

Lectio Divina



Lectio Divina for the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

We begin our prayer:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

O God, who were pleased to give us the shining example of the Holy Family, graciously grant that we may imitate them in practicing the virtues of family life and in the bonds of charity, and so, in the joy of your house, delight one day in eternal rewards. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

(Collect, Feast of the Holy Family)

Reading (*Lectio*)

Read the following Scripture two or three times.
Luke 2:22-40

When the days were completed for their purification according to the law of Moses, They took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, just as it is written in the law of the Lord, *Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord,* and to offer the sacrifice of *a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons,* in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout,

awaiting the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord. He came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus

to perform the custom of the law in regard to him, he took him into his arms and blessed God, saying:

“Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel.”

The child’s father and mother were amazed at what was said about him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted—and you yourself a sword will pierce— so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.” There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived seven years with her husband after her marriage, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple, but worshiped night and day with fasting and prayer. And coming forward at that very time, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem.



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When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions of the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

Meditation (*Meditatio*)

After the reading, take some time to reflect in silence on one or more of the following questions:

- What word or words in this passage caught your attention?
- What in this passage comforted you?
- What in this passage challenged you?

If practicing lectio divina as a family or in a group, after the reflection time, invite the participants to share their responses.

Prayer (*Oratio*)

Read the Scripture passage one more time. Bring to the Lord the praise, petition, or thanksgiving that the Word inspires in you.

Contemplation (*Contemplatio*)

Read the Scripture again, followed by this reflection:

What conversion of mind, heart, and life is the Lord asking of me?

He came in the Spirit into the temple. How can I prepare my heart and mind to participate in the Eucharistic liturgy? How can I make participation in the Mass a more central part of my faith life?

A sign that will be contradicted. How does my faith challenge the values I see in the world around me? How can I grow stronger in my ability to follow Jesus instead of the world?

When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions of the law of the Lord. In what ways do I struggle to conform my life to God's plan? What graces do I need to follow God more closely?

After a period of silent reflection and/or discussion, all recite the Lord's Prayer and the following:

Closing Prayer:

Give thanks to the LORD, invoke his name;
make known among the nations his deeds.
Sing to him, sing his praise,
proclaim all his wondrous deeds.

Glory in his holy name;
rejoice, O hearts that seek the LORD!
Look to the LORD in his strength;
constantly seek his face.

You descendants of Abraham, his servants,
sons of Jacob, his chosen ones!
He, the LORD, is our God;
throughout the earth his judgments prevail.

He remembers forever his covenant
which he made binding for a thousand generations
which he entered into with Abraham
and by his oath to Isaac.

(From Psalm 105)

Living the Word This Week

How can I make my life a gift for others in charity?

The next time you attend Mass, focus on paying close attention to the prayers and actions of the Mass, participating in body and spirit.

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