



**Archdiocese of St. Louis**  
**Office of Sacred Worship**  
**Lectio Divina**  
**December 21**  
**Lectionary: 197**

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***Lectio Divina***

Read the following passage four times.

- The first reading, simply read the scripture and pause for a minute.  
Listen to the passage with the ear of the heart. Don't get distracted by intellectual types of questions about the passage. Just listen to what the passage is saying to you, right now.
- The second reading, look for a key word or phrase that draws your attention.  
Notice if any phrase, sentence or word stands out and gently begin to repeat it to yourself, allowing it to touch you deeply. No elaboration. In a group setting, you can share that word/phrase or simply pass.
- The third reading, pause for 2-3 minutes reflecting on "*Where does the content of this reading touch my life today?*"  
Notice what thoughts, feelings, and reflections arise within you. Let the words resound in your heart. What might God be asking of you through the scripture? In a group setting, you can share your reflection or simply pass.
- The fourth reading, pause for 2-3 minutes reflecting on "*I believe that God wants me to . . . . . today/this week.*"  
Notice any prayerful response that arises within you, for example a small prayer of gratitude or praise. In a group setting, you can share your reflection or simply pass.

**Reading**

*Sg 2:8-14*

Hark! my lover—here he comes springing across the mountains, leaping across the hills. My lover is like a gazelle or a young stag. Here he stands behind our wall, gazing through the windows, peering through the lattices. My lover speaks; he says to me, "Arise, my beloved, my dove, my beautiful one, and come! "For see, the winter is past, the rains are over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of pruning the vines has come, and the song of the dove is heard in our land. The fig tree puts forth its figs, and the vines, in bloom, give forth fragrance. Arise, my beloved, my beautiful one, and come!

"O my dove in the clefts of the rock, in the secret recesses of the cliff, Let me see you, let me hear your voice, For your voice is sweet, and you are lovely."

Or

*Zep 3:14-18a*

Shout for joy, O daughter Zion! Sing joyfully, O Israel! Be glad and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! The LORD has removed the judgment against you, he has turned away your enemies; The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst, you have no further misfortune to fear. On that day, it shall be said to Jerusalem:

Fear not, O Zion, be not discouraged! The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a mighty savior; He will rejoice over you with gladness, and renew you in his love, He will sing joyfully because of you, as one sings at festivals.

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**Responsorial Psalm**

*Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21*

**R. (8) The Lord is gracious and merciful; slow to anger, and of great kindness.**

Give thanks to the LORD on the harp; with the ten-stringed lyre chant his praises. Sing to him a new song; pluck the strings skillfully, with shouts of gladness.

**R. The Lord is gracious and merciful; slow to anger, and of great kindness.**

But the plan of the LORD stands forever; the design of his heart, through all generations. Blessed the nation whose God is the LORD, the people he has chosen for his own inheritance.

**R. The Lord is gracious and merciful; slow to anger, and of great kindness.**

Our soul waits for the LORD, who is our help and our shield, For in him our hearts rejoice; in his holy name we trust.

**R. The Lord is gracious and merciful; slow to anger, and of great kindness.**

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**Alleluia**

**R. Alleluia, alleluia.**

O Emmanuel, our King and Giver of Law: come to save us, Lord our God!

**R. Alleluia, alleluia.**

**Gospel**

*Lk 1:39-45*

Mary set out in those days and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, “Most blessed are you among women,

and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy.

Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled.”