



# Faith in 52

A yearlong parish retreat based on the work *I Believe in Love*  
by Father Jean C. J. d'Elbee

*Week 34: June 24th through June 30th, 2013*

## For Individuals

(pages 190-194 of the book *I Believe in Love*, from "You will find unsuspected joys..." through page 194)

### **STEP 1: OPENING PRAYER**

1. Speaking to the Holy Spirit, say: "*O Holy Spirit, soul of my soul, I adore You. Enlighten, guide, strengthen, and console me. Tell me what I ought to do and command me to do it. I promise to be submissive in everything that You ask of me, and to accept all that You permit to happen to me. Only show me what is Your will*" (Cardinal Mercier).

### **STEP 2: PRAYERFUL READING**

1. Prayerfully read ONLY the weekly assigned pages of *I Believe in Love*.
2. While reading, pay careful attention to the phrases, ideas, or images that might bring about comfort or even those that are challenging. Rest on these a while and speak with the Lord about them, receive His graces, and ponder what has been laid out before you.

### **STEP 3: MEDITATION**

1. Keeping your imagination quiet, figuratively or literally shutting your eyes to all the things of sense, and closing your ears to all the sounds of earth, so as to be able to withdraw into the sanctuary of your baptized soul, which is the temple of the Holy Spirit, do the following:
  - Meditate upon the name of Jesus. The name means "the Lord saves." Early Christians would pray simply by slowly and reverently repeating the name of Jesus. Try doing this yourself: "Do not be afraid to pronounce and to repeat often the name of *Jesus*" (p. 190).
  - "Hold fast to an immense confidence, in your apostolate. Often our Lord hides from the apostle the fruit of his work, of his fatigue, in order to keep him humble and to test his faith, by a wholly divine wisdom. Learn how to say, 'I do not expect my reward here below'" (p. 192). Does this describe your current situation? Do you tire and wonder if your prayers and labors are really saving souls and bringing righteousness to the world? "Even if you do not see the result of your prayers, your supplications, and your efforts, believe, believe!" (p. 192). Make an act of the will and tell Jesus that you choose to believe.
  - Finish by saying the *Our Father* in a spirit of complete abandonment. ■

#### **The Name of Jesus**

The name of Jesus is at the heart of Christian prayer. All liturgical prayers conclude with the words "through our Lord Jesus Christ". The *Hail Mary* reaches its high point in the words "blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus." The Eastern prayer of the heart, the *Jesus Prayer*, says: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner." Many Christians, such as St. Joan of Arc, have died with the one word "Jesus" on their lips.

- from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*,  
§435. ■

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## You are the Light

**Y**ou are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do men light a lamp only to put it under a bushel basket; they put it on a stand where it gives light to all in the house. The Lord called his disciples the salt of the earth because they seasoned with heavenly wisdom the hearts of men rendered insipid by the devil. Now he calls them the light of the world as well, because they have been enlightened by him, the true and everlasting light, and have themselves become a light in the darkness.

Since he is the Sun of Justice, he fittingly calls his disciples the light of the world. The reason for this is that through them, as through shining rays, he has poured out the light of the knowledge of himself upon the entire world. For by manifesting the light of truth, they have dispelled the darkness of error from the hearts of men.

Moreover, we too have been enlightened by them. We have been made light out of darkness as the Apostle says: *For once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light.* He says another time: *For you are not sons of the night and of*



*Supper at Emmaus (detail) by Gerrit van Honthorst*

*darkness, but you are all sons of light and of the day.*

Saint John also rightly asserts in his letter: *God is light*, and whoever abides in God is in the light just as God himself is in the light. Therefore, because we rejoice in having been freed from the darkness of error, we should always walk in the light as children of light. This is why the Apostle says: *Among them you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life.*

If we fail to live in the light, we shall, to our condemnation and that of others, be veiling over and obscuring by our infidelity the light men so desperately need. As we know from Scripture, the man who received the talent should have made it produce a heavenly profit, but instead he preferred to hide it

away rather than put it to work and was punished as he deserved.

Consequently, that brilliant lamp which was lit for the sake of our salvation should always shine in us. For we have the lamp of the heavenly commandment and spiritual grace, to which David referred: *Your law is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.* Solomon also says this about it: *For the command of the law is a lamp.*

Therefore, we must not hide this lamp of law and faith. Rather, we must set it up in the Church, as on a lamp-stand, for the salvation of many, so that we may enjoy the light of truth itself and all believers may be enlightened.

- from a treatise on the Gospel of St. Matthew by Saint Chromatius, (Tract. 5, 1. 3-4: CCL 9, 405-407). ■

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## For Group Sharing

(pages 190-194 of the book *I Believe in Love*, from “You will find unsuspected joys...” through page 194)

### **STEP 1: OPENING PRAYER**

1. Gathering with your spouse, family, or a group of friends at a time of your choosing, though preferably on the following Sunday, make the Sign of the Cross and then say together to the Holy Spirit: “Come Holy Spirit, come by means of the powerful intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, your well-beloved Spouse.”

### **STEP 2: PUBLIC READING**

1. Depute or invite a competent reader among the group to read aloud the weekly assigned pages of *I Believe in Love*. All should be encouraged to listen attentively; any distractions, i.e., cell phones, televisions, etc., should be turned off or removed during this time.

### **STEP 3: PRAYERFUL DISCUSSION**

1. After the public reading, someone should facilitate the public discussion. This facilitator should read aloud the questions below. Considering the constraints of time or the particular audience, not every question need be asked nor discussed. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you when in doubt.
2. Everyone may speak but should not speak over others, should not dominate the conversation, and should not ridicule others. All should try to be like Christ who is “gentle and humble of heart.” Moreover, all should be asked to keep confidential the contents of the discussion. No one should reveal more than what they feel comfortable sharing or be forced to speak.

- Why does the heart of evangelization and the active apostolate lie in the approach of St. Paul: “I have become all things to all, to save at least some” (1 Cor. 9:22)? Becoming “all things to all” does not mean Christians should compromise the Truth, but then what does it mean to “become all things to all” people (p. 190)?
- Sometimes Catholics refrain from saying the name of Jesus in mixed company, while many Evangelical Protestants seem to use His name every chance they can. Is this your experience? Why do you think Catholics are reluctant to evangelize, to share the name of Jesus with others? Do they realize the “special grace attached to the name of *Jesus*” (p. 190)?
- “Remember that each soul won wins others, and that you will be forever the spiritual father or mother of a multitude of elect who will come to seek you out upon your arrival at the door of paradise” (p. 191-192). Does this

#### **Servants of the Word**

To nourish ourselves with the word in order to be “servants of the word” in the work of evangelization: this is surely a priority for the Church at the dawn of the new millennium. Even in countries evangelized many centuries ago, the reality of a “Christian society” which, amid all the frailties which have always

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statement discourage or inspire you? The Lord promised Abraham that his descendants would outnumber the stars in the sky; how many will you bring to the Catholic Faith?

- In heaven we will “be proud of one another, without the least jealousy” (p. 192). Why are we so envious of the spiritual and material gifts of others in this world? Are not our neighbor’s blessings ours, too? What does St. Paul mean that, in the Church, “if [one] part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy” (1 Cor. 12:26)?
- “Even if you do not see the result of your prayers, your supplications, and your efforts, believe, believe!” (p. 192). Why is confidence in the Lord the perfect response to the feeling of failure and apostolic fatigue?
- “Jesus makes use of everything to save us” (p. 193). How does the story of St. Jean Vianney, the Curé of Ars, and the widow illustrate this point (p. 192-193)? Do you make the Lord “a judge who strikes men down and seeks revenge” or a God who “seeks to save us by all possible means” (p. 194)?

## **STEP 4: CLOSING PRAYER**

1. When finished with the discussion, the entire group should conclude with:

**M**ary, Mother of Christians, pray for us.  
Amen. ■



***Servants of the Word*** (Continued from page 3)

marked human life, measured itself explicitly on Gospel values, is now gone. Today we must courageously face a situation which is becoming increasingly diversified and demanding... Over the years, I have often repeated the summons to the new evangelization. I do so again now, especially in order to insist that we must rekindle in ourselves the impetus of the beginnings and allow ourselves to be filled with the ardor of the apostolic preaching which followed Pentecost. We must revive in ourselves the burning conviction of Paul, who cried out: “Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel” (1 Cor. 9:16).

This passion will not fail to stir in the Church a new sense of mission, which cannot be left to a group of “specialists” but must involve the responsibility of all the members of the People of God. Those who have come into genuine contact with Christ cannot keep him for themselves, they must proclaim him. A new apostolic outreach is needed, which will be lived as the everyday commitment of Christian communities and groups...

Christ must be presented to all people with confidence. We shall address adults, families, young people, children, without ever hiding the most radical demands of the Gospel message, but taking into account each person’s needs in regard to their sensitivity and language, after the example of Paul who declared: “I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some” (1 Cor. 9:22).

- from Bl. Pope John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*  
(Jan. 6, 2001), §40. ■

## **Next Eucharistic “Hour of Power” in English**

- Saturday, July 6th, 7-8 p.m., St. Peter McMahon Hall

## **Next Parish Dessert Potluck\***

- Saturday, July 6th, 8-9 p.m., Upper Room Library