that Jesus Christ is our permanent security. He is our Way, Truth, and Life. In Him we live, move, and have our being. We are, therefore, joyful!

In Jesus, the fullness of Deity dwells. Jesus is truly God and truly man. He has the fullness of Deity. Jesus is truly divine. Through Jesus, we have all been reconciled with the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit (Colossians 1: 19-20). In Jesus, we have become God's covenant family. We are the Father's sons and daughters. With Jesus, we address God as Father, in the same way as Jesus does. In Jesus' love for His Father and for us, we are joyful!

We are now God's covenant family. The Blessed Trinity shares the fullness of the divine life with us. Jesus abides in us. He is the Head and we are His body! His Father who abides in Jesus now abides in us. The Holy Spirit, given to be our Advocate, dwells in us as the Keeper of our souls. We are, therefore, joyful!



Face to Face WITH GOD

The Holy Spirit teaches us everything and reminds us of everything that Jesus taught (John 14:26). The Holy Spirit scrutinizes everything, even the depths of God (1Corinthians 2:10), and reveals to us the treasures of God's heart. Through His power, the Holy Spirit re-creates us in the image and likeness of Jesus who is the fullness of Deity. We are, therefore, joyful!

Joy is the fruit of the peace of Christ. Peace is the comforting assurance that Jesus has overcome Satan, sin, and permanent death. No hurricane force of evil can withstand the power of His love and mercy, given to us through His death on the cross and resurrection from the dead. We are, therefore, joyful!

In joy, the reality of our souls could best be described as the multi-layers of the ocean: on the surface, we are constantly buffeted, tossed to and from, sometimes dangerously. However, hundreds of fathoms below, our souls are at rest, because the Master of the deep is also the Master of the storm. We are, therefore, joyful!

PRAYER TO THE HOLY TRINITY

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, I thank you for your gracious companionship. I praise you for being my Creator, Savior, and Lord. May I take your blessings to my day, and may your Presence envelop and permeate all my thoughts and actions, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Triune God, be my all! Triune God, be my all! Triune God, be my all!



Examination of CONSCIENCE

Prayer of Thanksgiving

O my God, I thank you for all the graces and blessings which I have received from you this day. Express to God your gratitude as you recall the blessings and graces that were present today: For what are you grateful?

Examination of Conscience

O my God, give me light to see what sins I have committed, and grant me the grace to be sorry for them: For what are you contrite? What spiritual discipline, including fasting, do you need to focus on tomorrow? Recall your sins of the day and repent in sincere sorrow for the sins you have committed, by reciting the Act of Contrition.

The Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You and I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell, but most of all because they offend You, my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace, to confess my sins, to do penance and to amend my life. Amen.





Encouragement for the Journey

You are beginning a grace-filled journey into the heart of God. You will be assisted by the Holy Spirit who will become your ardent Advocate, recreating you in the image and likeness of Jesus, and bringing you into the depths of God's Trinitarian love and compassion. Gradually, the Holy Spirit will develop the disciple's lifestyle in you. Prayer, the celebration of God's life in the Eucharist and Sacraments, Scripture and Spiritual Reading, and Ascetical Practices will become an integral part of your daily life. However, developing a disciple's lifestyle takes time and patience. There will be setbacks and lapses as we struggle with sinful urges that make it difficult to stay on the straight and narrow pilgrim road into God's Heart. In this Program, GEM will lead you slowly but surely, on your pilgrimage into God's Heart. We will offer you easy steps and gradually accelerate the process so that no violence is done to your spirit, and you experience your growth as a disciple, organically and naturally.

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My Notes

Date :

What is God saying to you?

For what are you grateful?

For what are you contrite?

My Notes

Date :

[illegible]



WHO DO YOU SAY I AM?

REVELATION 5: TRANSFORMED WITNESSES
OF JESUS
WEEK 2, DAY 2

THE MAGDALENE'S WITNESS

MICHAEL FONSECA, D. MIN



MORNING *Prayer*



Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God in three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that your divine Son became man and died for our sins, and that He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the holy Catholic Church teaches because in revealing them you can neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.

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Face to Face WITH GOD



PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

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"He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons. She went and told his companions who were mourning and weeping. When they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe." - Mark 16: 9-11

An amazing transformation has taken place in Mary Magdalene through Jesus' ministrations. Before she met Jesus, her story was scripted for disaster and tragedy. She was a demoniac who was oppressed by seven demons, a number signifying total dominance by Satan. Mary clearly belonged to the kingdom of darkness and doom. Her wretched condition brought disgrace to her family as well, the prevalent view being that her deplorable condition was the result of her own sins or the sins of her family. She was relegated to the lost sheep of Israel. Salvation was beyond her reach and God had rejected her. In these adverse circumstances, she meets Jesus: "Accompanying him were the Twelve and some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out" (Luke 8: 1-2). After her healing, along with other women of means, they provided Jesus and His disciples out of their resources (Luke 8: 3). Through Jesus, she has experienced health of body and mind, and her spirit has been healed. Jesus has become her Lord and Messiah. Only Jesus could recognize God's own image and likeness in Mary, and snatch it out of the hands of Satan, claiming her as His own.



Face to Face WITH GOD

In the shorter ending, Mark 16: 2-7, Mary Magdalene and the two other women return to the tomb of Jesus to complete the burial rites. They have a miraculous experience. The women are amazed to find that the stone closing the tomb has been rolled back. We are told that it was very large, implying that the women did not have the physical strength to roll it back and gain entrance. Then they have a vision of an angel appearing as a young man. He is dressed in a white robe, symbolic of the Risen Lord. Once again, the women are amazed. Then God's messenger gives them totally unexpected good news: "Do not be amazed! You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He has been raised; he is not here." The tomb is empty because Jesus has been raised. In the Upper Room, Jesus had told His disciples that He would meet them in Galilee after His resurrection (Mark 14: 28). The angel tells them that Jesus will be true to His word. Finally, the angel asks the women to be witnesses to the disciples. Their experience at the tomb has provided them with unshakeable certainty. They are asked to give the good news to the disciples. However, they are seized with trembling and bewilderment, and said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

In the longer version, Mark 16: 9-11, the Risen Lord gives Mary the exquisite privilege of appearing to her: "Jesus rose from the dead early on the first day of the week. He first appeared to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven demons." Fittingly, the early Christian community presented this apparition to Mary as the first one recorded in the Gospels. Mary Magdalene was one of the great icons of the early Christian community.

PRAYER TO THE HOLY TRINITY

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, I thank you for your gracious companionship. I praise you for being my Creator, Savior, and Lord. May I take your blessings to my day, and may your Presence envelop and permeate all my thoughts and actions, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

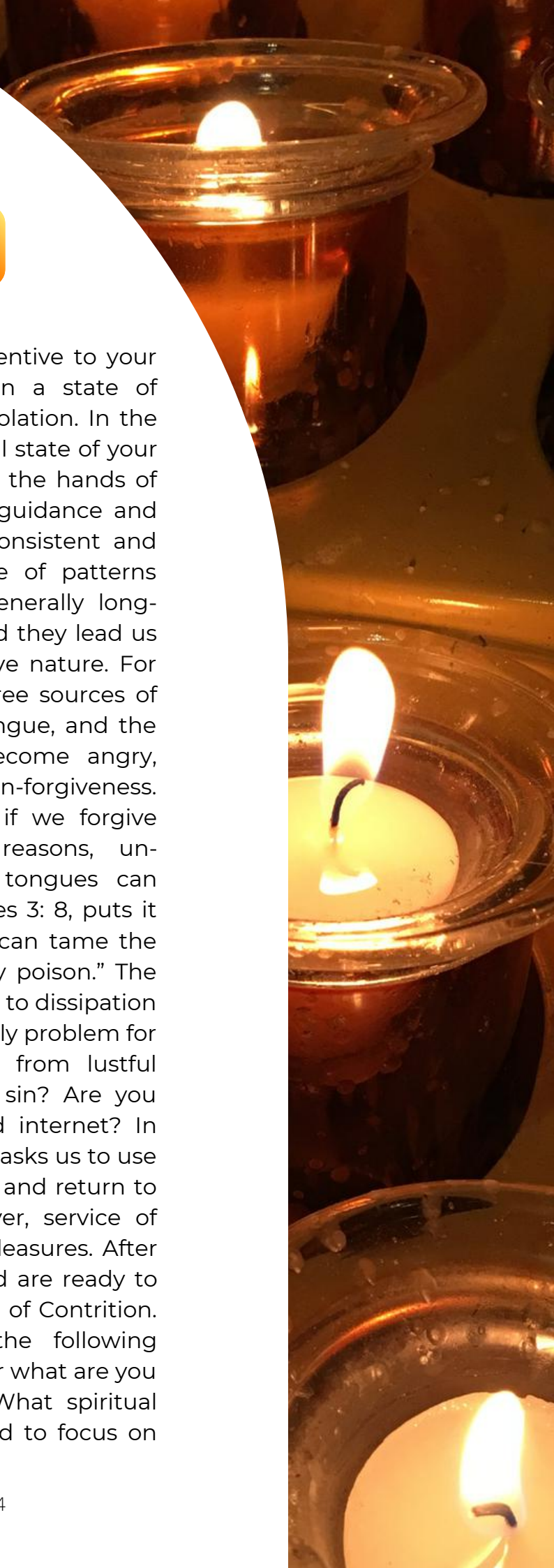
Triune God, be my all! Triune God, be my all! Triune God, be my all!

NIGHT *Prayer*

listen



This evening, you might want to be attentive to your patterns of behavior that keep you in a state of consolation as well as lead you into desolation. In the case of consolation becoming the normal state of your soul, such transformation takes place at the hands of the Holy Spirit. Under the Holy Spirit's guidance and direction, the disciple has developed consistent and productive spiritual habits. In the case of patterns leading us into desolation, they are generally long-standing and deeply ingrained in us. And they lead us into desolation because of their addictive nature. For today's review, I would like to name three sources of desolation: un-forgiveness, an unruly tongue, and the addictive use of the Internet. We become angry, unloving, and bitter when we harbor un-forgiveness. We will possess a tranquil spirit only if we forgive ourselves and others. For various reasons, un-forgiveness being one of them, our tongues can become deadly instruments of sin. James 3: 8, puts it very graphically: "But no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison." The Internet is another source that could lead to dissipation and sin. Pornography has become a deadly problem for millions of people. How free are you from lustful curiosity leading to secrecy, guilt, and sin? Are you balanced in the use of the phone and internet? In times of desolation, St. Ignatius of Loyola asks us to use every means possible to fight desolation and return to consolation. They would be more prayer, service of others, depriving oneself of legitimate pleasures. After you have examined your conscience and are ready to ask for forgiveness, you can pray the Act of Contrition. We encourage you to journal on the following questions: What is God saying to you? For what are you grateful? For what are you contrite? What spiritual discipline, including fasting, do you need to focus on tomorrow?





Examination of CONSCIENCE

Prayer of Thanksgiving

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Examination of Conscience

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The Act of Contrition

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Encouragement for the Journey

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-

My Notes

Date :

What is God saying to you?

For what are you grateful?

For what are you contrite?

My Notes

Date :

[illegible]



WHO DO YOU SAY I AM?

REVELATION 5: TRANSFORMED WITNESSES
OF JESUS
WEEK 2, DAY 3

THE APPEARANCE TO THE DISCIPLES

MICHAEL FONSECA, D. MIN

MORNING *Prayer*



Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God in three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that your divine Son became man and died for our sins, and that He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the holy Catholic Church teaches because in revealing them you can neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.

Act of Hope

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Morning Offering

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Face to Face WITH GOD



PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Come, Holy Spirit, and overshadow me with your gentle wisdom and power as I endeavor to sit at the feet of Jesus during this period of prayer. Purify my mind and heart as I seek to make the teachings of Jesus my priority in life, thinking, speaking, and doing as He desires. You are the Keeper of my soul, leading me into God's heart. May I be docile and submissive to your wisdom and guidance, and may my life be a pleasing offering in your sight, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

"Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. [Jesus] said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained." - John 20: 19-23

John 20 describes the transformation that has taken place in the lives of His disciples because of Jesus' resurrection from the dead! The disciples moved from despair to hope, from fear and anxiety to peace and joy, from doubt and questions to certainty that Jesus was raised from the dead and was God! Mary Magdalene saw the stone removed from the entrance to the tomb and wondered if Jesus' body had been stolen. She hastened to Peter and John and told them about it. The disciples went out and came to the tomb. Peter went into the tomb, and "saw the burial cloths there, and the cloth that had covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place" (John 20: 6-7). Perhaps, the way the cloths were arranged, the disciples surmised that the grave had not been robbed. John came to believe though "they did not yet understand the scripture that he had to rise from the dead" (John 20: 9).



Face to Face WITH GOD

In the next account, Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene at the tomb. Mary's sorrow and tears are turned into joy. She is no longer in doubt as she has seen and touched the Risen Lord. In obedience to Jesus' directions, she witnesses to the disciples: "I have seen the Lord" (John 20: 18) and tells them what Jesus told her. In the longer ending of Mark, we are told that the disciples did not believe Mary Magdalene's witness to the appearance of the Risen Lord.

It is no wonder then that the disciples continued to live in trepidation: "the doors were locked, for fear of the Jews" (John 20: 19). Jesus appeared in their midst and offered them His peace and showed them His hands and His side. Immediately, the disciples move from fear and trepidation to intense peace and joy: "The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord" (John 20: 20). Once again, Jesus offers them His peace and commissions them to evangelize the world: "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (John 20: 21).

Jesus then offers them the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus, the Risen Lord, breathes the Holy Spirit into His Apostles. He breathes into them His own divine life through His Holy Spirit. And through the Holy Spirit, Jesus gives His Apostles the power to forgive and retain sin. Twenty centuries of chosen humans, our bishops and priests, exercising this power in Jesus' name, has turned out to be an immense grace. We too have received the Holy Spirit in our baptism and confirmation. The breathing of the Holy Spirit upon us by Jesus is our re-creation. We are begotten of the Spirit who will guide us to all truth, and in doing so will give glory to Jesus!

PRAYER TO THE HOLY TRINITY

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Examination of CONSCIENCE

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My Notes

Date :

What is God saying to you?

For what are you grateful?

For what are you contrite?

My Notes

Date : _____

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



WHO DO YOU SAY I AM?

REVELATION 5: TRANSFORMED WITNESSES
OF JESUS
WEEK 2, DAY 4

THE APPEARANCE IN JERUSALEM

MICHAEL FONSECA, D. MIN



MORNING *Prayer*



Act of Faith

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Face to Face WITH GOD



PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

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"He stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." But they were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost." Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have." ... While they were still incredulous for joy and were amazed, he asked them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of baked fish; he took it and ate it in front of them...Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures. And he said to them, "Thus it is written that the Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and that repentance, for the forgiveness of sins, would be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem." - Luke 24: 36-47

In his account of Jesus' appearance in Jerusalem, Luke offers us some interesting details that enhance our appreciation of our Risen Lord. Jesus allays whatever doubts His disciples might have had about His resurrection and the resurrected state. Jesus makes it clear that He still has His body in His risen state. He asks them to look at His hands and feet, and to touch Him, so that they know He is truly risen and is no ghost! As further proof, He ate a piece of baked fish in their presence.



Face to Face WITH GOD

Luke is at great pains to emphasize the realness of Jesus' resurrected body. Luke was Paul's disciple and accompanied him on his missionary journeys. In Acts 18, Luke talks about Paul's visit to Corinth where he stayed for a year and a half. Undoubtedly, Luke was influenced by Paul's emphasis on the resurrection of our own bodies as a necessary consequence of Jesus' resurrection from the dead. Paul talks convincingly about the far-reaching implications of Jesus' Resurrection to the Corinthians: "And if Christ has not been raised, then empty [too] is our preaching; empty, too, your faith... For if the dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised, and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is vain; you are still in your sins" (1Corinthians 15: 14, 16-17). After this appearance of the Risen Lord and following Paul's teaching, the Church has come to appreciate the resurrection of our bodies as a necessary consequence of the resurrection of Jesus.

In this appearance and Jesus' appearance to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus, Luke highlights the need for Jesus to open the minds and hearts of His disciples to understand the scriptures. All the prophecies about the Messiah, especially the Four Suffering Servant Oracles of Isaiah, pointed to Jesus being the suffering Messiah who would die on the cross and rise from the dead on the third day. Indeed, Jesus came to fulfill the law and the prophets, not to abolish them.

Another important emphasis in Luke's writings is Jesus' commissioning of His disciples to preach repentance for the forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. Before He ascended to the Father, Jesus said, "You will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1: 8).

PRAYER TO THE HOLY TRINITY

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, I thank you for your gracious companionship. I praise you for being my Creator, Savior, and Lord. May I take your blessings to my day, and may your Presence envelop and permeate all my thoughts and actions, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Triune God, be my all! Triune God, be my all! Triune God, be my all!

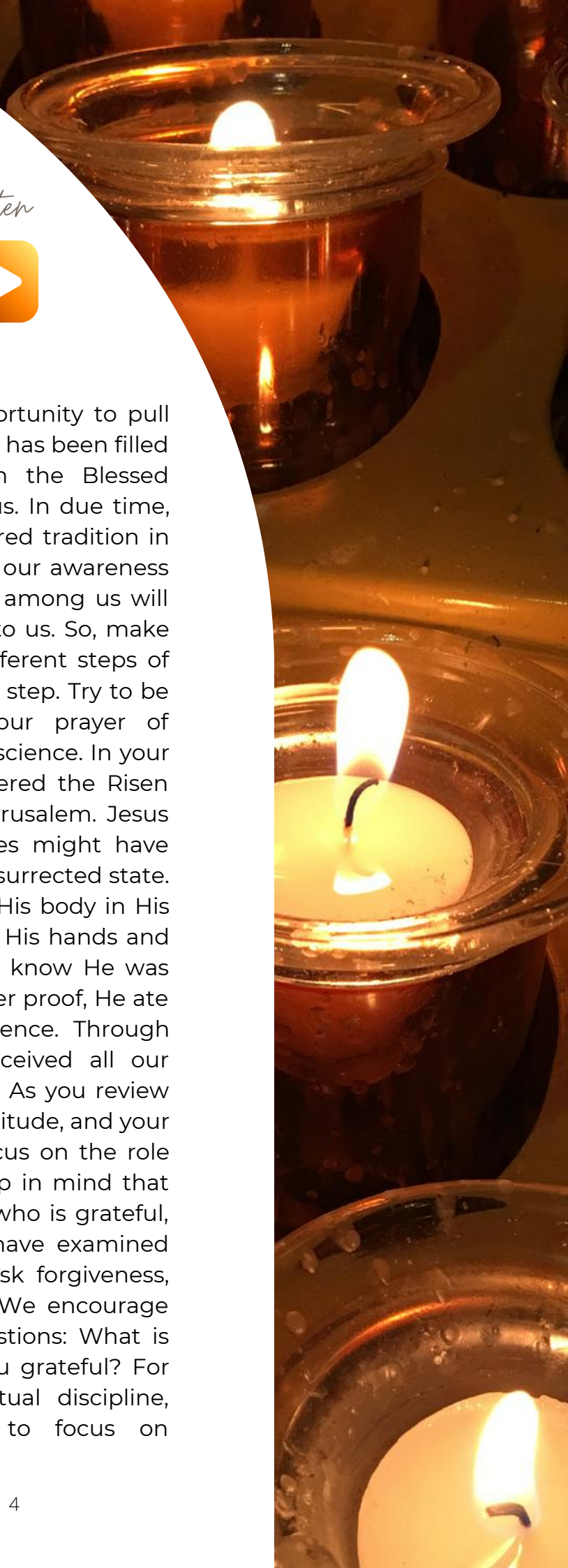
NIGHT

Prayer

listen



The nightly review gives us the opportunity to pull ourselves together to see how our day has been filled with blessings and graces through the Blessed Trinity's presence in us and among us. In due time, the nightly review will become a sacred tradition in our discipleship. In due time, as well, our awareness of God's constant love and presence among us will deepen and become second nature to us. So, make sure you take your time over the different steps of the review, tasting and relishing each step. Try to be deliberate and intentional with your prayer of thanksgiving and examination of conscience. In your morning Face to Face, you encountered the Risen Lord appearing to His disciples in Jerusalem. Jesus allayed whatever doubts His disciples might have had about His resurrection and the resurrected state. Jesus made it clear that He still had His body in His risen state. He asked them to look at His hands and feet, and to touch Him, so that they know He was truly risen and was no ghost! As further proof, He ate a piece of baked fish in their presence. Through Jesus, our Risen Lord, we have received all our blessings from Our Father in heaven! As you review your blessings from the Lord with gratitude, and your failures with repentance, you can focus on the role the Holy Spirit plays in your life. Keep in mind that the Lord always blesses the disciple who is grateful, honest, and transparent. After you have examined your conscience and are ready to ask forgiveness, you can pray the Act of Contrition. We encourage you to journal on the following questions: What is God saying to you? For what are you grateful? For what are you contrite? What spiritual discipline, including fasting, do you need to focus on tomorrow?





Examination of CONSCIENCE

Prayer of Thanksgiving

O my God, I thank you for all the graces and blessings which I have received from you this day. Express to God your gratitude as you recall the blessings and graces that were present today: For what are you grateful?

Examination of Conscience

O my God, give me light to see what sins I have committed, and grant me the grace to be sorry for them: For what are you contrite? What spiritual discipline, including fasting, do you need to focus on tomorrow? Recall your sins of the day and repent in sincere sorrow for the sins you have committed, by reciting the Act of Contrition.

The Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You and I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell, but most of all because they offend You, my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace, to confess my sins, to do penance and to amend my life. Amen.





Encouragement for the Journey

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My Notes

Date :

What is God saying to you?

For what are you grateful?

For what are you contrite?

My Notes

Date :

[illegible]



WHO DO YOU SAY I AM?

REVELATION 5: TRANSFORMED WITNESSES
OF JESUS
WEEK 2, DAY 5

THE DOUBTING THOMAS

MICHAEL FONSECA, D. MIN

MORNING *Prayer*



Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God in three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that your divine Son became man and died for our sins, and that He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the holy Catholic Church teaches because in revealing them you can neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.

Act of Hope

O my God, relying on your almighty power and infinite mercy and promises, I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of your grace, and life everlasting through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer. Amen.

Act of Charity

O my God, I love you above all things with my whole heart and soul because you are all good and worthy of all my love. I love my neighbor as myself for the love of you. I forgive all who have injured me and ask pardon of all whom I have injured. Amen.

Morning Offering

O Jesus, through the immaculate heart of Mary, I offer you my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day in union with the holy sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world. I offer them for all the intentions of your Sacred Heart: the salvation of souls, reparation for sin, the reunion of all Christians. I offer them for the intentions of our bishops and of all the apostles of prayer, and in particular for those recommended by our Holy Father this month. Amen.



Face to Face WITH GOD



PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Come, Holy Spirit, and overshadow me with your gentle wisdom and power as I endeavor to sit at the feet of Jesus during this period of prayer. Purify my mind and heart as I seek to make the teachings of Jesus my priority in life, thinking, speaking, and doing as He desires. You are the Keeper of my soul, leading me into God's heart. May I be docile and submissive to your wisdom and guidance, and may my life be a pleasing offering in your sight, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

"Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."- John 21: 27-29

Probably, the most significant story of disillusionment after Jesus' death is that of Doubting Thomas. Thomas was stubbornly unwilling to believe the eyewitness accounts of his colleagues. He chose to absent himself from their company when Jesus appeared to them: "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nail-marks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe" (John 21: 25). A week later, Jesus appeared to the group and Thomas was with them. Jesus invited Thomas to probe the nail marks with his hand so that he might believe. Instead, Thomas exclaimed in astonished belief: "My Lord and my God!" The chasm was finally bridged, from despairing disbelief to sublime adoration!

There are two other passages in John that give us a glimpse into the mind and heart of Thomas. In John 11, Jesus is moving toward Bethany where Lazarus has died in order to raise him from the dead. In doing so, Jesus is moving into Judaea, toward Jerusalem, the city of destiny, the place where He will be crucified. The disciples, Thomas among them, are apprehensive: "Rabbi, the Jews were just trying to stone you, and you want to go back there?" (John 11:8).



Face to Face WITH GOD

Jesus tells them, that “If one walks during the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if one walks at night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him” (John 11: 9-10). Thomas is still seized by the darkness of the night. But the light is in him and he is full of love for his Master. He says, “Let us also go to die with him” (John 11: 16).

In the Upper Room, Jesus is assuring His disciples, fraught with apprehension, that in His Father’s house, “I (will) go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be” (John 14: 3). A confused Thomas responds, “Master, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?” (John 14: 5). Thomas doesn’t understand Jesus’ talk about His Father’s house. He is thinking of the longed-for restoration of the kingdom of Israel through military power. After his encounter with the Risen Lord, however, Thomas came to believe and entered the Kingdom of God. From then on, he became a steadfast and ardent disciple. He was with the seven disciples who went fishing with Peter after the resurrection. He was in the Upper Room, preparing for the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Thomas sailed to India in AD 50 to the state of Kerala where there was a Jewish community. The St. Thomas Christians of Kerala believe that Thomas established seven churches in their midst. He then traveled to the southeast Coast of India and was martyred in Chennai on July 3, 72 AD. The Portuguese built the San Thome Basilica at his tomb. It was rebuilt in the 19th century and has been a revered site for Hindus, Muslims and Christians since at least the 16th Century.

PRAYER TO THE HOLY TRINITY

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Examination of CONSCIENCE

Prayer of Thanksgiving

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My Notes

Date :

What is God saying to you?

For what are you grateful?

For what are you contrite?

My Notes

Date : _____

[illegible]



WHO DO YOU SAY I AM?

REVELATION 5: TRANSFORMED WITNESSES
OF JESUS
WEEK 2, DAY 6

THE DISCIPLES ON THE
ROAD TO EMMAUS

MICHAEL FONSECA, D. MIN

MORNING *Prayer*



Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God in three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that your divine Son became man and died for our sins, and that He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the holy Catholic Church teaches because in revealing them you can neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.

Act of Hope

O my God, relying on your almighty power and infinite mercy and promises, I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of your grace, and life everlasting through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer. Amen.

Act of Charity

O my God, I love you above all things with my whole heart and soul because you are all good and worthy of all my love. I love my neighbor as myself for the love of you. I forgive all who have injured me and ask pardon of all whom I have injured. Amen.

Morning Offering

O Jesus, through the immaculate heart of Mary, I offer you my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day in union with the holy sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world. I offer them for all the intentions of your Sacred Heart: the salvation of souls, reparation for sin, the reunion of all Christians. I offer them for the intentions of our bishops and of all the apostles of prayer, and in particular for those recommended by our Holy Father this month. Amen.



Face to Face WITH GOD

listen



PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Come, Holy Spirit, and overshadow me with your gentle wisdom and power as I endeavor to sit at the feet of Jesus during this period of prayer. Purify my mind and heart as I seek to make the teachings of Jesus my priority in life, thinking, speaking, and doing as He desires. You are the Keeper of my soul, leading me into God's heart. May I be docile and submissive to your wisdom and guidance, and may my life be a pleasing offering in your sight, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

"But we were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel ... Some women from our group, however, have astounded us: they were at the tomb early in the morning and did not find his body; they came back and reported that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who announced that he was alive ... With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight." - Luke 24: 21-23; 31

Only Luke has included this account in much detail in his gospel. Mark 16: 12-13 seems to be referring to the same incident as well: "After this he appeared in another form to two of them walking along on their way to the country. They returned and told the others; but they did not believe them either." There are some features in the story that lead the curious to conjecture. There were two disciples on their way to Emmaus, and one was named Cleopas. His wife's name was Mary, and she is mentioned in John 19: 25. She was present at the crucifixion, along with Mary, mother of Jesus, and Mary of Magdala. According to Hegesippus, as quoted by the historian Eusebius, Cleopas was the brother of Joseph of Nazareth. If so, Mary and Cleopas were Jesus' aunt and uncle. Was she the other disciple who was traveling with Cleopas, or was it someone else? We will never know for sure. What is true is that Luke describes them as disbelieving and downcast.



Face to Face WITH GOD

They were not willing to believe that Jesus had risen from the dead even though some among them claimed that they had seen the Risen Lord. It seems as if they were not willing to have hope even though there were witnesses among them: "But we were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel ... Some women from our group, however, have astounded us: they were at the tomb early in the morning and did not find his body; they came back and reported that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who announced that he was alive" (Luke 24: 21-23). It is a mystery as to why the two disciples held on to their disbelief. They were not willing to accept the witness of some women in their community even though they were astounded by the revelation.

On their way to Emmaus, very patiently Jesus interpreted the scriptures for them. Jesus opened their minds and hearts to see how all the prophecies about the Messiah would reach their climax in His resurrection. In doing so, Jesus prepared them to recognize Him in the breaking of the bread. It is important for us to become familiar with the Old Testament so that we see the organic link between the two Testaments, how the Old Testament is revealed in the New, and the New is hidden in the Old. Jesus disappears from their sight when they recognize Him. However, He has left Himself with them in the breaking of the bread and Holy Communion. Consequently, their hearts were burning, and they experienced a profound change that sent them back to their community with intense peace and burning joy! Their lives have been profoundly transformed and they will no longer be the same. Such is the power of the Risen Lord!

PRAYER TO THE HOLY TRINITY

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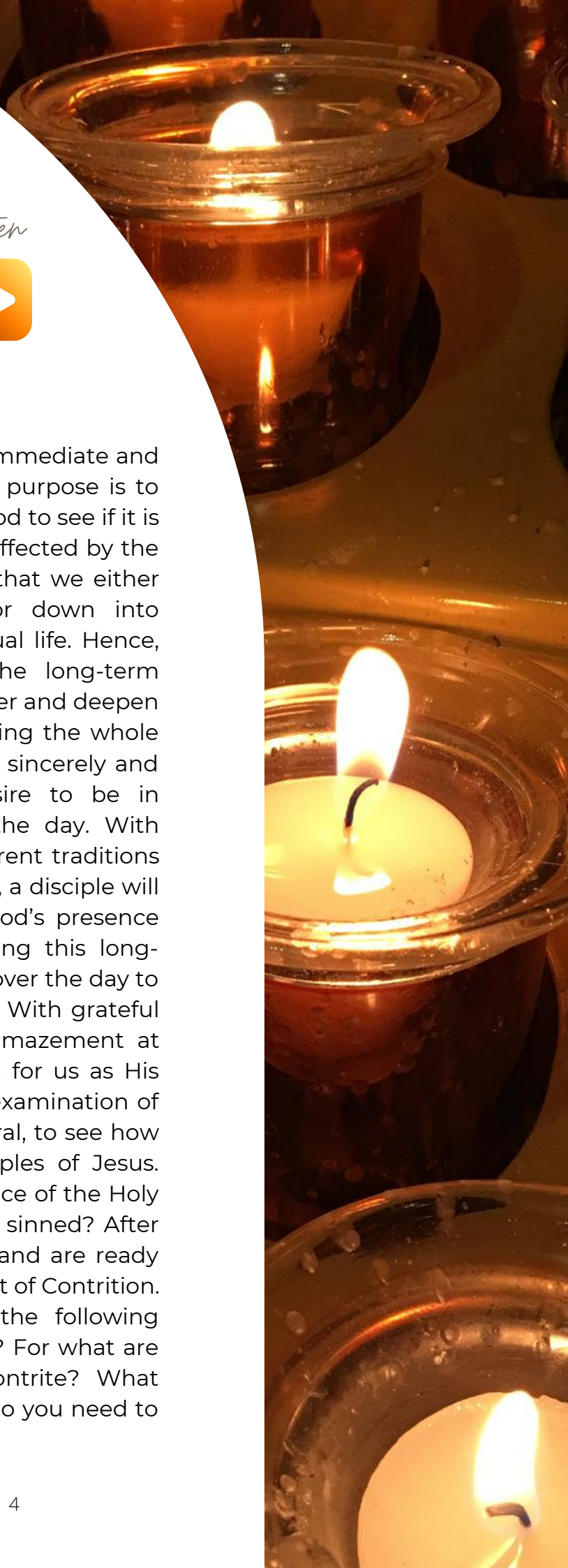
Triune God, be my all! Triune God, be my all! Triune God, be my all!

NIGHT *Prayer*

listen



Our nightly review of the day has an immediate and a long-term purpose. The immediate purpose is to review our current relationship with God to see if it is increasingly grace-filled or adversely affected by the disorder of sin. The saints inform us that we either go up in fervor and generosity or down into complacency and ennui in the spiritual life. Hence, the nightly review is important. The long-term purpose of the nightly review is to foster and deepen our awareness of God's presence during the whole day. When the nightly review is done sincerely and seriously, it leads to a strong desire to be in communion with God throughout the day. With practice and familiarity with the different traditions of the practice of the Presence of God, a disciple will develop a consistent awareness of God's presence and love throughout the day. Keeping this long-term benefit in mind, we can now go over the day to see how God has been present to us. With grateful hearts, we express our praise and amazement at God's immense love and compassion for us as His sons and daughters. We then do an examination of conscience, both Particular and General, to see how we have responded to God as disciples of Jesus. Have we been obedient to the guidance of the Holy Spirit? In what specific ways have we sinned? After you have examined your conscience and are ready to ask forgiveness, you can pray the Act of Contrition. We encourage you to journal on the following questions: What is God saying to you? For what are you grateful? For what are you contrite? What spiritual discipline, including fasting, do you need to focus on tomorrow?





Examination of CONSCIENCE

Prayer of Thanksgiving

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Encouragement for the Journey

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Step Six: Are you considering a strong finish to the end of this Pilgrimage?

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My Notes

Date :

What is God saying to you?

For what are you grateful?

For what are you contrite?

My Notes

Date :

[illegible]



WHO DO YOU SAY I AM?

REVELATION 5: TRANSFORMED WITNESSES
OF JESUS
WEEK 1, DAY 7

PRACTICING THE PRESENCE OF GOD

MICHAEL FONSECA, D. MIN

MORNING *Prayer*



Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God in three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that your divine Son became man and died for our sins, and that He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the holy Catholic Church teaches because in revealing them you can neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.

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Morning Offering

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Face to Face WITH GOD



PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

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The Practice of the Presence of God throughout the day has been a long-standing tradition among holy men and women throughout the existence of the Church. Several practices have developed over the centuries to foster the practice of the Presence of God, like the Jesus Prayer which was well established by the 6th century among the desert fathers and mothers. In the 16th century, through his Spiritual Exercises, St. Ignatius of Loyola advocated the practice of constant gratitude as was highlighted by St. Paul in his letters: "This is to ask for what I desire. Here it will be to ask for an intimate knowledge of the many blessings received, that filled with gratitude for all, I may in all things love and serve the Divine Majesty" (The Spiritual Exercises, #233). Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection was a French Carmelite lay monk of the 17th century. He was in constant intimate conversation with God throughout the day: "I began to live as if there were no one save God and me in the world." Together, God and Brother Lawrence cooked meals, ran errands, scrubbed pots, and endured the scorn of the world.

Holy men and women become saturated with the Presence of God throughout the day because they have accepted Jesus as their Savior and Lord. They have acknowledged their sins, repented of them through God's forgiveness, and have made a serious commitment "in all things to love and serve the Divine Majesty."



Face to Face WITH GOD

In receiving new life in Jesus, they have made some important decisions regarding values, lifestyle, and behaviors, aligning themselves with the teachings of Jesus. In receiving God's forgiveness, they have learned to forgive themselves, and more importantly, forgive others as God forgives us and asks that we do the same. Their generous response springs from having an overwhelming sense of God's love for them. Their response, under the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit, produces lasting results, like being in a state of consolation or pointed in God's direction, avoiding deliberate sin, being focused on doing everything for the establishment of God's kingdom, and satisfying their hunger for God by conversing with God throughout the day.

When God created us in His image and likeness, He established us in a covenant relationship with Him. If there were no sin in us, we would recognize God's presence in us as well as in others. If there were no sin in us, we would live in God and God in us. Jesus re-established us in God's original plan through His death and resurrection. Through Jesus, in the power of the Holy Spirit, we have been re-created in the image and likeness of Jesus. As we move deeper into covenant union with the Blessed Trinity through Jesus, we put on the mind and heart of Jesus. Among other things, the practice of the presence of God becomes our normal state of soul and lifestyle. We are truly living in the Resurrection and Life of Jesus.

PRAYER TO THE HOLY TRINITY

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