

**Daily Meditations on the Love of God
from Father Laurence Kriegshauser, O.S.B.**

A Scripture text is given for each day of the year as an opportunity for you to hear the Lord speaking to your heart through that particular text on that particular day. Following the text is a short meditation that you can use to supplement or complement your own experience of the divine word. (Saint Louis Abbey)

April 1

Jesus was to die for the nation—and not for the nation only, but to gather together in unity the scattered children of God. (John 11:51)

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Once again that precious preposition “for.” God is for us, everything he has done is for us, in particular the dying and rising of his Son. Our task is only to receive the gift and pray that all hearts, even the most hardened, receive it so that God’s desired unity may become a reality in his world.

April 2

I look on everything as so much rubbish if only I can have Christ and be given a place in him. (Philippians 3:8-9)

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“In Christ?” Yes, this is our call. We are invited into his divine-human life as members of his Body. Pauls’ passion to be in Christ is a sign that nothing else will satisfy the longing of the human heart.

April 3

With me, bear the hardships for the sake of the Good News, relying on the power of God who has saved us and called us to be holy—not because of anything we ourselves have done but for his own purpose and by his own grace. (2 Timothy 1:8-9)

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Each word, each phrase here deserves to be weighed and reflected on if we want to perceive the profusion of God’s generosity to us.

April 4

From heaven comes the savior we are waiting for, the Lord Jesus Christ, and he will transfigure these wretched bodies of ours into copies of his glorious body. (Philippians 3:20-21)

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Christian hope keeps its eyes on the transfigured Lord, longing and pleading for the moment when the same transfiguration will be communicated to us. This is the message we are charged to offer to the folks of our day.

April 5

Into your hands I commend my spirit. It is you who will redeem me, Lord. (Psalm 31:6)

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Once again Jesus enters into the Psalms of Israel to express the profound assurance of his Father's love beneath the excruciating torments of the cross. Because he has made this prayer we too can make it in the most profound suffering.

April 6

The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. (Matthew 20:28)

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Jesus's washing of the apostles' feet was an act of service symbolizing the definitive act of service he was to perform the next day in giving his life for the salvation of men. By his wounds we are healed. Jesus gives us this act of service as a model for bishops and indeed all believers.

April 7

I, the Lord, search to the heart, I probe the loins to give each man what his conduct and his actions deserve. (Jeremiah 17:10)

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The Lord knows us so as to expose our negativity and wash it away by his love.

April 8

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that those who believe in him might not perish but might have eternal life. (John 3:16)

* * *

The New Testament verse most worth memorizing. It roots the death and resurrection of Jesus in the Father's love for this world, gives the effect of it in everlasting life, and assigns faith as the means of receiving this life. "Believe" is found no less than 100 times in this Gospel of John. It is faith which opens the door to divine life and therefore to a life of active love.

April 9

The Lord is compassion and love. (Psalm 103:8)

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The verse is from Psalm 103 but is found in many other places in all three sections of the Old Testament. You can read Psalm 103 and find many themes found also in the Lord's Prayer. It might be termed an Old Testament blueprint for the Our Father.

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April 10

It is he who forgives all your guilt, who heals every one of your ills, who redeems your life from the grave, who crowns you with love and compassion. (Psalm 103:3-4)

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Meditate on the four verbs.

April 11

For as the heavens are high above the earth, so strong is his love for those who fear him. (Psalm 103:11)

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Our knowledge of the seemingly infinite reach of galaxies makes the comparison even more forceful than it was for the Old Testament writer.

April 12

Sing to the Lord, praise the Lord, for he has delivered the soul of the needy from the hands of evil men. (Jeremiah 20:13)

* * *

The call to song is all the more joyful coming from the prophet who more than any other exposed the extent and depth of Israel's guilt.

April 13

O Lord, it is you who are my portion and cup; it is you yourself who are my prize. I keep the Lord ever in my sight: since he is at my right hand, I shall stand firm. (Psalm 16:5.8)

* * *

Saint Paul tells us to fix our eyes on the risen Lord Christ seated at the right hand of the Father. Paradoxically that gaze brings Christ to our own right hand where it keeps us firm. Christ is both the light which illumines our darkness and the rock on whom we can build.

April 14

You will show me the path of life, the fullness of joy in your presence, at your right hand happiness forever. (Psalm 16:11)

* * *

The Lord wants to give us precisely the three things we most want: life, happiness, communion. Evangelization means sharing this good news with the hungry people of our day.

April 15

The mountains may depart, the hills be shaken, but my love for you will never leave you and my covenant of peace with you will never be shaken, says the Lord who takes pity on you. (Isaiah 54:10)

* * *

God cannot break his covenant of love with us, but man can break it and has broken it (Jeremiah 31:32). That is why the Lord in his pity made a new and everlasting covenant with us in the blood of his Son (Hebrews 13:20).

April 16

O Lord, you have raised my soul from the dead, restored me to life from those who sink into the grave. (Psalm 30:4)

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The psalmist could only praise God for bringing him back from the brink of the grave. The Christian prays this psalm in union with Jesus who literally passed through death to life. In this way we are taught to pray all the psalms as prayers of Christ, psalms of suffering as well as psalms of triumph. Christ entered the psalms to give them their definitive meaning, as Pope Benedict XVI taught us in his life of Christ (*Part Two: Holy Week*).

April 17

As the rain and the snow come down from the heavens and do not return without watering the earth, making it yield and giving growth to provide seed for the sower and bread for the eating, so the word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do. (Isaiah 55:10-11)

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The Gospel of John in miniature: The Word of God is sent from heaven to fulfill the Father's will by giving to mankind the water and bread of life before returning to his Father in heaven. Baptism and the Eucharist make us members of his risen Body.

April 18

With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. (Isaiah 12:3)

* * *

These words are sung at the Easter Vigil in preparation for the baptism of new believers. It is joy to be incorporated into Jesus whose very name means "the Lord saves."

April 19

Lord, I am deeply afflicted: by your word give me life. (Psalm 119:107)

* * *

Jesus is the Word of life. The afflicted soul needs only to cry out to him to receive this life.

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April 20

Anyone who drinks the water that I shall give will never be thirsty again: the water that I shall give will turn into a spring inside him, welling up to eternal life. (John 4:14)

* * *

Only Jesus can quench our thirst for the divine, the absolute. And when we have drunk from him we will only thirst for more.

April 21

The decrees of the Lord are more to be desired than gold, than the purest of gold, and sweeter are they than honey, than honey from the comb. (Psalm 19:11)

* * *

The precepts of the Lord are desirable because they show the way to life, but especially because Jesus accomplishes them in us when we call upon him.

April 22

I shall give you a new heart, and put a new spirit in you; I shall remove the heart of stone from your bodies and give you a heart of flesh instead. I shall put my spirit in you, and make you keep my laws and sincerely respect my observances. (Ezekiel 36:26-27)

* * *

It is only the Lord's own Spirit in us that can enable us to keep his commandments and can pulverize our stony hearts. Come, Holy Spirit.

April 23

Unless a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest. (John 12:24)

* * *

Jesus announces the fruitfulness of his own death and invites us to accompany him through death to eternal life. Our self-sacrifice in union with him gives life to the world.

April 24

When I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all men to myself. (John 12:32)

* * *

Jesus tells us what he is doing right now from his place at the Father's right hand. He draws even the most hardened heart to himself in ways we cannot see but must support with our prayer.

April 25

When we were baptized in Christ Jesus we were baptized in his death; in other words, when we were baptized we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life. (Romans 6:3-4)

* * *

These words are read at the Easter Vigil to show that the Resurrection of Christ is not just his but our resurrection too. It begins in this life and comes to full flower after death. Even now Christ lives his life in us.

April 26

We believe that having died with Christ we shall return to life with him: Christ as we know, having been raised from the dead will never die again. Death has no power over him any more. When he died, he died, once for all, to sin, so his life now is life with God; and in that way, you too must consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive for God in Christ Jesus. (Romans 6:8-11)

* * *

It is Christ in us who slowly wears away the sinful tendencies that remain in us. Our part is continually to plead with him to do this.

April 27

Since you have been brought back to true life with Christ, you must look for the things that are in heaven, where Christ is, sitting at God's right hand. Let your thoughts be on heavenly things, not on the things that are on the earth, because you have died, and now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God. (Colossians 3:1-3)

* * *

From the plethora of images that assail us in contemporary life we must keep our eyes fixed on the one who joins this world to himself, the risen Christ at the Father's right hand. He shows us the true meaning of our daily life and of the people we meet.

April 28

The whole group of believers was united, heart and soul; no one claimed for his own use anything that he had. (Acts 4:32)

* * *

The primitive Church in Jerusalem remains a model for all communities and the world. It is the risen Lord and his Spirit who brings about this unity for which we must continually

plead. Different and even contrary opinions find a synthesis in the Body of Christ in which each member contributes to the others.

April 29

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten by God; and whoever loves the Father that begot him loves the child whom he begets. (1 John 5:1)

* * *

Conclusion: love yourself as a beautiful child of God and all those other folks whom, unbeknownst to you, are begotten by God.

April 30

Anyone who has been begotten by God has already overcome the world; this is the victory over the world—our faith.

* * *

Faith says Yes to the message about the risen Christ, and in so doing shares in his victory over the world. Faith permits him to give us his life.