

# Bible Day by Day

MINUTE MEDITATIONS  
FOR EVERY DAY  
BASED ON SELECTED TEXTS  
OF THE HOLY BIBLE

By  
Rev. John C. Kersten, S.V.D.

Illustrated



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**BELONG** to my lover and He yearns for me.”

—Sg 7:10

**JAN.  
17**

### **We Belong to God**

The Judeo-Christian tradition sees the Song of Songs as a parable, describing the mutual love of the Lord and His people in terms of human love. The true meaning of mutual love comes from the poem as a whole.

How do you feel related to God? Isaiah writes, “For your Maker has become your husband” (Isa 54:5). The notions of punishment and reward may enter the picture. The Bible uses these motives as parents do with children! We should outgrow fear and the want of gain. You could meditate on the value “belonging” vs. “loneliness.” God yearns for you.



**HE** souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment can overtake them.

—Wis 3:1

**JAN.  
18**

### **Consolation in Time of Death**

All of us have to face the departure of a dearly beloved every so often. How do we handle it? Indeed, “from the viewpoint of the foolish they seemed to be dead . . . . But they are at peace” (Wis 3:23).

Since there is no scientific proof of a hereafter, in faith we turn to God’s word in Scripture. At the funeral service, we look at the lighted Easter candle, symbol of the risen Lord, Whom we hope to follow into life everlasting, and consolation is found in common prayer.



NOTHING is better than fear of the Lord. FEB.

—Sir 23:27 10

### Filial Respect for God

In Biblical idiom, fear of the Lord means “filial respect for God.” It is a cherished value of Sirach. It warms the heart (1:10); it is the beginning of wisdom (1:12); it surpasses all else (25:11); it is a paradise of blessings (40:27); nothing is better! “Blessed is the man who devotes himself to these things. . . . If he puts them into practice, he will be able to cope with anything, for fear of [filial respect for] the Lord is his lamp” (50:28-29).

What light are you going by: the candlelight many are using or the radiance of the Lord?



NOTHER is slow and in need of help, lacking in strength and abounding in poverty. FEB.

— Sir 11:12 11

### The Measure of Greatness

Not everyone can be a George Washington or an Albert Einstein. But the life of every person who does the loving thing in his/her situation is meaningful. A mother spending time with her children, a father listening to his son, a student doing his homework—all are great in the eyes of God. The person who cares only for satisfying his/her self is a failure.

Every Sunday we pray, “I confess to Almighty God . . . that I have sinned . . . in what I have failed to do.” Real repentance should result in trying to do the most loving thing!



O one can enter the Kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.

— Jn 3:5

JULY  
22

### Water and the Spirit

Baptism, the first phase of Christian initiation (Eucharist and Confirmation follow) is seen as a birth: “from above” (see Jn 3:1-5). Water, fire, and blowing wind are apt symbols, which approach the mystery of God’s presence in us (see Acts 2:1-13). Without God’s Spirit motivating us, flesh is just flesh and we are not fully alive (see Jn 3:6). We are part of Christ’s worldwide movement, the Kingdom of God.

Veterans proudly display their medals of honor. Word and example should show our Christian dignity. “Come, Holy Spirit. . . .”



TELL you that the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. — Mt 21:43

JULY  
23

### Exercising Faithful Stewardship

I have listened to prison inmates recounting how they had ruined their lives. One told me a few hours before his execution, “I must die. Will you give this ring to my wife?” Matthew is hard on those who hesitate to make a definitive commitment.

Am I exercising faithful stewardship over what God has entrusted to me, the gift of Faith included? Let’s not wait until it’s too late before “producing” in word and example. “God, help me to grow in the Faith and produce fruit as I should.”



HE healthy do not need a physician, AUG.  
but the sick do.

—Mk 2:17

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### The Divine Physician

The scribes criticized Jesus for eating with tax collectors and sinners. Jewish institutional law made members who did so unclean. Jesus, though, considers himself a physician.

Only when you feel ill do you make an appointment with your doctor. What are your weak spots as a Christian? Being self-righteous, you are like a woman who delays a recommended cancer smear till it is too late. Pray with Jeremiah: “Heal me, O Lord, that I may be healed. Save me!” (Jer 17:14).



F salt loses its taste, what can it be seasoned with? AUG.

—Mt 5:13

10

### The Salt of the Earth

Before the time of freezers and refrigerators, salt was the means used to preserve food. We Christians are the prophetic element in the world, trying to preserve it from the corruption of evil: “You are the salt of the earth” (Mt 5:13).

Depravity may come at us from many sources. Check what tears you down and where you fail in the field of loving God and neighbor. Be aware that if we fail, we are no longer good for anything, like salt, but to be thrown out (Mt 5:13). “I confess to Almighty God . . . that I have sinned.”