



Lectio Divina for the Second Week of Advent

We begin our prayer:

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

May the splendor of your glory dawn in our hearts,
we pray, almighty God,
that all shadows of the night may be scattered
and we may be shown to be children of light
by the advent of your Only Begotten Son.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

(Collect, Saturday of the Second Week of Advent)

Reading (*Lectio*)

Read the following Scripture two or three times.
Matthew 3:1-12

John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" It was of him that the prophet Isaiah had spoken when he said:

*A voice of one crying out in the desert,
Prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight his paths.*

John wore clothing made of camel's hair and had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. At that time Jerusalem, all Judea, and the whole region around the Jordan were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins.

When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance. And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you, God can raise up children to Abraham from these stones. Even now the ax lies at the root of the trees. Therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. I am baptizing you with water, for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in his hand. He will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

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.



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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?

Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand! How does Scripture describe the kingdom of God? What elements of the kingdom do I see in the world around me?

Jerusalem, all Judea, and the whole region around the Jordan were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins. What sins do I need to acknowledge? What conversion of life should I seek?

Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance. How can I live God's will more fully? What sort of amends do I need to make?

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

Closing Prayer

I will hear what God proclaims;
the LORD—for he proclaims peace to his people.
Near indeed is his salvation to those who fear him,
glory dwelling in our land.

Kindness and truth shall meet;
justice and peace shall kiss.
Truth shall spring out of the earth,
and justice shall look down from heaven.

The LORD himself will give his benefits;
our land shall yield its increase.
Justice shall walk before him,
and prepare the way of his steps.

(From Psalm 72)

Living the Word This Week

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

Make a good examination of conscience and make plans to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance before Christmas.

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