LOVE ONE ANOTHER

A RETREAT GUIDE ON ST. THÉRÈSE'S LITTLE WAY OF CHARITY

COMPANION GUIDE

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FIRST MEDITATION

Love's Little Way

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION/GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What does holiness mean to me?

2. In what ways have I experienced the call to be holy? How would I describe that call?

3. Where is it most difficult for me to allow God to be the elevator that St. Thérèse describes? How does God want to help me to accept his action in my life?

QUOTATIONS TO HELP YOUR PRAYER

> You are mistaken … if you believe that … Thérèse walks always with fervor on the road of virtue. She is weak … very weak, and every day she has a new experience of this weakness, but, Marie, Jesus is pleased to teach her, as He did to St. Paul, the science of rejoicing in her infirmities. This is a great grace, and I beg Jesus to teach it to you …
>
> —St. Thérèse of Lisieux,
> Letter to her cousin, Marie

> When Jesus said, "Give me to drink," it was the love of His poor creature the Creator of the Universe was seeking. He was thirsty for love. Ah! I feel it more than ever before, Jesus is parched, for He meets only the ungrateful and indifferent among His disciples in the world … alas, He finds few hearts

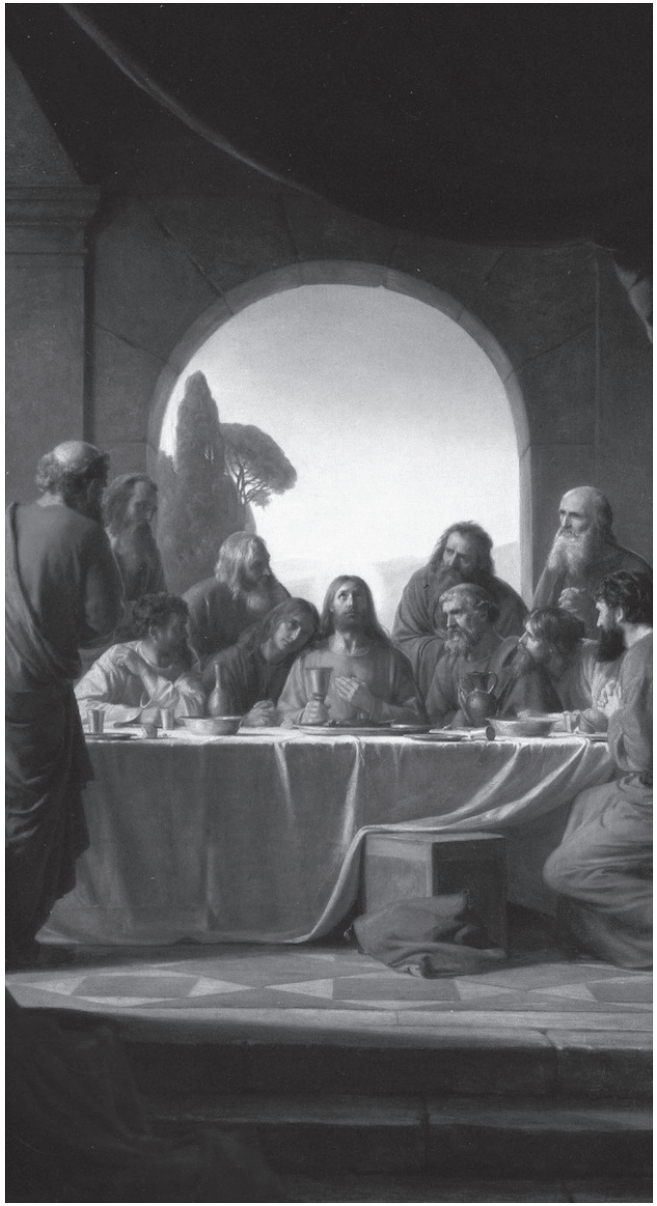
who surrender to Him without reservations, who understand the real tenderness of His infinite Love.

—St. Thérèse of Lisieux,
Letter to her sister, Celine

Living on Love is keeping within oneself
A great treasure in an earthen vase.
My Beloved, my weakness is extreme.
Ah, I'm far from being an angel from heaven! …
But if I fall with each passing hour,
You come to my aid, lifting me up.
At each moment you give me your grace:
I live on Love.

—St. Thérèse of Lisieux,
"Living on Love"

NOTES



SECOND MEDITATION

Love One Another as I Have Loved You

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION/GROUP DISCUSSION

1. How do I want to thank Jesus for the gift of His love?

2. In what ways do I sense the Lord is asking me to allow His love into my life?

3. Where could God be asking me to lay down my life for someone else? In what ways do I need to trust Him more in order to do that?

QUOTATIONS TO HELP YOUR PRAYER

Jesus made Himself poor that we might be able to give him love. He holds out His hand to us like a beggar so that on the radiant day of judgment when He will appear in His glory, He may have us hear those sweet words: "Come, blessed of my Father, for I was hungry, and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me to drink …" It is Jesus Himself who spoke those words; it is He who wants our love, who begs for it … He places Himself, so to speak, at our mercy.

—St. Thérèse of Lisieux,
Letter to her sister, Celine

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hireling and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf snatches and scatters them. He flees because he is a hireling and cared nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me, as the Father knows me and I know the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep.

—John 10:11–15
RSVCE

By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or speech, but in deed and in truth. By this we shall know that we are of the truth, and reassures our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts and he knows everything.

Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God; and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we keep his commandments and do whatever pleases him. And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. All who keep his commandments abide in him, and he in them.

—1 John 3:16–24
RSVCE

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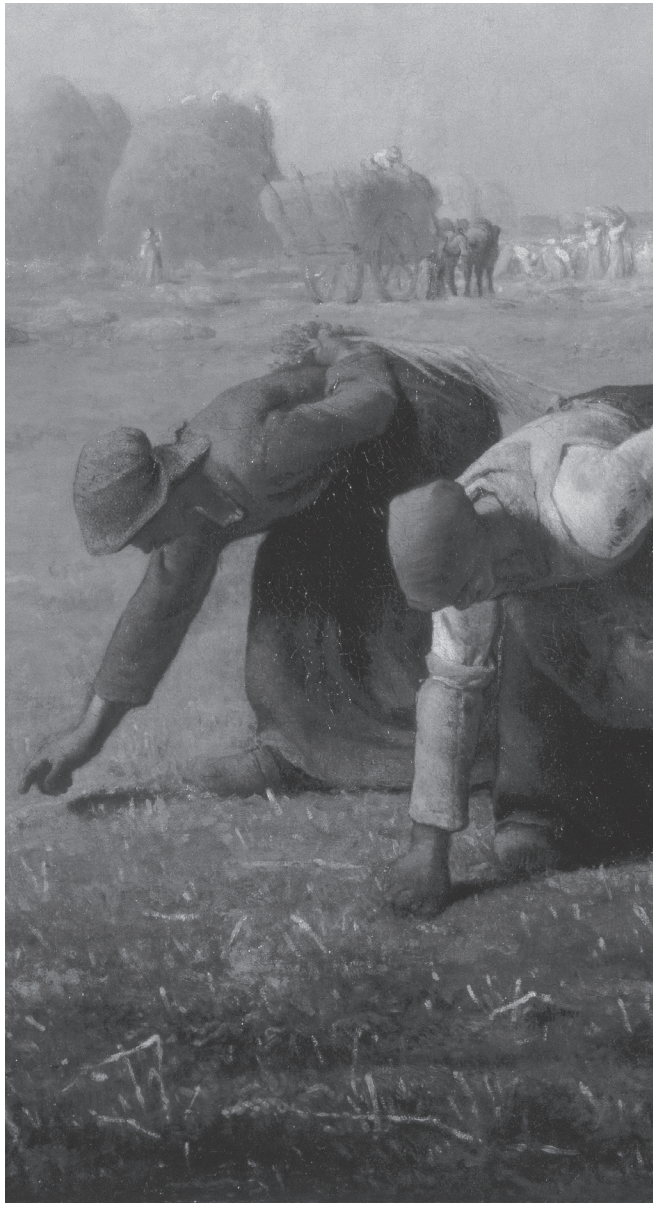

The Gleaners (cropped)

CONFERENCE

Everyday Love

PERSONAL QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is on my heart as I conclude this retreat?

2. In what ways has the Lord consoled me or challenged me?

3. How does the Lord want to help me to grow in my conviction that his commands are above all a promise?

4. Who is my *Sister St. Pierre*? In other words, who is that person I know the Lord is asking me to love and lay down my life for?

5. In what ways can I love the person I like the least?

6. List two or three practical resolutions from this retreat. For example, I will read one of the recommended books. I will choose one practical way to show my love for someone I may not like all that much. I will make a novena to St. Thérèse of Lisieux, asking her to pray for me so I grow in my love. Each week I will pick one ordinary household duty and intentionally offer it up for my family.

NOTES

FURTHER READING

If you feel moved to continue reflecting and praying about this theme, you may find the following books helpful:

Story of a Soul: The Autobiography of St. Thérèse of Lisieux
translation by Fr. John Clarke

My Vocation Is Love
by Jean LaFrance

Everything Is Grace
by Joseph Schmidt

The Better Part
by Fr. John Bartunek, LC

Walking with God: A Journey through the Bible
by Tim Gray and Jeff Cavins

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