

Zechariah's Canticle (Luke 1:67-79)

Bill Gaultiere ~ [Ignatian Meditation Guides](#) ~ [SoulShepherding.org](#)

Guidelines: Protect confidentiality and follow the leader's prompts.

Ignatian Meditation Process: Ignatius focuses on holy desire (as in this Gospel reading) in Week 1 of *The Spiritual Exercises*. Read the introduction and then "Ask for the grace". Then quietly read the passage by using your imagination to enter into the story, sensing and feeling what's going on. Don't analyze the passage or seek insights — *experience yourself as a character in the story*. After the second reading have a "colloquy" (short, personal conversation) with the Lord. You can use the prompts and questions at the bottom to guide your prayer time and journaling (and sharing with others).

Introduction: Zechariah and Elizabeth are old and childless. He'd been in silent prayer for nine months while she was pregnant. When John the Baptist is born Zechariah joyfully sings that his son will herald the coming of the Messiah who will save people from their sins. His prophetic song goes far beyond the angel's promise to him. He'd been mediating on the Old Testament prophecies and what God spoke to his young niece Mary and his wife.

Ask For the Grace: Lord Jesus, I ask for the grace I desire: a more personalized experience of God's grace that brings me spiritual relish and fruit.

Imagine Yourself in the Gospel: Luke 1 (MSG)

67-79 Then Zachariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied,

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel;
he came and set his people free.

He set the power of salvation in the center of our lives,
and in the very house of David his servant,

Just as he promised long ago
through the preaching of his holy prophets:

Deliverance from our enemies
and every hateful hand;

Mercy to our fathers,
as he remembers to do what he said he'd do,

What he swore to our father Abraham—
a clean rescue from the enemy camp,

So we can worship him without a care in the world,
made holy before him as long as we live.

And you, my child, "Prophet of the Highest,"
will go ahead of the Master to prepare his ways,

Present the offer of salvation to his people,
the forgiveness of their sins.

Through the heartfelt mercies of our God,
God's Sunrise will break in upon us,

Shining on those in the darkness,
those sitting in the shadow of death,

Then showing us the way, one foot at a time,
down the path of peace.

1st Reading: Visualize yourself in the Gospel passage. Don't seek intellectual insights — stay with the imagery. Use your senses to see, touch, feel, and hear. What part of the story are you drawn to? Which character do you identify with or are you a bystander?

2nd Reading: Experience the story in the role of the character God led you to. Then talk with the Lord. What do you feel? How does this relate to something in your life today? What is God saying to you?