

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Past and Future

Find a quiet place to reflect on the following series of questions. A Catholic church, an Adoration chapel, a coffee shop, or your favorite spot to relax would be good. No need to answer every question perfectly, entirely, or in order. They're just there to spark your thoughts. Invite the Holy Spirit to be with you and then respond to whatever he places on your mind and heart.

Describe one day or memory from your childhood that you wish you could relive or reexperience. Was it perfect, or would you change anything about it?

What would you say to God now about that day or memory?

Who had the biggest impact on your faith while growing up? What did they do that inspired your faith?

What was something difficult you had to overcome while growing up? How did you do it?

Did you believe God was with you in this struggle? Why did or why didn't it seem like he was with you?

VISIO DIVINA

Like *Lectio Divina*, the prayer experience known as *Visio Divina* (“divine vision”) is imaginative and immerses us in a sacred scene. In *Lectio*, we meditate on Sacred Scripture. In *Visio*, we meditate on sacred art. There are countless religious images from throughout the centuries that can move our hearts and minds to more deeply experience God’s love.

Find a comfortable, quiet place to pray with the image below for ten minutes. If you have more time, bring your Bible with you to look up the bolded passages. Begin with the Sign of the Cross and ask the Holy Spirit to be present with you.



Scan the code to view the painting in full color.

“L’Innocence” by William-Adolphe Bouguereau

In this oil painting, the Blessed Virgin Mary holds her child Jesus in one arm and an unblemished lamb in the other — three completely innocent figures. The white lamb not only represents purity but also foreshadows the sacrifice of Jesus who is “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (**John 1:29**) The painting serves as an invitation for us to become holy, too. The Lord says in **Isaiah 1:18**, “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.”

SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

Reading

In your Bible, turn to and read **Ephesians 2:10** two or three times.

Reflection

In his letter to the Ephesians, St. Paul is trying to explain to the people of Ephesus that following Jesus and being a part of his Church are inseparable. It's not enough just to "know" Jesus, but you have to do something with that relationship and be in relationship with his body of believers on earth (which we call the Church). Step One is to develop your relationship with Christ. Step Two is to see what he uniquely calls you to do with your life and how you can help build the Kingdom of heaven here on earth.

In this verse, the Holy Spirit prompts St. Paul to say that YOU (not just the Ephesians but you, personally) are God's "handiwork" (or "workmanship" in some translations). That means God created you with precision, intentionality, purpose, and care. There is not one detail about you externally or one blessing within you that is a mistake. What does this tell you about God, and how does that make you feel?

What are some of your gifts, talents, and skills? Don't be falsely humble here. Actually list some of your God-given gifts and talents now.

PRAYING WITH SAINTS



SAINT CARLO ACUTIS

May 3, 1991 – October 12, 2006

St. Carlo is the patron saint of
computer programmers, youth

Special causes to pray about with St. Carlo
Internet and technology-related petitions

Feast Day
October 12th

Biography

Saint Carlo Acutis was born in London, England on May 3rd, 1991 to wealthy Italian parents Andrea Acutis and Antonia Salzano. He was the first child born to his parents and lived his entire life as an only child. He was raised in Italy, where he embraced the Catholic faith more ardently than his parents. Carlo was granted special permission from his spiritual director and archbishop to receive his first Communion earlier than the usual age.

He attended a Jesuit classical high school where he kept up with a demanding course load. As a young teenager, Carlo showed an aptitude for computer programming and was well-liked by his classmates. He volunteered as a teacher of Catechism classes for children preparing for Confirmation, and managed his parish's website.

ACTIVITIES

Confiding in the Father

In the chart below, circle up to five words that describe how you felt today or this week, or write your own in the blank box. Next to each word you circled, rank what you currently feel the most, starting with the number one for whichever is strongest. Then continue on to the next page.

Joyful	Tired	Regretful	Bold	Uncertain
Confident	Fulfilled	Cheerful	Fearful	Inspired
Thoughtful	Confused	Worried	Lighthearted	Lonely
Angry	Calm	Indifferent	Peaceful	Sorrowful
Curious	Irritable	Embarrassed	Overworked	Grateful
Hopeful	Desperate	Stressed	Offended	Guarded
Helpful	Helpless	Honored	Humbled	Impatient
Amazed	Loved	Misunderstood	Accomplished	Doubtful
Empty	Distracted	Seen	Motivated	

This image shows a full page of blank, lined paper. It features approximately 20 evenly spaced horizontal grey lines across its entire width, providing a guide for writing. The paper itself is a clean, off-white color. There are no margins, text, or other markings present on the page.