

A LASALLIAN WAY TO PRAY

# A Daily Offering of Self

WISDOM FROM THE WRITINGS OF  
SAINT JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE

“How long has Jesus been  
knocking at the door of your  
heart, waiting to enter?”

SAINT JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE

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FOUNDER, BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS  
PATRON SAINT OF TEACHERS

## INVOCATION | LET US REMEMBER

Central to Lasallian Spirituality is the invocation, “***Let us remember that we are in the Holy Presence of God.***” Lasallians around the world begin prayer with these words. It is an invitation to “recognize the intervention of the Lord in their life” and is “essential to...the work of evangelization.”

“We must ensure that our mind remains filled with the thought of God’s presence as long as possible, and we must not go on to any other subject until we cannot pay attention any longer.”

SAINT JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE

While the spoken words offer us a reminder, it is the proceeding silence which is our “being with God and one another.” The silence is our signature prayer and it should last about a minute. The silence is a unitive reality that in its simplicity brings us together in brotherhood, sisterhood, purpose, and mission. We need not do anything. We are simply with. Silence enriches without anything else.

De La Salle tells us that as we pray with words and ritual we slip from time to time into a graced moment in which not words or actions but silence reigns. It is resting in the loving presence of God and one another that is the summit of prayer.

There is a great wisdom in this invitation as it calls us to a moment of focus and authenticity, identity and intent. It is the moment of remembering the presence that is Gospel.

## METHOD OF INTERIOR PRAYER

De La Salle's Method of Interior Prayer integrates prayer into the very fabric of life. It's practical and repeatable steps invites one to discern the will of God through Scripture and meditation, and to be so empowered to respond in the way God wills. This method was influenced by the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius, St. Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross, and St. Francis de Sales. This is truly a gift for the active contemplative. De La Salle firmly believed in retreating to God in prayer so as to receive what is needed to act in complete cooperation with God.

Contained in the pages that follow are the practical steps to prayerfully meditate on scripture and zealously respond. This contemplation takes place in three movements:

1. Recognizing God's presence and so disposing the soul for interior prayer;
2. Prayerfully contemplating Scripture while focusing on a mystery, virtue, or maxim;
3. Concluding with an act of review, thanksgiving, and offering. and that you might give yourself wholeheartedly to a more conscious accomplishment of this will... to God's plan.

## FIRST MOVEMENT

Pause for a few minutes to quiet yourself and to remember that God is, even in this very moment, present to you.

- *In all of creation, everything around you.*
- *In your very self, keeping you alive.*
- *In the midst of those whom you are praying.*
- *In the Eucharist and in the Word of God.*
- *In you by God's grace at work in your life.*
- *In the chapel as God's dwelling place.*
- *In the young and the poor.*

Ask for the graces necessary to understand better what God's will is for you and that you might give yourself wholeheartedly to a more conscious accomplishment of this will... to God's plan.

**“I consecrate myself entirely to you to procure your glory as far as I am able and as you will require of me”**

SAINT JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE (1694)

## SECOND MOVEMENT

Meditate on the mystery, virtue, or maxim presented in Scripture.

Read today's Gospel a few times slowly. What word or words especially catch your attention? Listen to what is being said; watch what happens; try to become part of the Mystery; lovingly contemplate Jesus.

Reflect on the Mystery of God's love at work in your own life.

- Does today's Gospel have any relevance to your life?
- How does this text invite you to be more faithful to the ministry entrusted to your care?
- How do you try to share the message of this Gospel with those with whom you live and work?
- If you chose to allow this Scripture passage to come alive in you now, what would you have to change in your life? What are obstacles to this change?

Interiorly, unite with Christ's spirit and ask for a share in this spirit, and the grace to acquire the spirit of this mystery and to practice its virtues and maxims.

## THIRD MOVEMENT

Resolve to be open to the Spirit working in and through you today.

- Where is the Spirit drawing you to sacrifice yourself today that others might have a happier, fuller, holier, and more love-filled life?
- Take a few minutes now to thank God for this time you have spent in prayer and to reoffer yourself, *as far as you are able*, to the accomplishment of God's will... God's plan.

## MEDITATION

The love that Jesus Christ shows for you in this great sacrament certainly deserves that today you show an altogether special return of love for him by a very deep respect, both interior and exterior, for this adorable mystery.

SAINT JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE

“Earnestly ask Jesus  
that His Spirit may  
be alive in you.”

SAINT JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE

## MEDITATION

This is also what Jesus Christ expects of you in the Holy Eucharist. He wants your soul to forget itself completely in his presence at the thought of this God of love. He wants you to make known to him that you honor him interiorly, as he requires of you, through the continual attention you pay to the goodness he has shown you by giving himself entirely to you in this great sacrament. Be faithful to this.

ON THE FEAST OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT

## SAINT JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE

Saint John Baptist de La Salle (1651-1719) founded the De La Salle Christian Brothers and was declared Patron of Teachers by Pope Pius XII. Despite being born into wealth and privilege, La Salle turned from his lofty status in society and the Church to follow God's call in service of the poor through education. This path required heroic faith and courage as he constantly strived to see all things with the "eyes of faith."

De La Salle insisted on complete uniformity of one's faith life and their personal and professional life. Spirituality, he insisted, could not be separated from our daily practical matters. All actions, especially in the classroom, must be rooted in love for God as to inspire others to love God. Each of our actions, when done in the spirit of faith, becomes prayer. This approach to spirituality transforms our workplace, classrooms, and homes.

The spirit of faith and zeal are integral to living this spirituality. Seeing the world as God would and acting with zealous love is a sure-way to make God known to others. Complete abandonment to God allows us to fully trust in His Providence.

## MARY, QUEEN & MOTHER OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

To be a Christian is to be Marian – it is to recognize that Mary leads one to Jesus. The day after the first Brothers made their first vows they made a pilgrimage to the celebrated sanctuary of Our Lady of Liesse. There, before the altar of Our Lady, they joyfully consecrated their life and work to Our Lady, and remained from that time under her maternal care and protection. De La Salle named Mary as “Superior of the Institute.”

De La Salle wrote, “she is above all creatures. We show our devotion to the saints on certain days and at certain times of the year but that which we must show to Mary should be continuous.”

As you pray the Holy Rosary, incorporate La Salle’s meditations for each mystery and receive the grace you need to imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise.

*“Every day we place ourselves under her protection”*

# JOYFUL MYSTERIES

## ANNUNCIATION

Let us give thanks with the whole Church for the honor that the Most Blessed Virgin received on this day, to become the Mother of God. This is the greatest honor any mere creature can ever receive. Saint Ambrose declares that it was the greatness and the excellence of Mary's faith that procured this favor for her.

## VISITATION

We must consider ourselves blessed when we are visited by God through his inspirations. Let us be faithful to them, for to this fidelity God usually attaches a great number of graces...God sends us His holy inspirations only to make us prompt to put them into practice with the intent to accomplish His holy will exactly.

## BIRTH OF OUR LORD

The poverty that Jesus practices so eminently at his birth ought to commit us to have great love for this virtue, for it is to make us love it that he is born in this condition. Let us not be surprised, then, when we lack something, even necessities, for at his birth, Jesus was lacking everything. This is how we must be born in the spiritual life, dispossessed and deprived of everything.

## PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE

Oh, how good it is to give yourself to God! Even in this life, he rewards and fills with very tangible consolations the soul that consecrates itself to him. He causes others to esteem and to honor those who are happy in humiliations. The more you give to God, the more he will bless you; the more you are despised by others, the greater you will be before God.

## FINDING JESUS IN THE TEMPLE

You whom God has called to labor for the salvation of souls must prepare by the practice of obedience over a long period of time to be worthy of so holy a role and to be able to achieve great good in your exercise of it. The more faithful you are to the grace of Jesus Christ, who wishes to see you become perfect in this virtue of obedience, the more will God bless your efforts, because whoever obeys his superior obeys God.

# LUMINOUS MYSTERIES

## BAPTISM

The Spirit of God also ought to come and to rest upon you on this sacred day, to make it possible for you to live and to act only by the Spirit's action in you. Draw him within you by offering him a well disposed heart.

## WEDDING FEAST AT CANA

Jesus changed water into wine at the plea of the Blessed Virgin, his mother, who told the table servants to do all that her Son would command them...This is likewise the most appropriate means we can use to obtain for ourselves an abundance of grace and to produce marvels, even miracles, in ourselves by helping us overcome ourselves...

## PROCLAMATION OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

To you especially Jesus Christ addresses these words of today's Gospel: Seek first the kingdom of God... You nourish the life of your soul with God's life by being occupied with his holy presence as much as you are able. What characterizes the life of the saints is their continual attention to God; this ought also to be true of souls consecrated to God, who seek only to do his holy will, to love him, and to cause him to be loved by others.

## TRANSFIGURATION

The Gospel tells us that our Lord was transfigured while praying on a very high, lonely mountain.<sup>1</sup> This teaches us that God pours out his consolation on souls who devote themselves a great deal to prayer and who love this holy exercise... Be faithful to this holy exercise, so that all your actions may be done in the spirit of prayer.

## INSTITUTION OF THE EUCHARIST

This sacred day is a happy one for all the faithful...He multiplies himself in it in order to be always with the faithful, to make them sharers in his divinity, and to change their hearts and bodies into living tabernacles.

## SORROWFUL MYSTERIES

### AGONY IN THE GARDEN

This is how Jesus Christ abandoned himself entirely to the will of his Father to suffer and die when and in the way God willed...Become disciples of Jesus in this way in order to have no other will than God's.

### SCOURGING AT THE PILLAR

What evil has he done? Pilate said to them. I find no crime in him that deserves death. But it sufficed that Jesus Christ was hated because he reproached them for their vices...Adore in Jesus' interior disposition in all these plans of the Pharisees' intrigue. He courageously endured because this was in accord with the plan of his Eternal Father.

### CROWNING OF THORNS

Jesus Christ suffered no less in his body than in his soul. He was bound and shackled disgracefully by the soldiers. His head was crowned with thorns, which were beaten in by heavy blows from a rod...When Jesus Christ asked her (St. Catherine of Siena) to choose between a gold crown and one made of thorns, she chose the thorns. Would you make a similar choice?

### CARRYING OF THE CROSS

In this world there are crosses of thieves and those of Jesus Christ... The crosses of Jesus Christ are those that often work miracles, procure a good spirit of self-denial, inspire the practice of other virtues... Is the cross you carry the cross of Jesus Christ? How do you recognize this? Do the difficulties you suffer lead you to practice many virtues? Pay attention to this: if these crosses turn you away and make you complain, they are the crosses of thieves.

### CRUCIFIXION AND DEATH

Jesus Christ was not content to have had this yearning to die for us all during his life. When he saw the time of his death approaching, he testified to his joy... All that remains on your part, Saint Paul says, is to complete what is lacking in the Passion of Christ, that is, the application that you ought to make of the Passion through your sharing in his sufferings. Become worthy, then, of such a grace.

# GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

## RESURRECTION

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ also ought to procure for you the benefit of making you rise spiritually by causing you to live according to grace. This means that it will cause you to enter an entirely new and heavenly life. To enter into these practices and to show, according to Saint Paul, that you are risen with Christ, seek the things that are above; love the things of heaven, not those that are on earth.

## ASCENSION

Jesus Christ asks of his Eternal Father for his holy Apostles is that he sanctify them in truth; in other words, he does not want them to be holy with a merely external justice, like that required under the Old Law. He wants their hearts to be purified and sanctified by grace and by a sharing in the divine holiness which is in Jesus Christ... Have this so much at heart that you never cease praying for it until you have obtained it.

## DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

By the descent of the Holy Spirit, the true light came into the world. The first effect that this light produces in a soul fortunate enough to receive it is to cause it to see spiritual things altogether differently from those who live according to the spirit of the times...If you act as a disciple of Jesus Christ enlightened by God's Spirit, this is the only light that ought to guide you.

## ASSUMPTION

The extreme joy she felt at that moment, caused by the desire to see God, who possessed her, filled her soul with such consolation that she easily went from earth to heaven without any struggle...The special grace we ought to ask of the Most Blessed Virgin on this day is to be removed and to be freed from the corruption of the world and especially to have great purity, which is the true incorruptibility that we ought to procure for our body.

## CROWNING OF OUR LADY QUEEN OF HEAVEN

She is exalted above all creatures because of the abundance of grace bestowed on her, which surpasses that given to anyone else, and because of the purity of her life, which no one has equaled.

## LIVE JESUS IN OUR HEARTS...FOREVER

The call and response is the traditional way Lasallians around the world conclude prayer. The purpose is to identify with Jesus living within us, not only by imitating his way of life, but more deeply by making one's own the mentality, the mindset, the heart of Jesus in the various events of His life, especially his self-surrender to the will of his heavenly Father.

This 'Jesus in our Hearts' invokes the reality of Jesus' full humanity which is the same as ours – the one with us in his humanity, one with God in His divinity. As Christians we strive to become so united to Jesus living within us that we truly bring Christ to those we serve. It is with Jesus in our Hearts that we become capable of touching hearts.



MORE RESOURCES &  
DISCERNMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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**Brothers of  
the Christian  
Schools**

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DIRECTIONS ADAPTED FROM DE LA SALLE'S METHOD  
OF INTERIOR PRAYER BY BROTHER WILLIAM MANN, FSC