

# Lectio Divina ~ Divine Reading

(pronounced "lek-tee-oh div-ee-nah")

Lectio Divina (translated as "divine reading") is the sacred spiritual discipline of reading scripture slowly and thoughtfully to contemplate each word in the passage. It has four distinct movements: Reading, Meditation, Prayer, and Reflection. The details of each are provided below. This contemplative approach to reading the Bible encourages us to enter the presence of God and savor every word in the scriptures. Engaging with scripture in this way helps to increase faith in God through knowledge of the scriptures, experience God on a deeper level, and grow in spiritual maturity.

This is not to be viewed as studying the Bible from an intellectual perspective, but rather a contemplative approach reserved for opening your heart and listening for guidance to improve your life, world, and affairs. Consider incorporating this discipline into your dedicated spiritual practice. Preparation: Before going into quiet time, say a prayer, ask the Holy Spirit to open your heart to hear what you need to hear, or know.



## LECTIO (Read)

- Select a short scripture to read. Perhaps from a devotional selection or a verse from The Book of Psalms, The Gospels, or a biblical story that speaks to the promises of God. Read slowly, focusing on each word and what it brings up for you. Listen for what catches your attention.
- After you make your selection, read the scripture aloud, slowly, two times. It's recommended to read aloud, but a faint whisper may also be used if privacy or disturbing others is a consideration.
- You may also want to consider reading different translations of the verse you select to get a feel for which you prefer. *Verse Suggestions: Jeremiah 15:16, Psalm 23, Psalm 91, Isaiah 58:11, Philippians 3:14*



## MEDITATIO (Reflect)

- After observing what comes up for you, or what has been revealed to you through reading the scripture, take a moment to contemplate what you just read. Three to five minutes is typically enough time to spend in this phase. But you can adjust your time intervals as needed.
- Take note of your surroundings. Did the environment change? What bodily sensations did you experience? What emotions emerged?
- This is a good place to incorporate a journal to document your quiet time experience. An alternative to writing your thoughts on paper is to create a voice note to play back for yourself at a later time.



## ORATIO (Respond)

- After reflecting on what you hear from God, pray about it. Depending on what you heard after reading the scripture, pray for what you need to do next. Did you receive an instruction to do something? Were you encouraged in some way? Is there someone you were told to pray for? Whatever it is, lift it up to God in prayer.
- If praying does not come easily for you, consider using a prayer book to read the prayers that others have written. You may also find some useful prayers by searching the internet for prayers that resonate with your specific experience. Over time, through engaging in this spiritual practice, you will have developed your personal prayer language.



## CONTEMPLATIO (Rest)

- Read the scripture one last time. This time, read all the way through without stopping to ask questions or write anything down. Immerse yourself in the text one last time. Lean into God's presence. Listen to your breath. Feel each inhale and exhale.
- As you prepare to come out of your quiet time, you may want to put on soothing music, drink a cup of tea, or do something that helps you make the transition back into your daily routines.
- Consider what kind of support you might need, if any, to act on or apply what you heard from God. Consider connecting with your spiritual advisor or prayer partner for support if needed. There are times when we need to enlist help from our spiritual community and sacred companions to do what we believe God has put on our hearts to do.