

Quiet Day Resources

Imagi Christi 1



Sacred texts for meditation & reflection

Matthew 16: 13-23 [NRSV]

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’ And they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.’ And Jesus answered him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.’ Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, ‘God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.’ But he turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling-block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.’

Colossians 1: 15-17 [NRSV]

Christ Jesus is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Hebrews 1: 1-3 [NRSV]

“In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.”

John’s Gospel “I am” sayings

Jesus said...

“I am the Bread of Life” (John 6:35)

“I am the Light of the World” (John 8:12)

“I am the Door” (John 10:9)

“I am the Good Shepherd” (John 10:11)

“I am the Resurrection and the Life” (John 11:25)

“I am the Way and the Truth and the Life” (John 14:6)

“I am the Vine” (John 15:1-5)

“Before Abraham was, I am.” (John 8: 58)

Spiritual texts for reflection

Images of Christ in Teresa of Avila

(Book of Life, chapter 22)

“All my life I had been greatly devoted to Christ (for this happened quite recently: by "recently" I mean before the Lord granted me these favours – these raptures and visions), so I remained of this opinion only for a very short time and then returned to my habit of continually rejoicing in the Lord. Especially when communicating, I would wish I had His portrait and image always before my eyes, since I could not have it as deeply engraven on my soul as I should like.”

“For when I see Thee near me I have seen all blessings. No trial has come to me that I cannot gladly bear when I look at Thee as Thou stoodest before Thy judges. With so good a Friend, so good a Captain at our side, Who came forward first of all to suffer, one can bear everything. He helps us; He gives us strength; He never fails; He is a true Friend.”

Second Council of Nicea (AD787)

"As the sacred and life-giving cross is everywhere set up as a symbol, so also should the images of Jesus Christ [...] be exhibited on the walls of churches, in the homes, by the roadside and everywhere, to be revered by all who might see them. For the more they are contemplated, the more they move to fervent memory of the person they represent.”

The image of Christ in Martin Luther (c.16th)

“It is possible for me to hear and bear in mind the story of the Passion of our Lord. But it is impossible for me to hear and bear it in mind without forming mental images of it in my heart. For whether I will or not when I hear of Christ, an image of a man hanging on a cross takes form in my heart just as the reflection of my face naturally appears in the water when I look into it. If it is not a sin, but good to have the image of Christ in my heart, why should it be a sin to have it in my eyes?”
Luther, *Luther's Works*, vol. 40, 99.

On the use of images by John of the Cross

(1 Night 3)

“As touching images and portraits, there may be much vanity and vain rejoicing in these. For, though they are most important for Divine worship and most necessary to move the will to devotion, as is shown by the approval given to them and the use made of them by our Mother Church (in order to awaken our lukewarmness), there are many persons who rejoice rather in the painting and decoration of them than in what they represent. (...) This is a complete hindrance to true spirituality, which demands annihilation of the affections to all particular things.”

“Many of these beginners have also at times great spiritual avarice. They will be found to be discontented with the spirituality which God gives them; and they burden themselves with images and rosaries which are very curious; now they put down one, now take up another; now they change about, now change back again; now they want this kind of thing, now that, preferring one kind of cross to another, because it is more curious. And others you will see adorned with *agnusdeis* and relics and tokens, like children with trinkets. Here I condemn the attachment of the heart, and the affection which they have for the nature, multitude and curiosity of these things.”

A poem by John of the Cross

The Young Shepherd

Stanzas applied spiritually to Christ and the Soul - by John of the Cross

Translation by Kieran Kavanaugh & Otilio Rodriguez

A lone young shepherd lived in pain
withdrawn from pleasure and contentment,
his thoughts fixed on a shepherd-girl
his heart an open wound with love.

He weeps, but not from the wound of love,
there is no pain in such affliction,
even though the heart is pierced;
he weeps in knowing he's been forgotten.

That one thought, his shining one
has forgotten him, is such great pain
that he bows to brutal handling in a foreign land,
his heart an open wound with love.

The shepherd says: I pity the one
who draws herself back from my love,
and does not seek the joy of my presence,
though my heart is an open wound with love for her.

After a long time he climbed a tree,
and spread his shining arms,
and hung by them, and there he died,
his heart an open wound with love.

El Pastorcico

Canciones a lo divino de Cristo y el alma,
por fray Juan de la Cruz

Un pastorcico solo está penado
ajeno de placer y de contento
y en su pastora puesto el pensamiento
y el pecho del amor muy lastimado.

No llora por haberle amor llagado
que no le pena verse así afligido
aunque en el corazón está herido
mas llora por pensar que está olvidado.

Que sólo de pensar que está olvidado
de su bella pastora con gran pena
se deja maltratar en tierra ajena
el pecho del amor muy lastimado!

Y dice el pastorcito: ¡Ay desdichado
de aquel que de mi amor a hecho ausencia
y no quiere gozar la mi presencia
y el pecho por su amor muy lastimado!

Y a cavo de un gran rato se a encumbrado
sobre un árbol do abrió sus brazos vellos
y muerto se a quedado asido dellos
el pecho del amor muy lastimado.

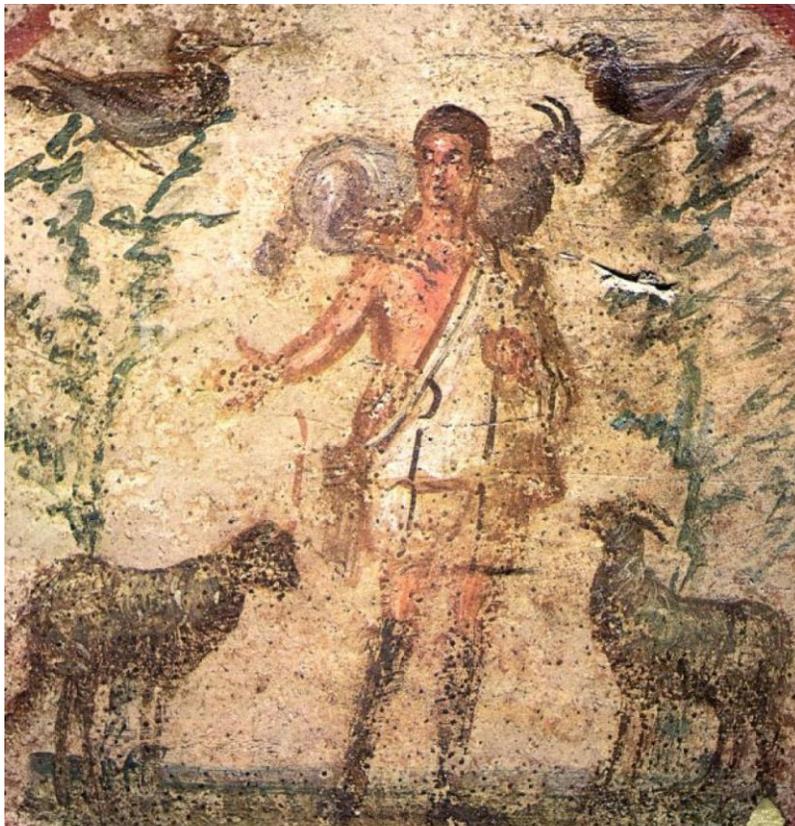
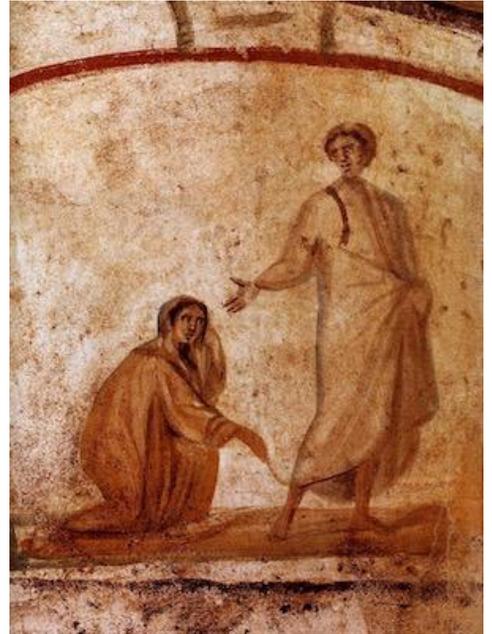


The Good Shepherd, AD350. Catacombs of Domitilla (Vatican Museum)

Imagi Christi 1

Images of Jesus

Early Christian images from Roman catacombs.



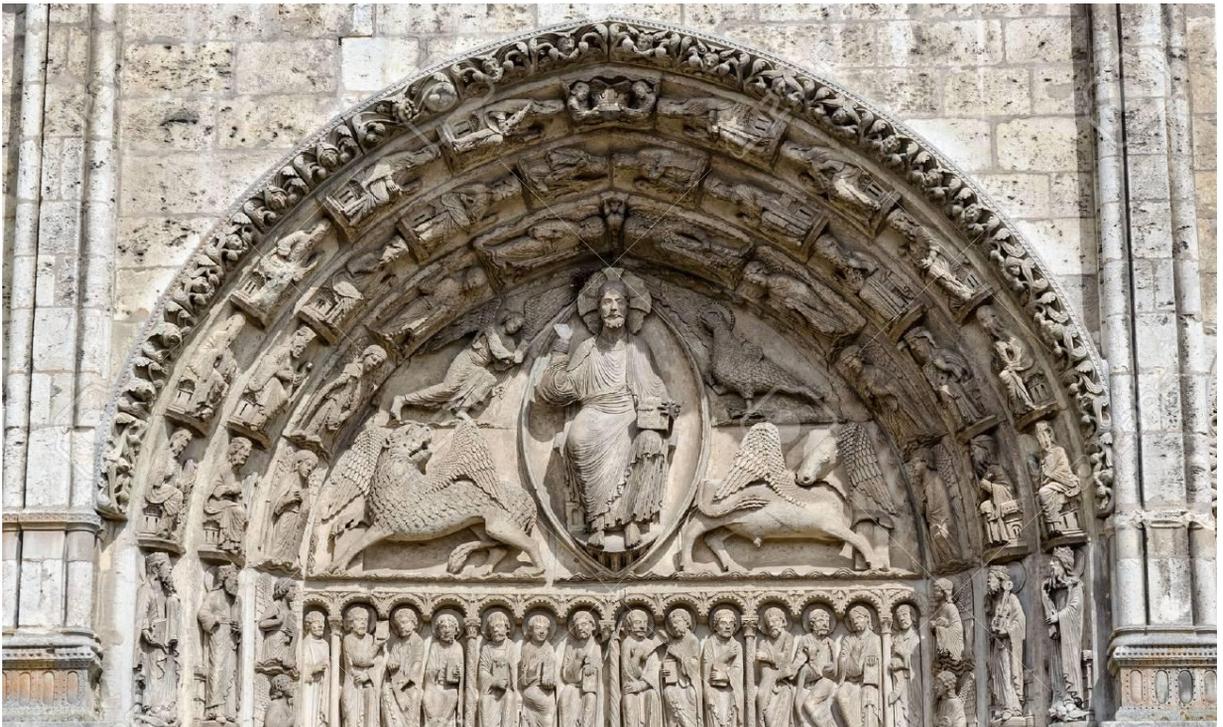
Good Shepherd, Priscilla catacombs (late 3rd century)

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Images of Jesus



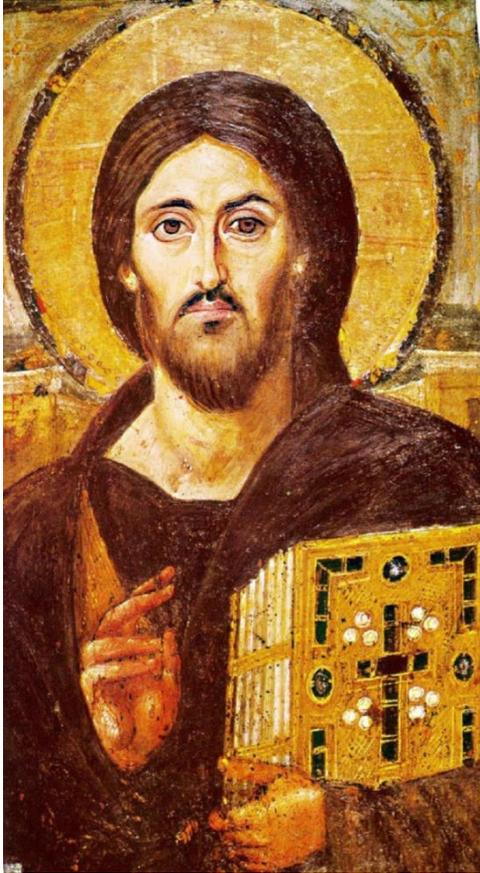
Good Shepherd (mosaic), Galla Placidia Mausoleum, Ravenna Italy (425 AD)



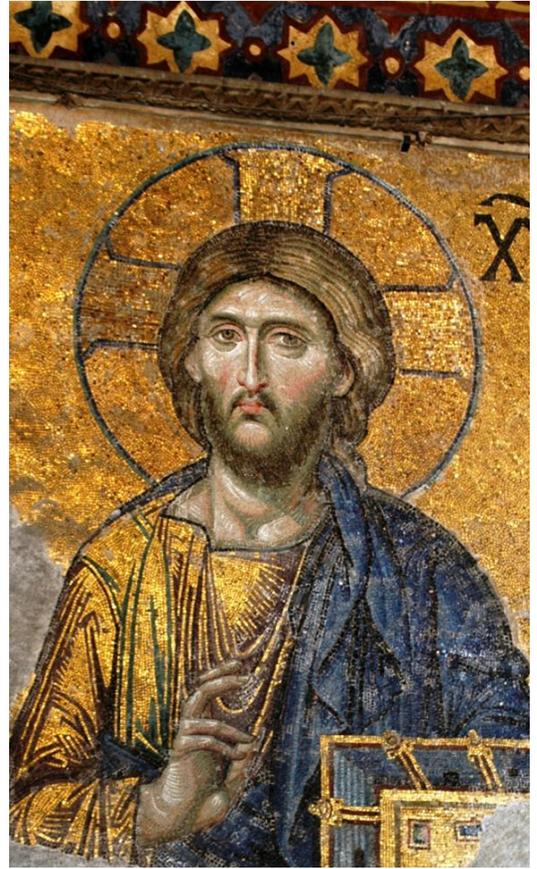
Pantocrator (sculpture), Royal Gate in Chartres Cathedral, France (c.13th)

Imagi Christi 1

Images of Jesus



Christ Pantocrator (Icon), St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai, Egypt (c.6th)



Christ Pantocrator (Mosaic), Basilica of Hagia Sophia, Constantinople (1280)



Crucifixion, Segna de Buonaventura (1315) The MET NY



Madonna and Child, Segna de Buonaventura (1315) The MET NY

Imagi Christi 1

Images of Jesus



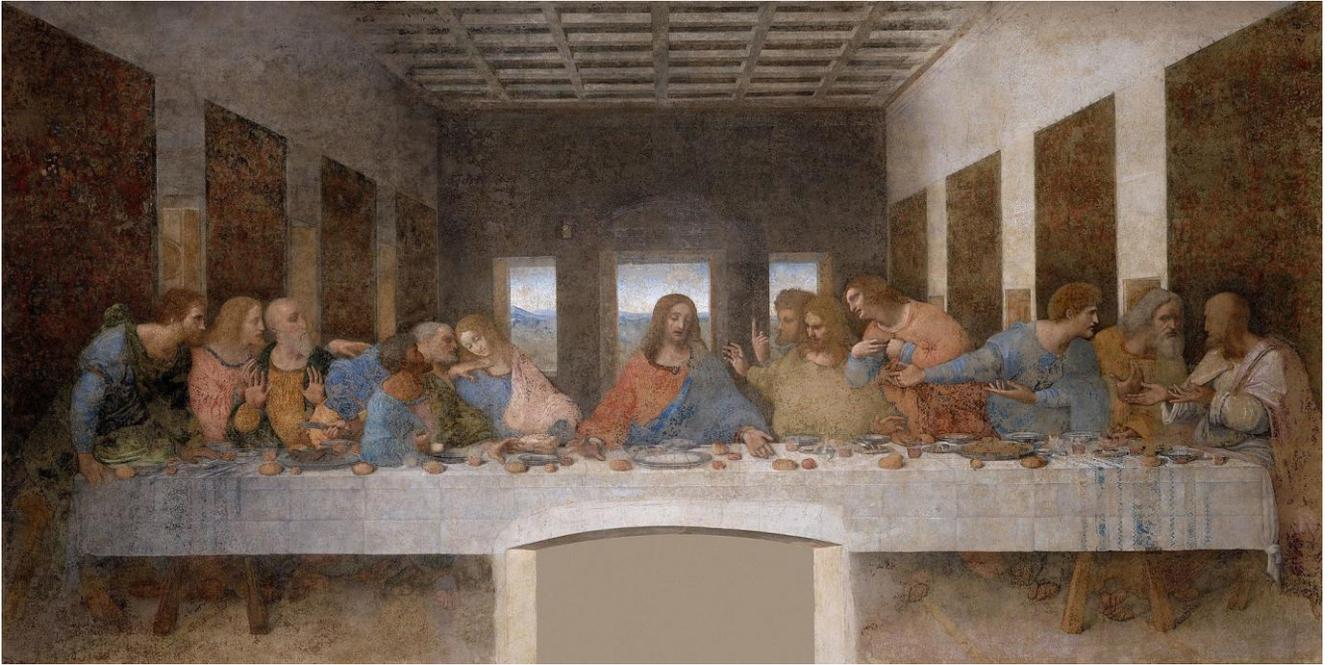
Christ the Judge, Michelangelo's Last Judgement, Sistine Chapel (1535), Rome



Jesus cleansing the Temple, El Greco (1568), National Gallery, Washington DC

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Images of Jesus



Last Supper, Leonardo Da Vinci (1490s)



Last Supper, Plautilla Nelli (1568), Santa Maria Novella, Florence



Images of Jesus



The Light of the World, William Holman Hunt (1851), Oxford

Imagi Christi 1

Your image of Christ

Suggestions for getting creative:

1. Sketch, draw or paint an image of Christ.
2. Write a poem that speaks of who Jesus is to you.
3. Write a letter to Jesus, expressing what he means to you today.
4. Create a "sacred collage": cut images from newspapers or magazines that speak of Christ to you, then put them together in a collage. Use this creative activity as a meditation or a prayer.

