

Fathers and Mothers

A PRAYER MEDITATION FROM *AMBASSADORS OF JESUS CHRIST*

“God honored you when ... you were made the guides and guardians of these children.”
(Meditation No. 203.3)

FIRST MOVEMENT

- 1. Take a few minutes to recollect yourself and recall that God is already present to you in those you daily meet and whose needs you serve.**

“Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of my brethren, you did it to me.” (Mt 25:40)

- 2. Ask God to draw your will into a more perfect union with God’s will.**

“It is not the will of my Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost.” (Mt 18:14)

SECOND MOVEMENT

- 3. Contemplate the Mystery of God’s Love at Work in the World**

Read the following passage. What words especially catch your attention? Listen to what is being said. Try to enter into the mystery. Lovingly contemplate Jesus Christ and the relationship into which Christ is inviting you.

“And he took a child, and put the child in the midst of them; and taking the child in his arms, Jesus said to them, ‘Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me.’” (Mk 9:36-37)

- 4. Reflect on the Mystery of God’s Love at Work in Your Own Life**

Allow the following passages to illuminate the nature of your relationship with those who have entrusted to you.

“The Gospels hold up to our admiration the great care which Saint Joseph took of the child Jesus. ... You ought to have as great a care and affection for the children entrusted to you ... as he had for the welfare of Jesus, since you are commissioned by God to look after them just as Saint Joseph was with regard to Our Savior. This, in fact, is the first thing you must do in your

employment, if you wish to imitate Saint Joseph, who had nothing so much at heart as to provide for the needs of the child Jesus.” (Meditation No. 110.3)

“Saint Monica was the mother of Saint Augustine. ... She did all in her power to withdraw him from his bad ways and win him back to Christ. ... She even crossed seas and undertook long journeys. ... Do you also take every possible care to win over to God those who are entrusted to you ...?” (Meditation No. 122.3)

“Saint Margaret, Queen of Scotland, herself performed the functions of tutor to her children, giving them reading lessons, and applying herself with all possible care to their education, for she rightly considered that this work was the most agreeable to God that she could do. For this reason, it was also the chief intention of her prayers. She is a striking example of what you should do with regard to the children whom God has confided to your care. Here you see this noble lady making it her chief concern to do that which constitutes the essential object of your state. Let it be an honor for you to do the same and look upon those whom God has entrusted to you as the children of God himself.” (Meditation No. 133.2)

“God has bestowed on you an honor equal to that of Saint Joachim by placing you in the position you occupy, since he destines you to be the spiritual parent of the children whom you instruct. If Saint Joachim was chosen to be father of the Most Blessed Virgin, you are called to engender children in Christ, and also to make Jesus live anew in their hearts. Can it be said that you have fully entered into the designs of God upon you?” (Meditation No. 157.1)

“Do you, like Saint Francis de Sales, have similar sentiments of charity and tenderness toward the children whom you have to instruct? Do you avail yourself of the affection the children have for you to attract them to God. If you show the firmness of a father in withdrawing them from bad habits, you should also show them the tenderness of a mother in gathering them together, and in doing them all the good in your power.” (Meditation No. 101.3)

In what way do you feel most empowered by God to care for those who have been entrusted to you? What gifts or graces have been given to you to enable you to do this work well?

What difference would it make in your life if you would truly love your students in the same way that God has loved you? What difference could such a love make in their lives?

THIRD MOVEMENT

5. Resolve to Be More Open to the Work of the Spirit in and Through You Today

Take a few minutes giving thanks for God’s relationship with you. Thank God for the ministry with which you have been entrusted.

In what ways could you reorder your daily activities so that you would be a better guide and guardian of others?

This prayer meditation is an excerpt from *Ambassadors of Jesus Christ: Prayer Meditations for Christian Educators* (1995) by Brother William Mann, FSC, Brother Henry Dissanayke, FSC, and Brother Isaias Tzegay, FSC. This book contains 35 meditations that invite one to enter into the three movements of Saint John Baptist de La Salle's *Method of Interior Prayer*.