

New Year's Reflection

God is with us.

Jesus didn't promise that life would be easy going, but he did promise before he left, *"And surely I am with you always, even to the end of the age"* (Matthew 28:20).

The Holy Spirit is the abiding presence of Jesus.

- *"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you."* (John 14:16–18)

Today we are going to prayerfully reflect on 2024 for the purpose of being made aware of God presence and working in our lives.

- Find a comfortable space and still your heart before the Lord. Take 5-10 deep breaths. Ask God to remind you of the key memories of last year, good and bad. Let God lead you through the memories and journal them until you have a good narrative of your life last year.
 - Go back through your memories with prayerful reflection: attend to the memories with thanksgiving, prayer for illumination, examination, repentance, and hope for next year.

Examination:

- *How was I drawn to God this year?*
- *Have I learned anything about God and His ways: in ordinary occasions, spare moments, in crisis, in the busyness?*
- *Did I meet Him in: fears, joys, work, misunderstandings, weariness, suffering?*
- *Did His Word come alive in: prayer, scriptures, liturgy?*
- *Did I bring Jesus to my community? Did they bring Jesus to me?*
- *Have I been a sign of God's presence and love to the people I met this year?*
- *Did I go out to: the lonely, the sorrowful, the discouraged, the needy? Did others come to me in my sorrow, discouragement, and need?*
- *Was I aware of God's work in my own locality, my country, in other nations of the world, in the Church at large?*
- *Have I had a keener sense of being loved, of sinfulness, of desire to give back what I have received, of dependence?*
- *Is there some part of my life still untouched by Jesus where He is calling me to deeper surrender?*

Expectation for the Future:

“Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 1:6)

In light of your reflection on this last year, ask Jesus to show you what he has for you in 2025.

- Take a few deep breathes and pray, “Jesus, what do you want for me in 2025?” Listen in silence for about 5 minutes. Be attentive to any images, scriptures, feelings, or themes the Holy Spirit brings to mind. Ask the Spirit to give you understanding on whatever he reveals.

Entrust yourself to God’s loving arms this year with thanksgiving.

“Don’t be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.” (James 1:16–17)

Share: How did you see God present and working in your life this year? What is your hope for this new year?