

# Retreat in Daily Life ~ Week 4

Week of April 1<sup>st</sup> — #1



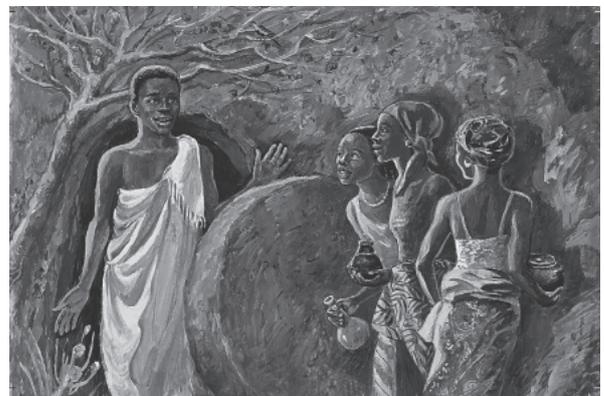
Journeying with Claudine  
1818-2018

## THEME:

To accompany Jesus in His moment of victory and joy as the Holy Spirit moves me.

## GRACE:

Lord God, I come to you this morning to rise with your Son, Jesus, in His Resurrection. Speak to me through the empty tomb and through Jesus' appearances to His disciples.



Jesus Mafa, *The Empty Tomb*, Cameroon

## SCRIPTURE:

Contemplate these Empty Tomb accounts.

Matthew 28:1-8

John 20:1-13

Mark 16:1-8

1 Peter 1: 3-10

Luke 24:1-12

Converse with the disciples, or the angels, guards or anyone else who is there.



Jesus Mafa, *Mary Magdalene at the Tomb*

## SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

“We now enter into the last movement of the retreat. In the Third Week, we shared in Christ’s sorrow and anguish. Now, in the Fourth Week, we ask to share in the joy and peace of the Risen Christ. This joy, like any grace we pray for, is a gift from God; we cannot earn or force it. We simply try to be open to receiving Easter joy by contemplating Christ as he shares the joy of the Resurrection with others.

Easter joy is rooted in each person’s relationship with Christ, cultivated over a lifetime and deepened through the Exercises and other spiritual practices. Joy comes as we grow in faith, hope, and love. The author of 1 Peter 1:8-9 describes an experience akin to living in the Fourth Week:

*Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”*

Adapted from Kevin O'Brien, Introduction to Fourth Week, *An Ignatian Adventure*

**The first appearance of Christ our Lord to his Mother, Mary:**

“The risen Jesus [#218] is first seen in his role as consoling Mary his mother [#219]. The setting for this contemplation is left to your heart and to your imagination, since there is no Scriptural basis to guide your thoughts. In the usual way, try to enter into this contemplation as fully as you can. Ignatius understood that the first person to whom Jesus would appear would be his mother. You can easily imagine the excitement of Jesus in wanting to share the joy of his resurrection with his Mother who had stood by him throughout the Passion. Let the delight and the love of this encounter permeate your being.” [219-20, 222-24]



Jesus Appears to Mary, Loyola Hall, England

James W. Skehan, SJ, *Place Me with Your Son*

**JM TRADITION:**

Father in heaven, our desire to serve you is itself your gift  
and our perseverance needs your guiding hand.

*How right it is that we should sing your praise!*

With boundless love you created the human family through your Word, in the Holy Spirit,  
and lifted it up into communion with yourself;  
you make the human family your bride radiant with your own likeness,  
adorned with the gifts of everlasting life.

In the fullness of time you raised up Mary.  
The Holy Spirit was to come upon her and your power was to overshadow her,  
making her the mother of the World's Redeemer.

He became poor, humble, and obedient, the source and pattern of all holiness,  
forming the Church into his bride, loving it with love so great that he gave himself up for it.  
In your loving wisdom you have called many to be his disciples,  
and to be sent forth with the good news that he has brought.

We earnestly pray you:  
send the fire of the Holy Spirit into the hearts of all whom you have called,  
and keep aflame the holy desire that has been given to them.

May the glory of baptism and holiness of life shine in their hearts.  
Strengthened by their consecration, may they be always one with you.  
May they cherish the Church as their mother and love the whole world as God's creation,  
teaching all women and men to look forward in joy and hope  
to the promise that shines forth in the resurrection of your Son. Amen.

Adapted from Solemn Blessing of Newly Professed, Ritual of Religious Profession, Congregation of RJM

CONTEMPORARY:

O Full of Lilies

Easter to me my little sister is,  
and I affirm her April's eminence.  
No beauty of atoning penances  
prevails on light as does her innocence.

Our abstract night is into day transmuted  
when she makes entrance into any room.  
A call goes out to sunrise, April fluted.  
Wakened in dew, the Easter lilies bloom.

Wide rumor says that she must dine on light  
to show such health of it in her clear face.  
The concept of the flower is also right  
with gleam implicit in the scent of grace.

O full of lilies in the time of lovers!  
My little sister whom night did not mar  
wins Easter first; its luster, one discovers,  
favors the gardens where the lilies are.

Jessica Powers, OCD, *The Selected Poetry of Jessica Powers*



Ted DeGrazia, Tomb Watchers, USA



“We all have our angels. They sit like DeGrazia’s shawled figures who lovingly attend the body of Jesus. They now wait with us until the light returns. And from these angels we learn how to tend the tombs of others, how to keep vigil with them in their dark dead times. Easter is about ‘tomb watches.’ It is about love that keeps vigil and waits and believes in life, no matter

how dark and empty and cold the inner space feels. Easter is about hope that is willing to sit in the tomb while it trusts in transformation. Easter is about faithful companions who keep watch with us and cheer us on as we wait for our inner resurrection.” Joyce Rupp, *Out of the Ordinary: Prayers, Poems and Reflections for Every Season*



The Magdalen, Lingering Grief

# Retreat in Daily Life — Week 4

Week of April 8<sup>th</sup> — #2

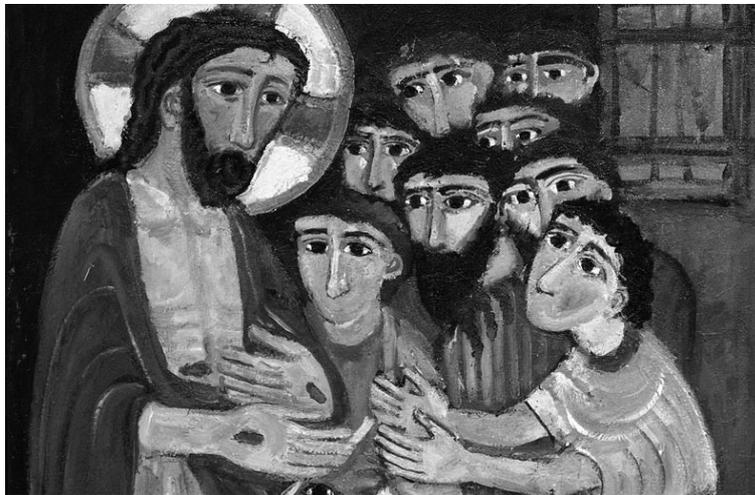


## THEME:

The risen Lord is with us as He promised, to console us and to give us His gifts, so that we may console those who suffer in the world today.

## GRACE:

I ask the Father for this gift: to be able to enter into the joy of the risen and victorious Christ.



*Shalom — Peace be with you*

## SCRIPTURE:

Luke 24:13-35 [Emmaus]

John 20:19-23 [Peace be with you]

Phil. 4:4-7 [Rejoice in the Lord always]

Isaiah 54:1-10 [I will have compassion on you]

Acts 3:1-10 [In the name of Jesus...walk]

Repetition

## SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

“In contrast to the passion, I should note how much the divinity shines through the person of Jesus in all his appearances. The peace and the joy which he wants to share with me can only be a gift of God. To realize that the role of consoler which Jesus performs in each of his resurrection appearances is the same role he performs now in my life is a faith insight into why I can live my life in a true Christian optimism.”

paraphrase of Sp. Exx. #s 223,224

David Fleming,

## PRAYER:

**May God rejoice over us in gladness, renew us in love, and grant us a share in the life of Jesus, in company with Mary, the mother of God. Amen.**

## JM TRADITION:

“We are convinced that our charism is alive and dynamic in each one of us and urges us to reveal the active goodness of God to women and men of our time. Fidelity to that grace requires that we incarnate it in all our situations. Thus, the Spirit impels us with a new desire to inculturate the Gospel wherever we are, and to be inserted in the cultures of the people we evangelize, so that we can help to refashion the disfigured features of our world.



United for mission, we desire to be transformed by the Word of God and the Eucharist, so as to view our world contemplatively and critically. Faced with the enormous challenges of our moment in history, we are nevertheless assured of the Lord's presence among us, as a light and companion on our journey, because of 'what we have seen and heard.'“

Message of GC 33

“The motto, *Praised forever be Jesus and Mary*, expresses the desire of the religious to live their commitment to the redemptive work of Christ in a spirit of praise, in 'joy of heart, freedom of spirit, confidence and generosity.'”

Constitutions, #11

## CONTEMPORARY:

The Lame Man Leaps for Joy



**“Christ is risen! We give thanks for the gift of Easter** that runs beyond our explanations, beyond our categories of reason, even more, beyond the sinking sense of our own lives. We know about the powers of death, powers that persist among us, powers that drive us from you and from our neighbor, and from our best selves. We know about the powers of fear and greed and anxiety, and brutality and certitude, powers before which we are helpless.

And then you ...  
you at dawn,  
unquenched,

You in the darkness, you on Saturday, you who breaks the world to joy.

Yours is the kingdom...not the kingdom of death,  
Yours is the power...not the power of death,  
Yours is the glory...not the glory of death.

**Yours...You...and we give thanks  
For the newness beyond our achieving.  
Amen.”**

W.Brueggemann, *Awed to Heaven, Rooted in Earth*





# Retreat in Daily Life ~ Week 4

Week of April 15<sup>th</sup> — #3



## THEME:

To journey with joy in the presence of the consoling Christ. Ignatius tells us that in all his appearances, Jesus becomes the consoling Christ.

## GRACE:

The grace of walking in the light of the Resurrected Christ.

## SCRIPTURE:

Luke 24: 13-35. Jesus, my companion on my own journey to Emmaus, points out to me how He has been part of my history and pre-history. Consoled, I want to proclaim to all: the Lord has been raised!

John 20:19-23. The fear, guilt, and confusion of the ten companions of Jesus in the Upper Room are familiar to me. I have felt them all. It is into just such a place that He wants and needs to come. I welcome Him, receive His five gifts: peace, joy, mission, His abiding spirit, and a forgiving heart.

John 21: 1-19 [miraculous catch of fish]

John 6:35-40 [I am the bread of life]

Romans 5:1-11 [peace and hope]

Ephesians 3:14-21 [I fall on my knees]

Repetition

## SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

“In the contemplations that follow, continue to reflect on the role of Christ as consoler. In your own life, look for signs of how God has consoled and continues to console you and the people around you. *Where do I find joy? Who or what gives me joy?*”



Baumgartner, Jesus consoles Thomas, USA

We experience various “dyings,” not just with the death of loved ones but also with the loss of friendships, changes in lifestyle or career, physical infirmity, children leaving home, and our own relocations from one city to another. Our God, however, is a God of life. The Resurrection reveals how God is always bringing life from death, hope from despair, love from hate, and light from

darkness. So we celebrate the “risings” as well, such as reconciled or new friendships, unexpected opportunities, renewed vigor, and meaningful learning experiences that come from losses.

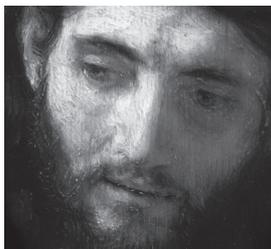
Notice how the risen Christ still bears the marks of the Crucifixion. This itself is a consoling image. Our hurts and limitations are part of who we are. In death, they are not wiped away but are redeemed. God takes us as we are and makes us whole again. A new creation is at work. God wastes nothing and redeems all.” Kevin O’Brien, commentary on the Fourth Week, in *The Ignatian Adventure*



**JM TRADITION:**

[As we celebrate our bicentenary,] “. . . it is hoped that this rich grace of **forgiveness**, offered and received into Claudine’s flesh, heart and beloved community, is finding new life and becoming a source of hope in the face of our mission for these times. In forgiving, Claudine received a new identity: she became a pilgrim and prophet of hope and thus made room for the ‘coming of the impossible’ and the power of God’s future. May she help us with her to bear witness to the same forgiving love and hope!”

International Commission on Charism and Spirituality, *Claudine, her Pilgrimage of Forgiveness*, 2012



Rembrandt’s faces of the risen Christ

**CONTEMPORARY:**

“It is quite remarkable that in the Gospel reading from John 20 the encounter of the disciples with the risen Christ does more than assure them of his presence and his rescue. More than that happens in this account. First, Jesus greets his disciples in peace (shalom) . . . twice. Second he breathes on them; he extends to them a second breath not unlike the breath of the Creator for the first human couple. But third, he authorizes this inchoate church to be an agent of forgiveness of sins, to break the vicious cycles of deathly alienation and bondage. Since only God can forgive, it is clear that the church is given authority to do the work of God. Easter is a fresh intrusion of God’s power for life into the world. The gift of power for life, however, is not simply a gift to and for the church. It is a gift through the church and beyond the church . . . the resurrection of Jesus is a missional event in which the followers of Jesus are given transformative work to do in the world.”

Walter Brueggemann, *Gift and Task*

“The Old Testament begins with darkness, and the last of the Gospels ends with it.

‘Darkness was upon the face of the deep,’ Genesis says.

Darkness was where it all started.

At the end of John, the disciples go out fishing on the Sea of Tiberias. It

is night. They have no luck. Their nets are empty. Then they spot somebody standing on the beach. At first they don’t see who it is in the darkness. It is Jesus.



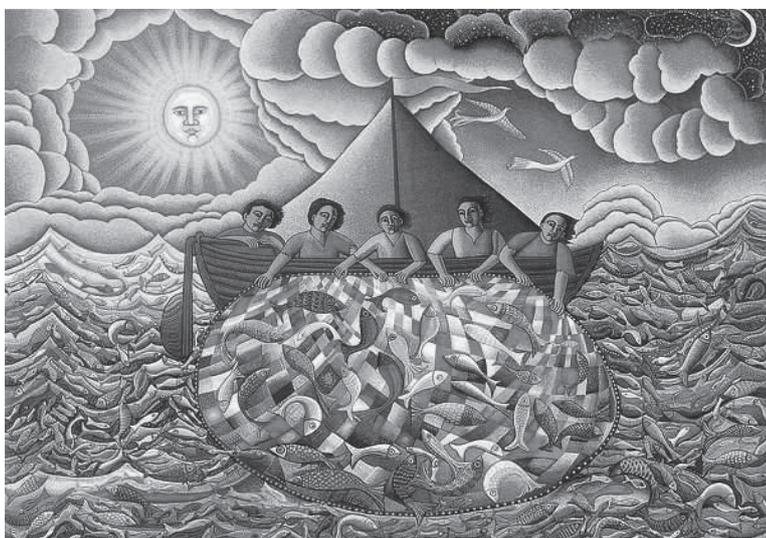
The darkness of Genesis is broken by God in great majesty speaking the word of creation. ‘Let there be light!’ That’s all it took.

The darkness of John is broken by the flicker of a charcoal fire on the sand.

The original creation of light itself is almost too extraordinary to take in. The little cook-out on the beach is almost too ordinary to take seriously. Yet if Scripture is to be believed, enormous stakes were involved in them both and still are.

Only a saint or a visionary can begin to understand God setting the very sun on fire in the heavens, and therefore God takes another tack. By sheltering a spark with a pair of cupped hands and blowing on it, the Light of the World gets enough of a fire going to make breakfast. It’s not apt to be your interest in cosmology or even in theology that draws you to it so much as it’s the empty feeling in your stomach. You don’t have to understand anything very complicated. All you’re asked is to take a step or two forward through the darkness and start digging in.”

Adapted from F. Buechner, *Whistling in the Dark*



Swanson, *Great Catch of Fish*, USA

## PRAYER:

Lord Jesus, we ask you now to help us  
to remain with you always,  
to be close to you  
with all the ardor of our hearts,  
to take up joyfully the mission  
you entrust to us,  
and that is to continue your presence  
and spread the good news  
of your resurrection. Alleluia!

Carlo Maria Martini, SJ

# Retreat in Daily Life ~ Week 4

Week of April 22<sup>nd</sup> — #4



**THEME:**



Like a potter with clay

Father, Son and Holy Spirit are always at work, sharing themselves with us, and empowering us to become contemplatives in action, finding God in all things.

**GRACE:**

In contemplating the love of God, we ask for the grace to love as God loves.

**SCRIPTURE:**

1 John 4:7-11 [let us love one another]  
Ephesians 1: 3-14 [for the praise of his glory]  
Psalm 23 [the Lord is my shepherd]  
Contemplation on the Love of God (p.13)  
Repetition



Like a mother in childbirth

**SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:**

**I beg** for the gift of an intimate knowledge of all the goods which God lovingly shares with me. Filled with gratitude, I want to be empowered to respond just as totally in my love and service.

**I consider** God's gifts to me: God creates me out of love and desires nothing more than a return of love on my part.

**I consider** God's self-giving to me: God not only gives gifts to me, but literally gifts me with the fullness of divine life in Jesus.

**I consider** God's labors for me: like a potter with clay, like a mother in childbirth, or like a mighty force blowing life into dead bones, God labors to share divine life and love. Moved by love, I may want to express my own response in the following words:

**Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory,  
my understanding, and my entire will –  
all I have and call my own.  
You have given it all to me.  
To you, Lord, I return it.  
Everything is yours; do with it what you will.  
Give me only your love and your grace. That is enough for me.**

## JM TRADITION:

“As Christians we are reminded in the angel’s Easter message not to look for the living among the dead, for the Risen One among the bones of a religious past, wonderful as it might be. As Religious of Jesus and Mary, we are compelled to find and reveal a Claudine who is now in the Risen One in whom and for whom she lived and died.” Perhaps we can imagine her saying something like this to us, as we join her this Eastertide on the road to Emmaus, to a new recognition of Christ and ourselves:



*Learn of me, as I learned from life, from the Lord, from the cross and the poor. You are looking for my heart, my experience of God and the miseries of my time? You want to live and serve in this 21<sup>st</sup> century with my apostolic vision and style? Learn as I did.*

*Learn to pray from your weakness and to let God’s power shine through that weakness. Let go of falsehood. Choose the company and friendship of Christ in the least, the most deprived, the most forsaken.*

*Forgive one another as Christ has forgiven you. Take his yoke and burden upon you, the light yoke and sweet burden of living and dying for others.*

*Be mothers, be friends, be sisters, walk together in union and joy.*

*Find your first and last law in the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, in the good news of the Gospel, in the maternal goodness of God, in the Spirit who had guided our beginnings and wells up within us a life that is ever renewed (C. 12).*

*You are not sure about your future. Neither was I. Move into your future, and mine, because it is God’s future, trusting that God is faithful, God is good, God will provide.”*

Excerpt from Conference of Janice Farnham, RJM, Rome, 2000.

## CONTEMPORARY:

[In the 4<sup>th</sup> Week, Ignatius counsels the retreatant that] “The divinity of Jesus, which seemed hidden during the Passion, now appears and manifests itself so miraculously in his holy resurrection through its true and most holy effects.’ [Exx. 223] The recognition of the risen Jesus for the early followers was always a sudden joy, surprise, and restored hope. Especially after the Ascension, the issue for them was to recognize the extraordinary reality of Jesus’ risen presence in the ordinariness of daily life. When the focus on that risen presence is lost, daily life can become dull, boring, deadening. Finding the extraordinary disguised in the ordinary is the challenge that faces our daily faith. This enrichment of everyday life can be another blessing of that risen, faithful Companion, if we are eager enough and sensitive enough to His presence.”

G. Aschenbrenner, “A Consoling Companion Faithful Beyond Any Doubt,” *The Way*, July, 2007



“We tend to think of love as closing out the world, and we can only see the face of the beloved, and that everything else goes quiet or goes numb. But actually, what I experienced was that — and I’ve experienced it again with my children — is that the love demanded to be something else. It demanded to be expressed beyond the expression of the participants. It kept demanding more.

And that excess energy, I think, is God. And I think it’s God in us, trying to return to its source. I don’t know how else to understand it . . . .

I think we have these experiences, and they are — people react against the word “spiritual” these days, but I don’t know what other word to use, at this point — they are spiritual experiences. And then religion comes after that. Religion is everything that we do with these moments of intense spirituality in our lives, whether it’s whatever practice we have; whether it’s going to church; whether it’s how we integrate sacred text into our lives.

Being religious, or taking on some sort of religious elements in your life, you are not necessarily saying, ‘I agree with everything that this religion says.’ What you are saying is that ‘I’ve had these incredible experiences in my life — of suffering or joy, or both, and they have demanded some action of me and demanded some continuity of me. And the only way that I know to do this is to try to find some form in it and to try to share it with other people.’” <https://onbeing.org/> Krista Tippet interviews Christian Wiman, January 4, 2018



“It was a very clear night, or morning, very still, and then there was such energy in the things transpiring among those trees, like a storm, like travail. I stood there a little out of range, and I thought, it is all still new to me.” Marilyn Robinson, *Gilead*



Photo by Tony Detroit on Unsplash.com

*Praised Forever Be Jesus and Mary!*

## CONTEMPLATION ON THE LOVE OF GOD [230]

Preliminary Note: Before this exercise is presented, two observations should be made:

- 1) the first is that love ought to show itself in deeds over and above words;
- 2) the second is that love consists in a mutual sharing of goods. For example, a lover gives and shares with the beloved something of his personal gifts or some possession which he has or is able to give; so, too, the beloved shares with the lover. In this way, one who has knowledge shares it with one who does not, and this is true for honors, riches, and so on. In love, one always wants to give to the other. [231]

PREPARATION: I take the usual time to place myself reverently in the presence of my Lord and my God, and beg that God will direct everything in my day more and more to his praise and service.

At this time I may find it especially helpful to imagine myself standing before God and all his saints who are praying for me. [232]

GRACE: I beg for the gift of an intimate knowledge of all the sharing of goods which God does in his love for me. Filled with gratitude, I want to be empowered to respond just as totally in my love and service of him. [233]

THE SETTING: There are four different focal points which present the subject matter for my prayer:

### 1. God's gifts to me. [234]

God creates me out of love which desires nothing more than a return of love on my part. So much does he love me that even though I take myself away from him, he continues to be my Savior and Redeemer.

All my natural abilities and gifts, along with the gifts of Baptism and the Eucharist and the special graces lavished upon me, are only so many signs of how much God our Lord shares his life with me. My consolation: who I am by the grace of God!

If I were to respond as a reasonable person, what could I give in return to such a Lover? Moved by love, I may want to express my own love-response in the following words:

### TAKE AND RECEIVE

**Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will – all that I have and call my own. You have given it all to me. To you, Lord, I return it. Everything is yours; do with it what you will. Give me only your love and your grace. That is enough for me.**

### 1. God's gift of himself to me. [235]

God not only gives gifts to me, but he literally gives himself to me. His is not only the Word in whom all things are created, but also the Word who becomes flesh and dwells with us. He gives himself to me so that his Body and Blood become the food and drink of my life. He pours out upon me his Spirit so that I can cry out "Abba." God loves me so much that I literally become a dwelling-place or a temple of God – growing in an ever deepening realization of the image and likeness of God which remains the glory of the creation of man and woman.

If I were to make only a reasonable response, what could I do? Moved by love, I may find that I can respond best in words like the TAKE AND RECEIVE.

### 3. God labors for me. [236]

God loves me so much that he enters into the very struggle of life. Like a potter with clay, like a mother in childbirth, or like a mighty force blowing life into dead bones, God labors to share his life and his love. His labors take him even to death on a cross in order to bring forth the life of the Resurrection.

Once more I question myself how I can make a response. Let me look again to the expression of the TAKE AND RECEIVE.

### 4. God as Giver and Gift. [237]

God's love shines down upon me like the light rays from the sun, or his love is poured forth lavishly like a fountain spilling forth its waters into an unending stream. Just as I see the sun in its rays and the fountain in its waters, so God pours forth himself in all the gifts which he showers upon me. His delight and his joy is to be with the sons of men – to be with me. He cannot do enough to speak out his love for me – ever calling me to a fuller and better life.

What can I respond to such a generous Giver? Let me consider once again the expression of the TAKE AND RECEIVE.

I close the prayer with an Our Father.

**Note:** There are a number of approaches which we can use as we pray this Contemplation on the Love of God.

The Contemplation could provide the prayer material for the final day or days of the Fourth Week and so close out the retreat. All four points of the contemplation could be used in a single prayer period. Then the repetitions would continue to simplify the response throughout the prayer periods of the day. Perhaps one or two points of the contemplation might provide the material for the whole day, with the usual repetitions being employed.

Another approach would be to use the Contemplation as a whole or with any one of its points as the final prayer period of each day within the Fourth Week, taking the place of the usual Application of the Senses. Perhaps one final day would be spent upon the total material of the Contemplation, after the manner of reviewing the whole of the Passion in the Third Week.

Whatever is more conducive to the good closure of the retreat for the particular retreatant is the determining guide for how to proceed.