



CONTEMPLATION GUIDE:

This “Contemplation Guide” is a companion resource for the Immaculate Conception Novena. It takes as a model the Ignatian method of contemplation. Here are the steps to follow, along with a brief explanation of each.

1st Step: Prayer Preparation

All good things need a good preparation. Even prayer. *First*, choose a place that is most conducive to prayer. The ideal is your local parish church or a chapel, so that you may make this meditation in the Lord’s Eucharistic Presence. But if you can’t make it one of these places, then at least find a place in or around your home that is suitable to a moment of prayer. *Second*, put away anything that can distract you. *Third*, call on the help of the Holy Spirit using this prayer or one of your own choosing.

O Holy Spirit, give me great devotion to Mary, your faithful spouse; give me great confidence in her maternal heart and an abiding refuge in her mercy, so that by her you may truly form in me Jesus Christ.¹

2nd Step: Recall the Mystery

This is a moment to exercise your memory. Try to remember as much about the Biblical scene you want to contemplate as you can. If you cannot remember much, then go back and read about in the Bible.

3rd Step: Make it Intentional

Give today’s contemplation a particular intention. For example, if you are contemplating Mary’s *spiritual poverty* then ask the Lord at the beginning of this moment of prayer to grant you the grace to be *poor in spirit*.

4th Step: See, Hear, Observe

Now that you have recalled the mystery, it’s time to place yourself in it. Be a part of the story. Stand alongside Mary or somewhere in the scene with her. What do you see? What do you hear? What is happening? What can you observe? What does this teach you?

5th Step: Resolve, Take Note, and Give Thanks

Hopefully your heart has been moved to offer something to Jesus in Mary in return for the example she has given you. This is the moment of resolution. Make a *realistic, concrete* and *loving* resolution. For example, “For the love of Jesus and Mary, I resolve to have only one social media account and check it only once a day for 15 minutes.” Take note of your resolution. At the end of this novena, it is advisable to organize your list of resolutions so as to formulate a plan on how you are going to implement them one at a time.

Finally, give thanks. Thank God for this moment of grace. He has inspired it. He has brought you to it. He was helped you through to the end. Even if it was a dry moment of prayer, give thanks! God is purifying and humbling you. Resolve to try again tomorrow, doing the best you can to prepare yourself for your moment of prayer and trusting that God will not be outdone in generosity.

Close with three Hail Mary’s in honor of Her Immaculate Conception

¹ St. Louis de Montfort, *The Secret of Mary*