

First Reading**Genesis 17:9-14**

A reading from the Book Genesis

God said to Abraham: For your part, you and your descendants after you must keep my covenant throughout the ages. This is the covenant between me and you and your descendants after you that you must keep: every male among you shall be circumcised. Circumcise the flesh of your foreskin. That will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. Throughout the ages, every male among you, when he is eight days old, shall be circumcised, including houseborn slaves and those acquired with money from any foreigner who is not of your descendants. Yes, both the houseborn slaves and those acquired with money must be circumcised. Thus my covenant will be in your flesh as an everlasting covenant. If a male is uncircumcised, that is, if the flesh of his foreskin has not been cut away, such a one will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.

**The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm

R) The Law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing my soul.

The earth rocked and shook; the foundations of the mountains trembled; they shook as his wrath flared up. **R)**

Smoke rose from his nostrils, a devouring fire from his mouth; it kindled coals into flame. **R)**

He parted the heavens and came down, a dark cloud under his feet. **R)**

Mounted on a cherub he flew, borne along on the wings of the wind. **R)**

Second Reading**Galatians 5:3-6**

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Galatians

Once again, I declare to every man who has himself circumcised that he is bound to observe the entire law. You are separated from Christ, you who are trying to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. For through the Spirit, by faith, we await the hope of righteousness. For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.

**The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.**

Alleluia, alleluia.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.

Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel**Luke 2:21**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

When eight days were completed for his circumcision, he was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

**The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to You, Lord Jesus Christ.**

How to do a Yearly Examen for spiritual clarity in the New Year

If we want to progress spiritually in the New Year, we must not forget the past, but learn from it and accept everything that happened in light of God's divine providence. By doing this, we can better move forward and do so in a spirit of collaboration, realizing that God is the one who is in control.

One way to reflect on the past year is to make a Yearly Examen. This practice is simply an extension of the Daily Examen that is a central part of Ignatian spirituality. The Daily Examen is a practice where an individual stops two times during the day (at midday and at the close of the day) to examine God's activity and to recognize any faults or sins committed.

Here is how a Yearly Examen might look, based on St. Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises*.

- 1:** After placing yourself in God's presence, first give thanks to God for all the many blessings received during the past year. Pass through each month, remembering the blessings that occurred.
- 2:** Pray for the grace to understand God's divine providence.
- 3:** Next, review each month again and take notice of any feelings or movements that occur in your heart while doing this activity. Whatever you may feel (whether it was a good feeling or bad feeling), ask God to help you understand why an event happened.
- 4:** Fourth, ask pardon for any sins you committed, trusting fully in God's mercy.
- 5:** Last of all look forward to the new year and think of ways that you can collaborate more with God's loving plan for your life.

[Adapted from the Aleteia Spirituality web site.]