



Prayer Journaling: An Invitation to Pause + Pray

"And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart." Luke 2:19.

- *After our Blessed Mother's example, how do we keep and reflect on things in our hearts?*

For the tea drinkers among us, have you ever really just watched a cup of tea steep, watched as the water begins to transform as soon as the teabag touches it?

- *In spending time with our Lord, in allowing Him to touch our minds and hearts through prayer and/or reading of the Scriptures, how may we ourselves be experiencing transformation?*
- *Prepare a cup of tea and visualize what may be taking place in your own heart.*

"The faintest ink is better than the strongest memory."

Prayer journaling can be like taking a record of our own personal spiritual history: a collection of inspirations, reflections and revelations through which God has guided us to this point in our lives – to be reminded of the grace of the past, to embrace the blessing in the present, and to keep stepping forward in hope for the future.

This year has been unique to say the least, with its opportunities and uncertainties, challenges and reminders. It has been a year to truly count our blessings and to practice God's presence of peace. How can one do this? One of my favorite ways is by prayer journaling.

Happy Advent,
Celina Chavez

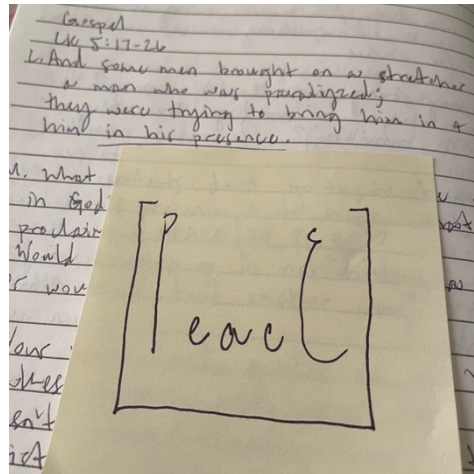
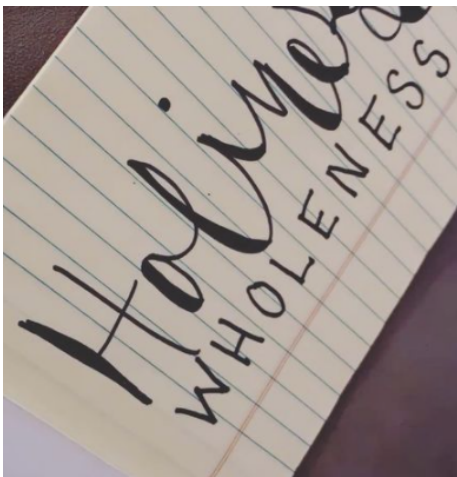


Prayer Journaling can include:

- Highlighting, underlining and making notes (i.e., quotes by your favorite saints, from other books you may be reading, etc.) in your Bible
- Lectio Divina – An ancient Scripture reflection practice that fosters an ongoing conversation with God where we hear from Him in Scripture and respond in prayer (the following steps are from Loyola Press: Lectio Divina)
 - To begin, you might open with a short prayer, asking God to guide your prayer time. Then do the following:
 - **Read** - Slowly and thoughtfully, read the Scripture passage the first time. What word or phrase captures your attention and grabs your heart? Linger with it whenever this happens.
 - **Reflect** - Slowly and prayerfully, read the passage again. What is God saying to you in this passage? offering you? asking you? What feelings are arising within you?
 - **Respond** - Slowly and prayerfully, read the passage again. Respond to God from your heart. Speak to God of your feelings and insights. Offer these to God.
 - **Rest** - Possibly read the passage another time. Sit quietly in God's presence, asking, "What are you saying to me?" Rest in God's love, and listen.
 - As you end your prayer period, you might close with an Our Father or another short prayer. It might be helpful to jot down in a journal what arose during this time. What did you speak to God, and what did God offer you?


Advent Series
2020
A Season of Hope

- A Sensory Reflection – Ask the question, “What do I see, hear, taste, smell, touch/feel in the context of a Scripture passage?”
 - Place yourself in the context of the passage and think about what you would be experiencing, thinking and feeling?
 - Of those present, who do you identify with most today?
- Lettering – ‘Word Art’ that focuses on a word or phrase reflecting a promise or truth from Scripture; ‘word art’ can provide a visual for your reflection
 - For Advent, words to focus on might be the weekly themes – hope, peace, joy and love





Advent Series
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- Prayer Intentions – Write down prayer intentions for each decade of a rosary or Divine Mercy Chaplet, perhaps referencing the Psalms
- Gratitude Reflection – Following Ignatian Spirituality, Examen (the following steps are from Ignatian Spirituality: Examen Prayer Card):
 - **Ask God for light.** – I want to look at my day with God’s eyes, not merely my own.
 - **Give thanks.** – The day I have just lived is a gift from God. Be grateful for it.
 - **Review the day.** – I carefully look back on the day just completed, being guided by the Holy Spirit.
 - **Face your shortcomings.** – I face up to what is wrong – in my life and in me.
 - **Look toward the day to come.** – I ask where I need God in the day to come.
- Questions – Write out your questions to God, and if you begin to discern His answers in prayer, write these down, too

“Seek by reading and you will find by meditating. Knock by praying, and it will be opened to you in contemplation.”

St. John of the Cross