

**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.

May 1

After saying this he breathed on them and said: "Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven, for those whose sins you retain, they are retained." (John 20:22-23)

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The Spirit that was in Jesus is now in the apostles and their successors to apply to all people down the ages the forgiveness won by Christ on the cross. The only sins that are "retained" are those that are not repented of.

May 2

These signs are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name. (John 20:31)

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Faith is the fulcrum that allows us to receive the life of the risen Christ, a divine life that transforms us. God gave his only Son so that those who believe in him might have eternal life.

May 3

As they prayed, the house where they were assembled rocked; they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to proclaim the word of God boldly. (Acts 4:31)

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The boldness with which unlettered men preached the risen Jesus even before hostile authorities is one of the surest proofs of the resurrection of the one they preached. Boldness is a key word in the Acts of the Apostles.

May 4

You, O Christ, are the faithful witness, the First-born from the dead; you have loved us and have washed away our sins with your blood. (Revelation 1:5)

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This opening thought of the Book of Revelation is the key that must be kept in mind as we read through the turbulent visions of this Book.

May 5

No one has gone up to heaven except the one who came down from heaven, the Son of Man who is in heaven; and the Son of Man must be lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him. (John 3:13-15)

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Again, the connection between faith and life. Believing is compared to the gazing upon the bronze serpent of the ones who had been bitten by fiery serpents. Those who looked upon the serpent were healed (Numbers 21:9). Those who keep their gaze on the one lifted up on the cross and from there to the Father's right hand receive a share in his life.

May 6

I sought the Lord and he answered me; from all my terrors he set me free. (Psalm 34:5)

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The words of the risen Christ and those born again in him.

May 7

Whoever listens to my words, and believes in the one who sent me, has eternal life. (John 5:24)

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Faith comes through hearing. Let us be sure to listen to the divine word of love each day.

May 8

I shall ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you forever, that Spirit of truth whom the world can never receive since it neither sees nor knows him; but you know him, because he is with you, he is in you. (John 14:16-17)

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Each person of the Trinity has a different role to play in our sanctification.

May 9

The ransom that was paid to free you from the useless way of life your ancestors handed down was not paid in anything corruptible, neither in silver nor gold but in the precious blood of a lamb without spot or stain, namely Christ. (1 Peter 1:18-19)

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As the blood of the paschal lamb protected the homes of the Israelites from the destroying angel (Exodus 12:13), so the blood of Christ saves us from death and the punishment for sin. Once again the Old Testament gives us images for understanding what happened in the New.

May 10

If anyone should sin, we have our advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, who is just; he is the sacrifice that takes our sins away; and not only ours but the whole world's. (1 John 2:1-2)

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This is the message we have to offer the world. Our task is to listen to the folks of our day, hear their story, show them love, and then witness to our own experience of Christ. The first thing is to establish a relationship.

May 11

Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at God's right hand. "I can see heaven thrown open," he said, "and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." (Acts 7:55-56)

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Where are the three persons of God in this passage? How does it relate to us?

May 12

Be a rock of refuge for me, a mighty stronghold to save me, for you are my rock, my stronghold. For your name's sake, lead me and guide me. (Psalm 31:3-4)

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God often appears in the Psalms as a rock and a stronghold. But in addition to providing security he accompanies us on our journey. The rock "went with them" (1 Corinthians 10:4).

May 13

Let your face shine on your servant. Save me in your love. (Psalm 31:17)

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Love is God's profoundest attribute, saving his greatest external work, rooted in love.

May 14

I am the living bread which has come down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world. (John 6:51)

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This is the closest Saint John comes to the institution of the Eucharist, which is not mentioned in his account of the Last Supper. Eating the bread that is Christ's Body is the fullness of the faith that gives life, in the thinking of this Evangelist. Virtue and sacrament are intertwined.

May 15

He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him. As I, who am sent by the living Father, myself draw life from the Father, so whoever eats me will draw life from me. (John 6:56-57)

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No comment can say more.

May 16

He was bearing our faults in his own body on the cross, so that we might die to our faults and live for holiness; through his wounds you have been healed. (1 Peter 2:24)

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The sacrifice of the cross has the negative effect of destroying sin and the positive effect of granting holiness of life, that is, charity.

May 17

May the God of hope bring you such joy and peace in your faith that the power of the Holy Spirit will remove all bounds to hope. (Romans 15:13)

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Dare one aspire to joy and peace in a world with so much misery? It is the gift God wants to give us so that we can bring it to our suffering brothers and sisters. Hope in the risen Lord surmounts all obstacles.

May 18

I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for my sheep. (John 10:14-15)

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Only in the second half of his ministry does Jesus reveal the profound mystery of his coming death for our salvation. Only later will the apostles understand this death as the gateway to eternal life for all. In this self-giving for our salvation Jesus reflects the identity of his Father.

May 19

These are the people who have been through the great persecution, and because they have washed their robes white again in the blood of the Lamb, they now stand in front of God's throne and serve him day and night in his sanctuary; and the One who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. They will never hunger or thirst again; neither the sun nor the scorching wind will ever plague them, because the Lamb who is at the throne will be their shepherd and will lead them to springs of living water; and God will wipe away all tears from their eyes. (Revelation 7:14-17)

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The sacrificed Lamb is shepherd. Scripture has this shocking way of joining opposed metaphors to point to the ineffability of the divine purpose.

May 20

The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish. No one can take them out of my hand. My Father who gave them to me is greater than anyone, and no one can take them out of the Father's hand. The Father and I are one. (John 10:27-30)

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To be grasped by Jesus is to be grasped by the Father.

May 21

Like the deer that yearns for running streams, so my soul is yearning for you, my God. (Psalm 42:2)

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Nothing but God will satisfy the infinite longing of the human heart. Our task is to help folks see that their longings for happiness and truth and love are fulfilled in the one who offers the waters of eternal life.

May 22

O send forth your light and your truth; let these be my guide. Let them bring me to your holy mountain to the place where you dwell. (Psalm 43:5)

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The prayer was answered when God sent his Son, light of the world and truth in person, to guide us to himself.

May 23

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation, a people set apart to sing the praises of God who called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light. (1 Peter 2:9)

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May all men and women be part of this chosen, consecrated, royal and priestly people so that the darkness in the world is swallowed up in light.

May 24

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. (John 15:4)

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By faith and baptism we are already "in" Christ. He asks us to stay there by remembering his presence and invoking his help. Only by surrendering to his life in us can we love as he commanded us.

May 25

I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty; for cut off from me you can do nothing. (John 15:5)

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All our efforts at virtue are ineffective unless they spring from Christ's life in us. Those who have entrusted themselves to him can do great things.

May 26

We all have to experience many hardships before we enter the kingdom of God. (Acts 14:22)

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We have to accompany Christ along the "narrow way" to reach the Father's kingdom, and he in turn accompanies us. Letting go of sinful attachments, bearing with ill treatment, forgiving, bearing others' burdens...

May 27

I saw the holy city and the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, as beautiful as a bride all dressed for her husband. Then I heard a loud voice call from the throne, "You see this city? Here God lives among men. He will make his home among them; they shall be his people, and he will be their God; his name is God-with-them. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes; there will be no more death and no more mourning or sadness. The world of the past has gone." (Revelation 21:2-4)

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The refrain of the Old Covenant, "I will be your God and you shall be my people" (e.g., Leviticus 26:12) is consummated in the new Jerusalem. The bond between God and his redeemed people will never be broken.

May 28

The One sitting on the throne spoke: "Now I am making the whole of creation new" he said. (Revelation 21:5)

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The new creation is without spot or wrinkle, purified by the blood of the Lamb. All we have to do is accept it.

May 29

I give you a new commandment: love one another; just as I have loved you, you also must love one another. By this love you have for one another, everyone will know that you are my disciples. (John 13:34-35)

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The "As...so" construction is frequent in John's Gospel, e.g.: "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you" (John 15:9). Here, as the image of God (Genesis 1:26) we are called to love as Christ, "the image of the unseen God," (Colossians 1:15) has loved.

May 30

If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him and make our home with him. (John 14:23)

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The unfathomable miracle is that God the Father and his Son want to dwell in our poverty.

May 31

The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all I have said to you. (John 14:26)

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“If you think of the Father as something ‘out there’, in front of you, and of the Son as someone standing at your side, helping you to pray, trying to turn you into another son, then you have to think of the third Person as something inside you or behind you.” (C S Lewis: *Mere Christianity*)