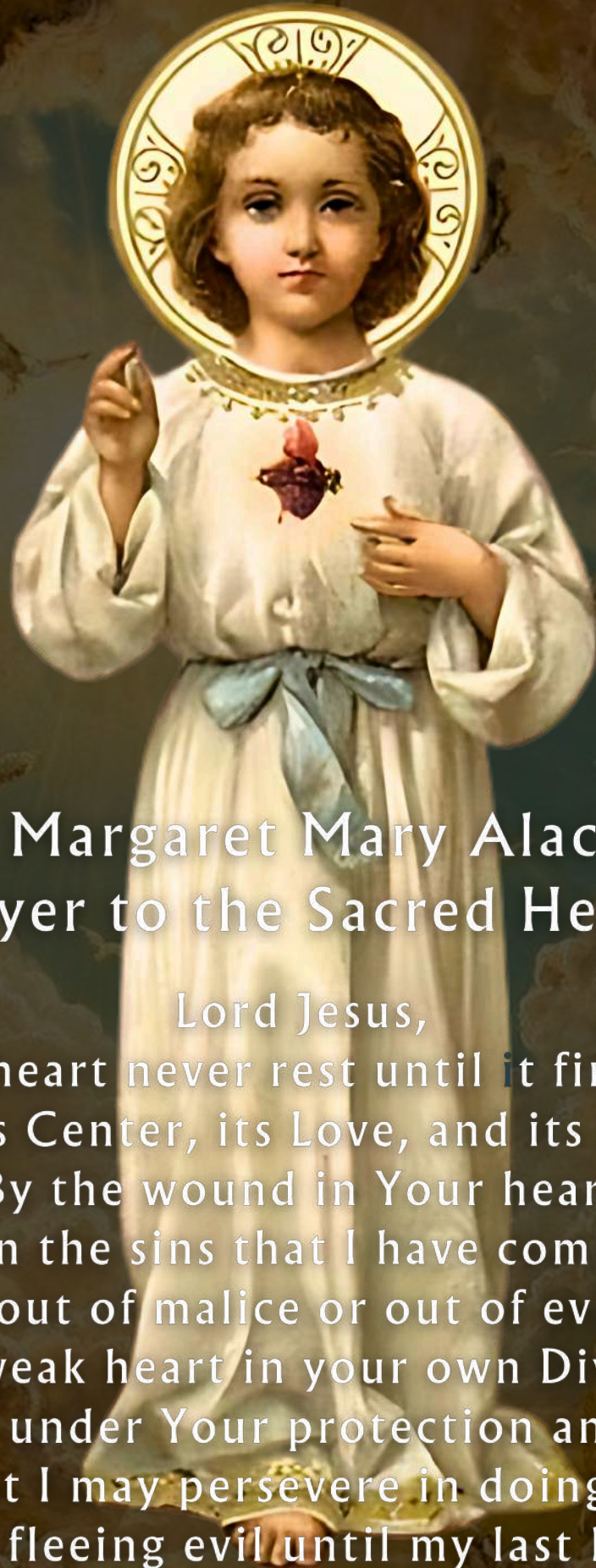




COR. 8

HEART OF THE
FATHER



Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque
Prayer to the Sacred Heart:

Lord Jesus,

Let my heart never rest until it finds You,
who are its Center, its Love, and its Happiness.

By the wound in Your heart
pardon the sins that I have committed
whether out of malice or out of evil desires.
Place my weak heart in your own Divine Heart,
continually under Your protection and guidance,
so that I may persevere in doing good
and in fleeing evil until my last breath.

Amen.

Lectio Divina: Finding Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:41-52)

Brothers, we contemplate the Holy Family's pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:41-52). This passage invites us to consider our own spiritual journey towards God, a journey that, like Jacob's ladder, connects heaven and earth, revealing God's presence in our lives. Let us open our hearts to the Holy Spirit.

Meditation (Reading and Reflection):

Read Luke 2:41-52 slowly, intentionally, and reverently. Pause after each verse or phrase, allowing the words to sink deep into your soul.

As you hold this passage in your heart, consider these possible avenues for reflection:

- What words or phrases from the passage resonate most strongly with you? Why do these particular words stand out?
- Imagine Mary and Joseph's anxiety as they searched for three days. How does their distress reveal the depth of their love for Jesus and their responsibility as his parents?
- Jesus's response, "Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" is a powerful statement of his identity and mission. How does this foreshadow his later ministry and his ultimate sacrifice on the Cross? How does it connect to the Eucharist, where we encounter Christ truly present in the tabernacle, his "house"?
- The Gospel tells us Jesus was "sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions." This image speaks to the importance of seeking wisdom, engaging with Scripture, and learning from the teachings of the Church. How can we emulate Jesus's example in our own pursuit of truth and understanding?
- How does this encounter with the Child Jesus in the Temple speak to your own experiences of seeking God, especially during times of spiritual dryness, doubt, or feeling lost?



Contemplation:

Choose one word or phrase that has touched you during the *Meditation* (e.g., "Father's house," "looking for him," "kept all these things").

Enter into a time of silent prayer. Hold this word or phrase gently in your heart, allowing the Holy Spirit to illuminate its meaning for you. Imagine yourself present in the Temple with the Child Jesus, surrounded by the teachers. What do you see, hear, and feel in this sacred space? Allow yourself to rest in God's loving presence.

Call to Action (Prayer and Action):

- Prayer: Lift up your heart to God in prayer. Offer gratitude for the gift of Jesus. Ask for Mary's intercession, that you may grow in deeper understanding and love for her Son. Pray for the grace to recognize Christ's presence in the Eucharist and in the Church (e.g., Hail Mary, Memorare [Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary...]).
- Action:
 - Reflecting on Mary's example of "keeping all these things in her heart," what specific spiritual insight from this passage will you carry with you and reflect upon during the coming week?
 - Knowing that we encounter Christ in the Mass, how will you extend that encounter into the rest of your week through connection with the Church? Consider attending daily Mass, participating more fully in parish activities, dedicating time to personal prayer, or studying the Catechism.
 - Consider spending time in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, seeking Jesus in His "Father's house."

A Moment of Grace:

The finding of Jesus in the Temple is a powerful reminder of His divine identity and unwavering commitment to His Father's will. It shows us that even in the midst of ordinary life, God is present, inviting us to ascend, step by step, towards Him. Through Mary's intercession, may we grow in our love for Jesus and deepen our commitment to His Holy Church. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Shared Lectio Divina Journey

Three volunteers will lend their voices to the Sacred Text, inviting us into three profound encounters with the Word. After each reading, we will pause for a moment of sacred silence, allowing the words to penetrate our souls.

- Following the first reading, we will share a word or phrase that ignited our hearts. This simple act of sharing weaves a tapestry of spiritual perspectives, enriching our individual journeys.
- After the second reading, we will delve into the depths of meaning, reflecting on how the chosen word or phrase resonates with our personal experiences. This deeper contemplation allows us to connect the divine message to our lives in a tangible way.
- Finally, after the third reading, we will consider the divine invitation before us. This call to action might be a whisper of guidance, a nudge towards transformation, or a spark of divine inspiration. Let us share our insights with open hearts, fostering a sense of spiritual community and shared purpose.

✠ Lectio Divina ✠
A Journey to the Father's House

Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ
According to Saint Luke 2,41-52.

Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it.

Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.

When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety." He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years,^[n] and in divine and human favor.

As We Depart

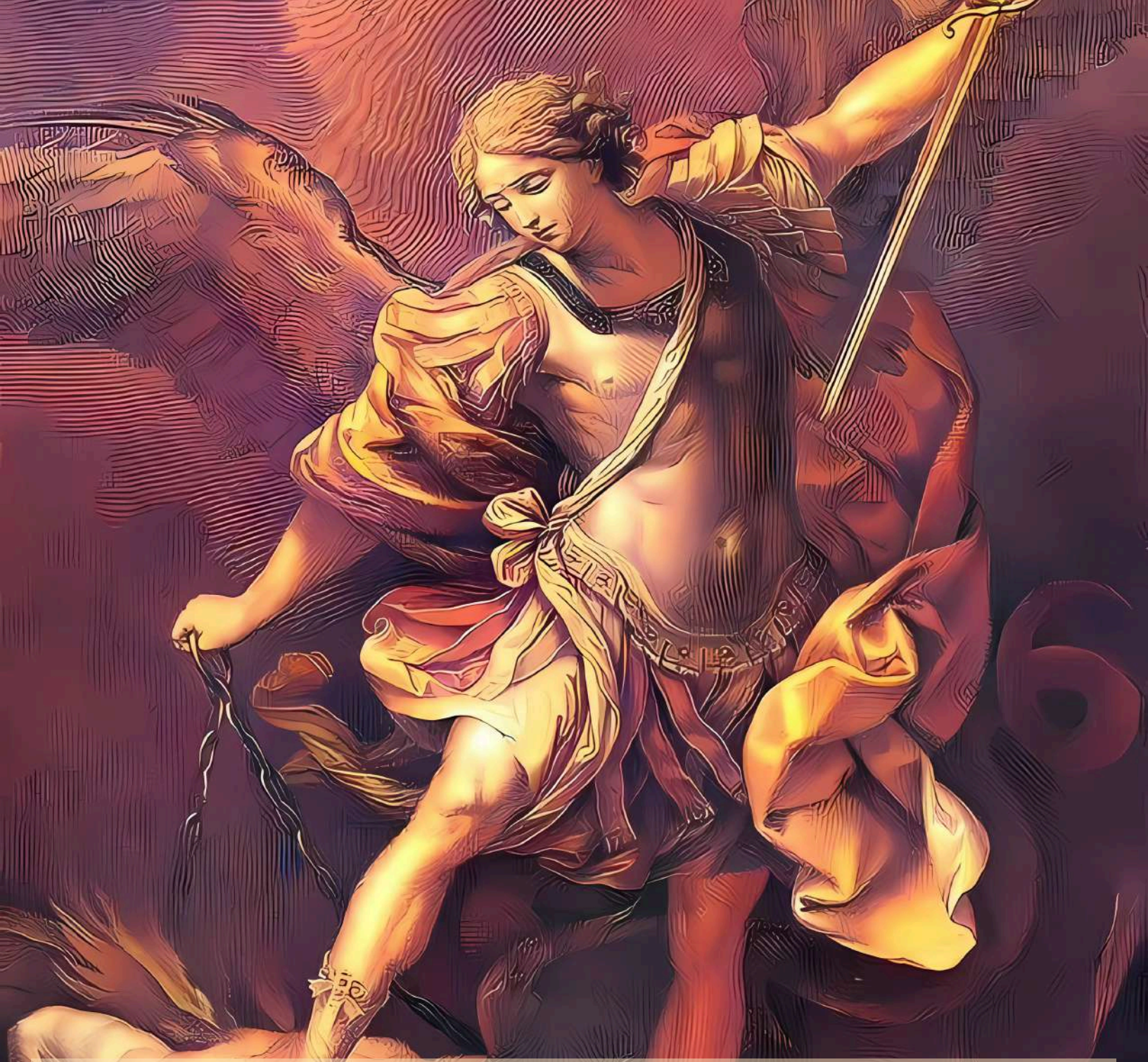
Loving God, we thank you for revealing your love in the story of the Holy Family and the growth of young Jesus in wisdom and grace.

Through our baptism, we are called to share in his life and to be formed more perfectly in his image. May we, like Mary, ponder these things in our hearts and, with open hearts to the Holy Spirit, strive always to discern and do your holy will, growing in virtue and conforming our lives more fully to the example of your Son.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.



Last Saturdays of the Month
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O Lord, who in the Child Jesus offered a perfect example of obedience to his earthly parents and unwavering devotion to his heavenly Father, and who in the Temple revealed your Son's divine purpose, strengthen us, with the intercession of Saint Michael the Archangel, to follow in his footsteps and to live as faithful members of your Holy Church. Empower us to resist the allure of worldly pursuits that lead us astray, and by the power of your grace, guide us to your presence, that we may always be found doing your will and dwelling in your house. Amen.



Holy Family, as you sought and found Jesus in the Temple,
guide us to build strong families rooted in faith, unity, and
charity, serving God and our neighbors
in our homes and our communities.

