

Praying with Luke's Infancy Narrative

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Throughout his Gospel, Luke places great emphasis on prayer. Luke portrays Jesus as one who prays: Jesus prays during his baptism (3:21), before choosing twelve apostles (6:12), before the confession of Peter (9:18), before the Transfiguration (9:28), before the rendering of the Lord's Prayer (11:1), and before his arrest in the Garden (22:41). Luke considers prayer to be among the more important elements of discipleship. Luke shows that prayer is the means by which God has guided his people throughout history.

Did you ever try to envision what things would be like in Christianity if we didn't have Luke's gospel? Can we imagine Christmas without shepherds or a baby in a manger? Liturgy without any **Magnificat, Gloria, Benedictus, or Nunc Dimittis**? A Church year without Ascension or Pentecost? Luke's themes of universality, of Christ as Savior of the disadvantaged, of joy, wonder, praise and blessing demonstrate God's openness in Christianity to everyone and form the core of Luke's personal portrayal of God's saving action in history and in the world.

Reflection Questions

Praying with the Infancy Narrative of the Gospel of Luke [chapters 1&2]

What are some of the events of the past year that have caused me to question God's presence/absence in my life? How have I experienced the paradox of being Christian and human this past year? What areas of my life keep me distant from God? What areas and parts of myself bring me closer to God? To whom have I announced Good News this past year? How do I keep God's Word alive in my heart?

The Benedictus [1:68-79]

How do I allow people to have an experience of salvation? What personal experiences of salvation reveal God to me as the Great, Almighty One? What gives me hope today? What causes me to despair? What darkness and shadows surround me or fill me at present?

The Magnificat [1:47-55]

How have I experienced salvation during the past year? Who are the people who have allowed me to experience God's salvation? With whom have I shared secret joys and sorrows over the past year? How can I sing my own personal Magnificat of the past year? What events would I mention? Singing Mary's Magnificat, do I join those who are still awaiting those events to happen? Or do I sing it as a *fait accompli*? How do I lead people to the awareness of salvation and God's great actions in our lives? How have the poor brought me good news over the past year?

Nunc Dimittis [2:29-32]

How do I see God's glory in my life? Do I thirst for justice and peace? What are the new situations and who are the new people who have entered my life in the last little while? What new realities am I avoiding or afraid of? How am I light and salvation for other people?