

God-A Community of Love Meditation



Time: 1st meditation on Rise Day

Length: 25-30 minutes

Speaker: a person of
mature Christian spirituality

Purpose: This meditation is the joyful celebration and relishing of the full Christ we encounter in the love circle of the tri-personal God. It is meant to be a delightful experience of the full dimension of His person. As the depth and breadth of the God-love that sustains His heart and that flows in and through Him to us, the mystery of who we are in God's mystery comes home to us.

The end result of this meditation in the minds and hearts of the youth on the TEC weekend should be: How good it is to be here. I am the beloved brother/sister of Jesus, the adopted son/daughter of God. This is my ultimate value as a human person; it is the full realization of my vocation. I have been invited to walk in companionship with a God who loves me so much it took three hearts to embrace me.

Setting: The candidates have lived through a profound communal experience of 'dying' through the process of 'Die Day'. And having experienced the warm sharing in the unfolding of the TEC community around them, interspersed with the flow of the meditations, they have come to sense in faith awareness that Jesus is truly their friend who loves them very personally. They renewed their Baptismal promises in the Paschal Vigil the night before, and have participated in the Resurrection prayer service a short time ago. Now is the moment when we strive to bring the mystery of Christ into focus so that our own personal mystery finds meaning within Him.

This meditation is designed to open up for the candidates the magnificent mystery of the full love of God that Jesus brings to us. To encounter Christ is to know Jesus, not only in His person as He walked the earth, but to know Him as only He could reveal himself to us in the full splendor of His life as God. This meditation strives to enter into the divine mystery through the heart of Christ as he has shared His relationship with His Father and the Holy Spirit with whom He lives in intimate communion within an eternal embrace. The love that Jesus shares with us is the living embrace of three hearts beating as one in Him. Only Jesus can share with us how it is to live within this joyful circle of love. Jesus invites you and me to come to know God's living love as he experienced it.

The purpose of the meditation in shaping the faith awareness in the candidates is to bring them to a strong personal conviction that God loves them in Jesus personally to such a degree the tri-personal God draws them into the intimate circle of God's life and love.

The first important point that must be made is that this is not a class on the Doctrine of the Trinity. We are not trying to create theologians. We are striving here to present our God of love as revealed in Jesus in a highly personal way. Jesus revealed God as a relational God both within the Divine communion and in all God's initiatives to reestablish His love-bond with human hearts. Another title might read: How God graces our lives with His three-fold love. The image of God we strive to present to the faith awareness of the youth is the God of Grace.

This does not mean that we abandon the doctrine on the Trinity, rather we use it as a framework within which we prayerfully portray in graced human terms how the love of God touches our lives and brings alive within us an awareness of who we are. In trying to bring home to the candidates this truth in a manner they can easily grasp, we lay before them the magnificent display of the gifts God bestowed upon us as a testimony to how He holds us in His love.

We do this not by approaching the mystery from the inside out, as it were, by striving to share how the three persons in God live in an eternal embrace of life and love. But rather we approach the mystery of God in so far as the Divine life is active in our world, touches our personal lives. It is not only a matter of God-with-God, but of God-with-us.

Given all these insights, it is still possible the speaker might mistakenly talk about God rather than speak from their own personal graced love relationship with God. It is the difference between talking about some person in general, or sharing about someone whom we love. Hence the kind of material used in the presentation of this meditation should be gathered from our own personal prayerful reflection of the graced moments when we became aware of the living-loving presence of God in our world.

Our youth are culturally conditioned to see all of the created world as a fact, not as a gift. They are thus locked out of perceiving the world as a mystery. The speaker should use the approach that sees all of creation as a sacrament revealing the presence of a God who loves us. In presenting the personal mission of God the Father as creator, he/she should make broad use of images gleaned from the beauty of the world, all seen as gifts. This draws them to reinterpret their life experiences within the framework of their faith vision.

In presenting the grace-life communicated by Jesus in His resurrection through the Holy Spirit, the speaker should draw upon examples showing how life came together in a unique way in these instances because of the presence of God's love active in human hearts. It is like seeing the sun's presence by the warmth and light that touches our cheek. If the examples are well chosen, they will also serve to illustrate how God continues to reveal Himself in our personal experiences of the Paschal Mystery; a reliving of the sorrow and joy of Christ's passion, death, and resurrection through which our hearts are progressively refashioned in His image.

Finally, the speaker concludes by sharing that all of this magnificent mystery became part of their life at the moment of Baptism. Baptism is not something we do for God. It is the willingness to open our heart to God who loves us so deeply. God's love is a creative and expansive love. He not only shares His life with us, He gives us the ability to share His life with others. We are members of the family of God. We are brothers and sisters of Christ who chose to make us the sons and daughters of God. WE are persons who are invited to walk the earth in companionship with our God.

Outline:

Scripture: (John 10:10) *"I have come that you may have life and have it more abundantly".*

(1John 4:16) *"We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him."*

(John 1:18) "No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, ever at the Father's side, who has revealed Him."

1. The speaker recalls the experiences of last night in the Paschal Vigil (renewal of Baptismal promises) and of the morning prayer (the resurrection service). Yesterday we shared and lived the Paschal Mystery of Jesus in community. Today we stand at the very heart of this mystery, the dynamic surge of love from the heart of God through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus to draw us into the circle of God's communion. Jesus in His resurrection revealed Himself to be not only God-with-us, but also God-with-God. Those who knew Him as a friend, now see the full mystery of His person radiantly present.
2. Review the great capacity for friendship that Jesus showed in His life among us. Jesus had a deep personal, intimate love for all of His disciples. He looked upon the rich young man and he loved him because of his goodness. He had a special love for Mary M; it was evident in the tone of His voice. He had a special love for Peter; do you love me? He had a very special love for John; the youngest of His disciples. John was a stand-in for all of us. He had a special love for children; held them in His arms and blessed them. He had a special love for His mother, Mary.
 - a. Jesus is the sacrament of God in our midst. He entered into our familiar world on common ground with us to unfold for us the full mystery of God's life and love for us. Jesus as our friend was a person of warmth and great depth. He brought an entirely new form of love into the world, gift love. Loving others passionately without any hope of return. His was a life-giving love.
3. Jesus is our window to God. St. Augustine said: "The greatest act of love of Jesus for us was His revelation of the inner life of God". We are dealing with a profound mystery. But our lives too are mysteries. We constantly discover new things about ourselves as our life unfolds. In friendship and love there is a constant sharing at a deeper level.
 - a. To whom do we belong: that is who we are. we only reveal the secret of who we are to those who love us. Jesus followed the same pattern in revealing how His heart and the heart of His Father and the Holy Spirit were bonded together in life and love. He shared with us in a personal way; yet all their love for us comes from their three hearts beating as one.
4. Jesus enjoyed a very special love for His Father and His Father for Him. There was an abiding intimacy between them. (Sketch briefly our relationship with our human fathers). Scan the world and present a panoramic vision of all that God the Father has done for us in laying out the world and in our own personal formation and continued care. Show how Jesus wants to share His Father with us.
5. Jesus enjoyed an intimate bond of love and life with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was involved in His incarnation, was His soul-mate during all of His life on earth, was present in Jesus when He announced His mission at the synagogue in Nazareth and was Jesus' final gift to us. Continues to inspire and instruct our hearts enabling us to live in intimate union with the full mystery of God in Jesus.
6. The whole powerful dynamic flow of living love from the communion of the hearts of the tri-personal God reached its fullest expression in the Paschal Mystery of Jesus. God's divine plan whereby God chose to take the initiative in laying His heart next to our human hearts was realized in the incarnation of God's Son. Even when human sinfulness put that love on a cross to

bleed to death, God redeemed us by out-loving us. (Show how this mystery is expressed in the sign of the cross).

7. Jesus established the Sacrament of Baptism as the entry point into the living love of God. St. Paul tells us we were "plunged into the life and love of God", but only after we responded CREDO, (I give my heart to God), We are the anointed of God. We are the beloved of God. We are the image of God, to be revealed more clearly in our love relationship with Christ, our brother.
8. Agape love calls us to:
 - a. Love as God loves
 - b. Love that is constantly expanding
 - c. A bonding love that calls us together as a family
 - d. We are meant to be other Christs