

# **LECTIO DIVINA**

## **(Sacred Reading)**

This model for reading and praying Scripture comes from the monastic tradition (Benedictine). These are not steps you take in order, but rather 4 dynamics of praying with Scripture. Choose a short passage, perhaps a reading from daily liturgy, and find the place and posture that is best for your prayer. As you begin, take a few deep breaths and seek to be present to God.

### LECTIO (Reading)

Read the passage slowly. You may want to read the passage out loud. Listen deeply. Do certain words, phrases, or images capture your attention? Are you attracted or do you experience some resistance? What lines is God “highlighting” for you? With your imagination enter into the passage. How do you feel? What is stirred up in you? Feel the Word deeply.

### MEDITATIO (Meditation)

Meditate on them, in the sense of thinking about them, reflecting, turning them over and over in your mind and heart. What does it mean? Think about the feelings the passage stirred in you. What connections do you see with your life? Fill your mind with the Word. The things you've learned from a commentary might help in this stage, but meditatio is not just a matter of intellect, it is mind and heart and intuition.

### ORATIO (Prayer)

Let the Scriptures draw you into prayer. Respond to God by sharing your thoughts and feelings. Talk to God about what has surfaced in your reading and meditation. Open your heart to God, pouring out in prayer whatever you find there. Pray yourself empty.

### CONTEMPLATIO (Contemplation)

Simply be present. Just rest in the love of God that you have experienced in these Scriptures. (Sometimes we just aren't able to do this, and that's OK.) After resting in God for as long as you are able, take a deep breath and pray the Our Father, Sign of the Cross, or Glory Be to bring your time of lectio to a close.

*“I read myself full, I think myself clear, I pray myself hot, and I let myself go.”*

### SHARED LECTIO/VISIO DIVINA PROCESS:

1. One person reads the passage through out loud, prayerfully. Pause. Each person shares the word or phrase which stands out for him/her in the reading.
2. The passage is read a second time, and the work of art is viewed. Each person is asked to share something that stands out for them in the artwork. It may be how the people are portrayed, but it may also be the symbols, colors, lines, movement, etc.
3. The passage is read a third time. Each person shares the message they are hearing, what it means to them today.
4. If time allows, each person shares the prayer that rises in her heart. Or the leader can simply close with an Our Father or Glory be.