

## Lectio Divina: My Eyes have seen the Salvation



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### **Lectio Divina – Listening to God’s Word with our hearts**

“And the word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us”

In Imaginative Contemplation we pray with the Scriptures, allowing Christ in the Scriptures to speak to us through our imagination. In Lectio Divina we pray with the Scriptures by dwelling on God’s word by listening with our heart. In Imaginative Contemplation, Jesus’ words, actions, teaching and relationships with people become familiar to us when we enter into the Scripture passage using our imagination. In Lectio Divina, God’s word becomes familiar to us by listening with our hearts and dwelling on His words. Listening with our hearts is something we do automatically in everyday life when we for example dwell on the beauty of nature or listening to someone we love or recall a poignant memory.

Lectio Divina or divine reading has four parts: reading, repeating, responding and resting.

**Reading:** Begin by reading the Scripture Passage slowly until a word or a phrase resonates with you. Then stop for the moment.

**Repeating:** Dwell on the words you have chosen. Repeat them again and again as though God is saying them to you. Try not to analyse them, just let them speak to you. Savour the words.

**Responding:** Allow God's heart to speak to your heart. He wants to be close to you so ask yourself what this invitation could mean. Speak to God with your heart. Be open to what he is trying to reveal to you. Share with God whatever is coming into your heart and mind.

**Resting:** Rest in the embrace and love of God. It is God's response to us. Your whole being is focussed on God so dwell in the moment. When you feel ready, move on.

As you listen to the following passage, note which parts move you but don't analyse anything. Then when you are ready, **read, repeat, respond and rest** and when you have dwelt on the words that initially resonated with you, continue on reading the passage and repeat the process.

## **Prayer**

Let us pray that the word of God comes to dwell in us and enlighten us.

## **Reading Luke 2:22-40**

When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, they took him up to Jerusalem to be presented to the Lord. - observing what stands written in the Law of the Lord: Every first-borne male must be consecrated to the Lord- and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is said in the Law if the Lord, a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons.

Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to Israel's comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord, Prompted by the Spirit he came to the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, he took him into his arms and blessed God; and he said:

"Now Master, you can let your servant go in peace, just as you promised;

because my eyes have seen the salvation  
which you have prepared for all the nations to see,  
a light to enlighten the pagans  
and the glory of your people Israel.”

As the child’s mother and father stood there wondering at the things that were being said about him, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “You see this child: he is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected – a sword will pierce your own soul too- so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare.”

There was a prophetess also, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, the tribe of Asher. She was well on in her years. Her days of girlhood over, she had been married for 7 years before becoming a widow. She was now eighty four years old and never left the temple, serving God night and day with fasting and prayer. She came in just at that moment and began to praise God; and she spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.

When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and Gods favour was with him.

### **Questions for Reflection**

1. What word, sentence or phrase most caught your attention?
2. Do you find it strange that, Mary, the Mother of God and conceived without sin goes to the temple to be purified, strange that she should take her Son, God’s Son, Jesus, to be presented in the temple strange that Mary and Joseph felt they needed to do what the Law of Moses require?
3. Anna and Simeon were holy people who were prompted by the Spirit and found themselves in the right place at the right time. Have you ever been prompted by the Spirit and found yourself in the right place at the right time.?
4. Simeon said that Jesus was destined to be sign that would be rejected. Have you, as a follower of Jesus ever experienced rejection?
5. Simeon told Mary that a sword would pierce her heart. Have you as a parent ever had a sword pierce your heart?
6. Anna praises God and proclaims a bright light in the hearts of all who "looked forward" to His coming. Is there an Anna in your life who puts hope into your heart of God’s presence in the world?

7. Jesus grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him. What can this mean for parents today: for the religious formation of their children; for the plan that God has for each of His children; for the fears and sufferings of parents when as their children grow up?

Let us now spend 10 minutes in quiet Reflection

## **End Prayer**

### **The Holy Family Prayer (Missionaries of the Holy Family)**

**JESUS**, Son of God and Son of Mary, bless our family. Graciously inspire in us the unity, peace, and mutual love that you found in your own family in the little town of Nazareth.

**MARY**, Mother of Jesus and Our Mother, nourish our family with your faith and your love. Keep us close to your Son, Jesus, in all our sorrows and joys.

**JOSEPH**, Foster-father to Jesus, guardian and spouse of Mary, keep our family safe from harm. Help us in all times of discouragement or anxiety.

**HOLY FAMILY OF NAZARETH**, make our family one with you. Help us to be instruments of peace. Grant that love, strengthened by grace, may prove mightier than all the weaknesses and trials through which our families sometimes pass. May we always have God at the centre of our hearts and homes until we are all one family, happy and at peace in our true home with you. Amen.

Pope Francis tells us that when parents and children together breathe in this climate of faith, they have an energy that allows them to face even difficult trials, as the experience of the Holy Family shows.