

**7 on 7
December, 2018**

Selections from the
Meditations by St. John Baptist de La Salle
Concerning Advent and Christmas

Period One

Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.

Today our prayers will focus on some of the writings of the St. John Baptist de La Salle founder of the Brothers of the Christian Schools and referred today as Founder of both the Brothers and all Lasallians – teachers, staff, students, graduates, and families. These writings were written for us all.

From Meditation 2.2 (a focus on St. John the Baptist)

Why, do you think, did Jesus Christ praise Saint John so highly? It was to lead the people to accept his teaching and to make them understand that what John had said about himself was true: that Saint John had been sent to prepare their hearts to receive Jesus Christ and to profit by his teachings.

Lord, this season of Advent invites us to reflect on the mystery of You becoming human to share in all our joys and challenges. Your life gives meaning to your presence among us for you truly know us, not as some God far away, but as one of us. Immanuel, “God with us”.

Reflection: What is one way I can prepare my heart today?

St. John Baptist De La Salle **Pray for us.**
Live Jesus in our hearts **Forever.**

Period Two

Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.

From Meditation 2.1

Saint John the Baptist, while in prison where he had been thrown by Herod's command, sent two of his disciples to Jesus Christ to ask him whether he is the Messiah. This gave Jesus Christ the opportunity to praise Saint John before the people; he ended by saying that John is the man of whom it was written: I am sending my angel before you, to prepare for you the path where you will walk. You too, as well as Saint John, are angels sent by God to prepare a path for him, so that he can enter your heart and the hearts of your disciples.

Loving God, I wonder. An angel sent by you? I hardly see myself as an angel and yet You call me this. Let me see my goodness this day and share it with both my friends and my family.

Reflection: How are you applying yourself today and what can you do to help others?

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Period Three

Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.

From Meditation 3.1

The Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask Saint John who he was: the Christ, Elijah, or a Prophet. Saint John told them he was none of these, but he declared, I am the voice of one crying in the desert: make straight the way of the Lord. Saint John wished to leave to Jesus Christ all the honor of converting souls, the task at which he labored so constantly. He said, therefore, that he was only a voice crying out in the desert. In the same way that a voice is a sound that strikes the ear and makes it possible for a word to be heard, so it was that Saint John prepared the Jews to receive Jesus Christ.

Jesus, words are powerful things. They can heal and they can wound. Words can draw people in or push people away. Words can affirm ones goodness or beat someone into the ground. Give me the courage to say the words of truth – that we are marvelous creations of your love. May my words this day prepare the way for the world to receive you and give voice of your love.

Reflection: Can a name a time in which I chose to give voice to the truth when it was not popular or easy?

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Period Four

Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.

From Meditation 4.3

In the same way you will return to the grace of our Lord and, according to Saint Peter, you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, who will make you firm in goodness, thanks to his dwelling in you. This Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Beg him to establish your heart so firmly in good that on the day of his coming, as Saint Peter says, you may be found pure and irreproachable in his eyes.

From Meditation 85.3

Because we know that Jesus Christ is going to come into us today and we recognize him for what he is, let us prepare for him a dwelling place worthy of him. Let us dispose our hearts to receive him in such a way that he may be pleased to make his home there!

Lord, we don't hear the language of our body being the "Temple of the Holy Spirit" as it once was used. You dwell within us. You created us good and holy and dwell within us. Just as we are, no exceptions, you dwell within us. No one can take away that fact. Advent is the season to once again remember as we prepare to hear and celebrate the story of your coming and dwelling within us.

Reflection: No matter what I believe about God, I am holy and the sacred dwells within. Can I think of a time I believed in my goodness?

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Period Five

Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.

From Meditation 85

Have you recalled that God was present with you everywhere? Because God is present everywhere, have you adored him everywhere? Pay attention to all this to show God how great an esteem you have for him.

For how long has Jesus been presenting himself to you and knocking at the door of your heart to make his dwelling within you, and you have not wanted to receive him? Why? Because he only presents himself under the form of a poor man, a slave, a man of sorrows.

Dear God, the messages, the stores, the ads all speak of happiness coming from things. Things rust, burn out, and fall apart. Today's "thing" fills the shelves and racks at Goodwill and Savers. Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote asking people if they really wanted Jesus to come, for if they did, it was his message they wanted. De La Salle tells us the same thing in different words. May we open the door and welcome Him in.

Reflection: Do I want Jesus to be born? How have I welcomed him in?

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Period Six

Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.

From Meditation 85.2

You often receive Jesus Christ in your heart, but is he not there as though in a stable, finding there only dirt and corruption, because you have affection for other things rather than for him? If you looked upon him as your Savior and your Redeemer, what honor would you not pay him? Would you not keep him company, regarding him as God by paying attention to his holy presence and as man by meditating on his sufferings and his Passion? To find out whether you profit by the coming and dwelling in you that Jesus desires very much, consider whether you are more reserved, more recollected, and better behaved than you are on other days.

If you wish to profit by the coming of Jesus Christ in you, let him be the master of your heart, and be docile to whatever he might require of you, often saying to him with the Prophet Samuel, Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening, and with David, I will hear what the Lord God will say in me.

Gracious God, you have given us so much. The time between Thanksgiving and Christmas is so busy, so filled with activity it is difficult to stop. The season of darkness invites us to slow down, come inside, and be present to ourselves and You. It is when we slow down that we are able to listen to You call to us. Give us the wisdom to spend time with You.

Reflection: How are you this day acknowledging and accepting God's call?

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Period Seven

Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.

From Meditation 112.3

If God gives us so many signs of his goodness toward us on this holy day, we also have the advantage of receiving a great number of graces. Jesus Christ says in the Gospel that he came into this world only to give us life and to give it to us in abundance. By him and in him, says Saint Paul, a general reconciliation of all things with God has taken place. He too, according to the same Apostle, has made us worthy to share the lot of the saints.

This day, therefore, is a day of joy and blessings for us, for it was on this day that God, who is rich in mercy, as Saint Paul says, out of the infinite love with which he has loved us, sent his own Son, to give us new life in Jesus Christ, to manifest to future ages the magnificence of the riches of his grace through the goodness he has had for us in Jesus Christ. If, then, we enjoy such abundant graces to save ourselves and to become perfect saints, as Saint Paul says, we are indebted for all this to what Jesus Christ did for us on this day by becoming man out of love for us. Let us show him our gratitude by the holy use we make of these graces.

Reflection: How have each of us been aware of God's grace in our life today?

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