



## *BENEFITS OF JOURNALING:*

Journaling helps you become more familiar with the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit in your life. Through the Journal you will be training yourself to listen closely to the Holy Spirit, both in your prayer and throughout the day. The questions that you will be responding to on a daily basis will be a significant key to this formation. Since you are beginning this journey of formation at the hands of the Holy Spirit, there are only 3 questions that you will be attempting to answer on a daily basis:

### **What is God saying to you?**

In prayer, we express our sentiments and petitions to God and listen to how He wants us to live our lives. Prayer becomes truly efficacious when we learn the art of listening to God's voice manifesting itself through the various movements generated in our minds, senses, imagination, memory, and hearts. Teaching us this art is the work of the Holy Spirit, and it requires diligent practice. Sometimes the Holy Spirit will reveal to you a deeper appreciation of the teachings of Jesus. Sometimes, in doubt and confusion, you will be strengthened to stay true to the teachings of Jesus. At other times, you will get a deeper insight into yourself, whether it is your sinfulness, or God's great love for you, or God's unwavering compassion and forgiveness upon your repentant heart. There will be times when the Holy Spirit will give you confirmation about the rightness of your actions to help you persevere and fight the good fight. On occasion, you will know the Presence is there, and you can't quite reach, or touch God. It will seem like you are in a fog, reaching out for the Good Shepherd's hand and not finding it, or so it will seem. And you will understand that you are being asked to believe and trust in the constant Presence of Jesus. Then there will be times when you will be swept into the Mystery of the Divine Presence. In those moments, your communion with the Divine will be in awed silence.

### **For what are you grateful? For what are you contrite?**

You are answering these questions at the end of the day, after you have made your Examination of Conscience. St. Ignatius of Loyola emphasized the importance of the Examination of Conscience as a great help towards union with God. A significant part of the Examination of Conscience is to recall the blessings and graces that God has bestowed upon us during the day. Being grateful to God is an essential dimension of the creature. Responding generously to God's love for us can be considered to be an important dimension of our gratitude to God for His help and grace. We engage in this daily prayer of gratitude by answering the question For what are you grateful? We depend on God for absolutely everything! In light of God's loving kindness towards us, we examine our own response, generous or failed, to God's invitation to give ourselves to Him. Then in light of God's loving kindness towards us, we examine our own failed response to God's invitation to give ourselves to Him. Examining our conscience is the other significant aspect of this prayer. We enter into union with God through repentance of our sins and God's forgiveness of us. Your answer to the question For what are you contrite? gives you a deeper appreciation of this very special relationship that God has with you.