

## Our Lenten Retreat - Week One

Your observance this week will be founded in the Latin roots of the word “religion.” The Latin for this word has two prominent etymologies. The first, from Cicero, is that of *re- + lego* in the sense of “choose,” “go over again,” “or consider carefully.” The second was made prominent by St Augustine, and it comes from *re- + ligo (religare)*. *Ligo* means to “bind, connect.” When the prefix *re* is added, it means to bind again, to reconnect. We will do both.

### ***Relego***

For *relego*, you must enter into the archetypal energy of the Hermit. Embrace that energy. The Hermit. The Hermit is about illumination from within. This is Divine inspiration, sage wisdom, a break from the crowdedness of life, and a deep contemplation. *Relego*. To ‘go over again and consider carefully.’

Consider those people or situations in your life that you want to forgive, to offer grace so that you can be released from the attachment to them. This is its own work. Write below, consider in your mind, create art, or gather a collection of items from nature that represent this forgiveness that you now offer.

Consider carefully that which you have been unable or unwilling to forgive in yourself. Note them in the space below, consider them in your mind, or create a visual representation.

### ***Religare***

Whether it is just in your mind, in a journal or piece of writing, a piece of art you create, or a collection of bits of nature that you gather as symbolic representation, record yourself as you are in your wholeness. Do this on some separate piece of paper or whatever best suits your expression of this. Give it time and care. Don't leave out those parts of yourself that came up during your time in *relego*. Wholeness is additive. *Religare* invites you to reconnect with all of who you are. Even if it doesn't feel like forgiveness, it can feel like gentle acceptance. You are on your way. Revisit this representation often as a reminder of your sacred wholeness and holiness, no parts left out.

### **Our prayer for the week:**

*Father Mother God present in our every breath, thank you for your sacred embrace as we begin the powerful and sometimes daunting work of claiming as beloved every part of who we are. May we see ourselves this week as we are seen through the eyes of the Divine - whole, holy, and created in the very image of God. Let us consider carefully all the parts of our lives that keep us from truly living. Let us release those knots that bind us to others through our practice of forgiveness. Help us bind to ourselves every part of us into one, sacred whole, holy being in your eyes. Remind us through this week that we are not alone in this practice even as we rest deeply into the energy of The Hermit. We enter solitude together. May this bring us comfort. May the light of God shine upon us, through the darkness to make fruitful our entire lives. Let us be grateful. And so it is. Amen.*