

Daily Meditations on the Love of God  
from Fr Laurence

*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.*

July 1

How happy are the poor in spirit; theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:3)

\* \* \*

You can't give anything to a person who has everything. "It is our emptiness and thirst that God needs, not our plenitude" (H Clerissac).

July 2

Happy are those who mourn: they shall be comforted. (Matthew 5:5)

\* \* \*

There is much to mourn over: one's own sins, the state of the world, personal loss. By sharing our tears (John 11:35), Jesus changed them into joy (Psalm 30:6, 126:5-6). Because he shed no tears for the poor man at his gate, the rich man deprived himself of eternal life (Luke 16:20-25).

July 3

Happy are the pure of heart; they shall see God. (Matthew 5:8)

\* \* \*

We are here at the "heart" of the Sermon on the Mount. What God seeks is "love springing from a pure heart" (1 Timothy 1:5), in a purification that only God can effect. That purification must be the object of our unceasing prayer: "A pure heart create for me, O God" (Psalm 51:12). It is such a heart that Jesus won for us on the cross.

July 4

Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven; this is how they persecuted the prophets before you. (Matthew 5:11-12)

\* \* \*

Persecution should not be sought but rather accepted when it comes, in union with the persecuted and victorious Jesus.

July 5

The Son of God, the Christ Jesus that we proclaimed among you—I mean Silvanus and Timothy and I—was never Yes and No: with him it was always Yes, and however many

the promises God made, the Yes to them all is in him. That is why it is “through him” that we answer Amen to the praise of God. (2 Corinthians 1:19-20)

\* \* \*

The Paschal Mystery, the death and resurrection of Jesus, is God’s definitive Yes to the creation he made and loves.

July 6

It is God himself who assures us all, and you, of our standing in Christ, and has anointed us, marking us with his seal and giving us the pledge, the Spirit, that we carry in our hearts. (2 Corinthians 1:21-22)

\* \* \*

How does this text help me relate to each person of the Trinity?

July 7

You are the light of the world. (Matthew 5:14)

\* \* \*

One radiates this light only by accepting the light of Christ ever more deeply in oneself.

July 8

O Lord, it is you who are my portion and cup, it is you yourself who are my prize. The lot marked out for me is my delight; welcome indeed the heritage that falls to me. (Psalm 16:5-6)

\* \* \*

Portion, cup, prize, lot, heritage—the psalmist has to multiply images to convey something of the delight he finds in the God who in turn delights in him.

July 9

We, with our unveiled faces reflecting like mirrors the brightness of the Lord, all grow brighter and brighter as we are turned into the image that we reflect; this is the work of the Lord who is Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:18)

\* \* \*

Gazing on the risen Lord in prayer transforms us.

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July 10

If you are bringing your offering to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, go and be reconciled with your brother first, and then come back and present your offering. (Matthew 5:23-24)

\* \* \*

“It is love I want not sacrifice” (Hosea 6:6; Matthew 9:13, 12:7). Old and New Testament concur.

July 11

The love of Christ overwhelms us when we reflect that if one man has died for all, then all men should be dead; and the reason he died for all was so that living men should live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised to life for them. (2 Corinthians 5:14-15)

\* \* \*

What dies in us is self-centeredness so that we can transcend self in giving self to Christ in others.

July 12

Shout for joy, you heavens, for the Lord has been at work! Shout aloud, you earth below! Shout for joy, you mountains, and you, forest and all your trees! For the Lord has redeemed Jacob and displayed his glory in Israel. (Isaiah 44:23)

\* \* \*

Scripture awaits a “new heaven and a new earth” (Isaiah 65:17; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1) which will be penetrated by the glory of the risen Lord and burst into praise. This verse is a classic “hymn” in which an invitation to praise is followed, via the word “for,” by the reason for praise.

July 13

All you need say is “Yes” if you mean yes, “No” if you mean no; anything more than this comes from the evil one. (Matthew 5:37)

\* \* \*

To speak the simple truth without unnecessary emotional insistence is a difficult skill to learn. The same is true for hearing the truth behind another’s emotional outburst.

July 14

What proves that God loves us is that Christ died for us while we were still sinners. (Romans 5:8)

\* \* \*

The truth never to be forgotten. We have only to reach out and accept the gift, unworthy.

July 15

The just will flourish like the palm-tree and grow like a Lebanon cedar. Planted in the house of the Lord they will flourish in the courts of our God, still bearing fruit when they are old, still full of sap, still green, to proclaim that the Lord is just. In him my rock there is no wrong. (Psalm 92:13-16)

\* \* \*

With our roots in the dwelling of God, Jesus Christ, we grow graceful (palm-tree) and strong (cedar of Lebanon), singing the Father's praises.

July 16

I have been crucified with Christ, and I live now not with my own life but with the life of Christ who lives in me. The life I now live in this body I live in faith; faith in the Son of God who loved me and who sacrificed himself for my sake. (Galatians 2:19-20)

\* \* \*

Faith in the sacrificial love of Jesus for me is the means by which he comes to live in me. Each day the gift needs to be accepted at deeper levels of our being until we are totally transformed in him.

July 17

My soul lies in the dust; by your word revive me. (Psalm 119:25)

\* \* \*

The Christian prays this in and with the suffering Christ and with all the presently downtrodden.

July 18

We are thought most miserable and yet we are always rejoicing; taken for paupers though we make others rich. For people having nothing though we have everything. (2 Corinthians 6:10)

\* \* \*

The Christian simultaneously suffers and rejoices with the risen Christ. Dying we live (2 Corinthians 6:9).

July 19

Remember how generous the Lord Jesus was: he was rich, but he became poor for your sake, to make you rich out of his poverty. (2 Corinthians 8:9)

\* \* \*

And it is in our own poverty, weakness, that we are filled to become rich for others. The Christian who thinks himself rich in good works blocks out the Christ whom he could give to others. Only in my poverty do I become rich.

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July 20

Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you; in this way you will be sons of your Father in heaven, for he causes his sun to rise on bad men as well as good, and his rain to fall on honest and dishonest men alike. (Matthew 5:44-45)

\* \* \*

The Lord tells us in the Sermon on the Mount not what we have to do but what he will give us the power to do by his death and resurrection and the sending of the Spirit. He alone makes possible true love of enemies.

July 21

God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Corinthians 8:9)

\* \* \*

How many martyrs of Christ were able to make jokes as they were mounting the scaffold or being burned on the gridiron. Others forgave without resentment.

July 22

My grace is enough for you: my power is at its best in weakness. (2 Corinthians 12:9)

\* \* \*

Lord Jesus, may I entrust my weakness to you rather than run away from it.

July 23

I shall be very happy to make my weaknesses my special boast so that the power of Christ may stay over me, and that is why I am quite content with my weaknesses, and with insults, hardships, persecutions and the agonies I go through for Christ's sake. For it is when I am weak that I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:9-10)

\* \* \*

Weakness can become strength when we let the risen Christ enter into it, which he will do if we persistently ask him to.

July 24

Can you not buy two sparrows for a penny? And yet not one falls to the ground without your Father knowing. Why, every hair on your head has been counted. So there is no need to be afraid; you are worth more than hundreds of sparrows. (Matthew 10:29-31)

\* \* \*

This is how the Christ of Saint Matthew's Gospel tells us of his Father's and his own love for us. We are precious to our creator—that thought taken in can banish fear.

July 25

Come to the water all you who are thirsty; though you have no money, come! Buy corn without money, and eat, and, at no cost, wine and milk. Why spend money on what is not bread, your wages on what fails to satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and you will have good things to eat and rich food to enjoy. Pay attention, come to me; listen, and your soul will live. (Isaiah 55:1-3)

\* \* \*

God wants to feed us with the only banquet that will satisfy us, namely himself. And even when we eat this food we will desire more. He is an inexhaustible fare.

July 26

Anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake, that man will save it. (Luke 9:24)

\* \* \*

The way to secure our life with God is not to grab for it but to accept it as a gift. Our problem is that we want to be in control.

July 27

Do not judge, and you will not be judged; because the judgments you give are the judgements you will get, and the amount you measure out is the amount you will be given. (Matthew 7:1-2)

\* \* \*

If we model ourselves on the merciful judge and let his mercy flow through us to others, we will enjoy that mercy ourselves. On the other hand, to block his mercy for others is to block it from ourselves. The mature person rejoices to receive mercy and to share it.

July 28

Take the plank out of your own eye first, and then you will see clearly enough to take the splinter out of your brother's eye. (Matthew 7:5)

\* \* \*

Focusing on the faults of others is a sign of blindness to our own shortcomings. If we need the forbearance of others, they also need ours.

July 29

Enter by the narrow gate, since the road that leads to perdition is wide and spacious, and many take it; but it is a narrow gate and a hard road that leads to life, and only a few find it. (Matthew 7:13-14)

\* \* \*

It is hard to find it at first, but we can hope that after a life of hardship and trials, many will find that narrow gate. Jesus wants all to be saved and to be aware that the way to life is through the cross.

July 30

He took our sicknesses away and carried our diseases for us. (Matthew 8:17)

\* \* \*

Why our God should take away our sufferings by undergoing them himself is the unfathomable mystery of his love. Cause for permanent gratitude and joy.

July 31

If anyone gives so much as a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is a disciple then I tell you solemnly, he will most certainly not lose his reward. (Matthew 10:42)

\* \* \*

Giving without cost is a sign that Christ is living in us.