

# LECTIO DIVINA

Lectio Divina is a Latin term that means divine reading. It is a way of reading the Scriptures ( or other sacred texts) where we gradually let go of our own agenda and open ourselves to what God has to say to us.

## **Explanation of practice:**

Begin by reading a scripture passage slowly, out loud to yourself and paying attention to what message or grace God might have for you in it. Repeat three times with the focus as outlined below: Read; Meditate; Pray.

## **A sacred text is read aloud 3 times:**

1. *Read (Lectio)*: The first time listen to the passage in a general way, simply enjoying the presence of God's Word. Try not to analyze the scripture, instead allow it to wash over you.
2. *Meditate/Reflect (Meditatio)*: During the second reading, listen for the word or phrase that stands out to you. Perhaps jot it down in your journal.
3. *Pray (Oratio & Contemplatio)*: The final time, listen for what the Spirit might be wanting to say to you through the word or phrase in step 2. What personal message does God have for you today in this Scripture? Focus on only the word or phrase that stood out to you.

## **Preparing for this Practice:**

I invite you to start with a few minutes of silence. Take a few deep breaths. Offer a prayer from the heart or read the following to open yourself to the moment:

*O God the source of all insight,  
Whose coming was revealed to the nations  
Not among men of power, but on a woman's lap  
Give us grace to seek you where you may be found,  
That the wisdom of this world may be humbled  
And discover your unexpected joy,  
Through Jesus Christ. Amen*

The next page contains an Example of Lectio Divina to walk you through the practice.

Remember that you can use any scripture, spiritual text or poems of your choosing with this spiritual practice. It is recommended that you set aside at least 10 minutes for yourself to engage in this prayer exercise. Enjoy!

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## **Example of Lectio Divina in practice:**

**1st Reading (Lectio):** Listen to each word and allow them to enter your heart.

2 Corinthians 9:8 (any scripture of your choice)

*God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, You will abound in every good work.*

*Now, I invite you to enter into a time of patient waiting and tender abiding, a moment of being held by God. Enjoy just being in God's presence. (1-2 minutes)*

**2nd Reading (Meditatio):** Meditating/Reflecting on the reading.

Read the passage aloud again, I invite you to listen for a word or phrase that attracts or repels you or to which your heart responds in some way. This can involve your thoughts, your emotions, and/or your imagination. Ask God to bring to mind the word or phrase He wants to grace you with today. (1-5 minutes)

After this time of listening, I invite you to speak aloud or jot down in your journal the word or phrase that God has brought to your mind.

**3rd Reading (Oratio & Contemplatio):** Responding in Prayer

Read the text again. Continue to reflect on and contemplate the word or phrase you received in the second step. What message might it have for you?

Is there something more that God is wanting to show you?

Remember to listen first and then respond to God in prayer. (5-15 minutes)

## **Optional Additions:**

*Journaling:* A wonderful way of saving the graced moments that God has given to you. This can also be useful for further reflection at another time.

*Witnessing:* If you are using Lectio Divina in a group, this can be a time for participants to share what God has offered them in this prayer time.

*Closing prayer:* A prayer of gratitude for the grace of revelation received.

