

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Tuesday of the First Week of Lent) Leader

1. Welcome: Introductions and greetings; names by seat; distribute handouts and pens. Our adventure begins. What *Lectio* has done for me: *Lectio has given me a special way to appreciate the Word of God by narrowing my focus on how to relate to a word or phrase from scripture, to develop spontaneous prayer based on that word or phrase, and to rest quietly with God in His Word.*

2. Guidelines: What we share in this group needs to be kept confidential. Also we want everyone to feel safe and to receive empathy and prayer — not judgment, advice, or reassurance. In a few minutes as we go through the Scripture meditation process I'll prompt you on what we're about to do. This way of being a small group may be different for you, so listen for my prompts on what we're doing at each step. If at any time you're not sure what to do, then just wait quietly. Remember: God is our leader; I am the facilitator.

3. Lectio Divina Process:

Read (*Lectio*), Reflect (*Meditatio*), Respond (*Oratio*), Rest (*Contemplatio*)

Hearing God's voice with confidence takes practice. A great way to learn is through *Lectio Divina*, a method of Scripture meditation developed by St. Benedict in the sixth century. Three times we read the Bible passage and then pray or journal quietly for a few minutes to help us listen to the Spirit. Each reading is guided by a focus question listed below.

4. Introduction to the Text (Matthew 6:7-13)

Jesus preaches the Sermon on the Mount in Chapter 5 then continues in Chapter 6 with a warning against doing good in order to be seen and gives three examples: almsgiving, prayer, and fasting. After reminding us that "your Father knows what you need before you ask him", Jesus tells us how to pray.

5. Opening Prayer: We ask you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to join us and lead us in this scripture meditation. May Jesus, through His Word, lead us to Our Father. May we rest in Our Father's presence and be inspired by the Holy Spirit as we read, reflect, respond, and rest.

6. First Reading: We begin as we read (*Lectio*) Matthew 6:7-13. During the reading, focus on question #1 below (read) Point out questions at bottom of handout. We will pause for 2 to 3 minutes after the reading for you to reflect (*Meditatio*) and share a word or phrase from the reading. You may write the word or phrase in the space below the question. Leader or volunteer reads today's scripture. Pause three minutes after the reading or until most have written their response.

7. First Response: In this first lesson I will share my reflection as an example, then I will invite anyone in our group to share a word or phrase. We will reflect on the shared word or phrase without explanation or commentary.

8. Second Reading: Will someone volunteer to read our scripture passage a second time? As we read the scripture, focus on question #2 below. Imagine yourself there in the scripture. We will pause for 2 to 3 minutes of silence, then I will invite you to share a short personal prayer (*Oratio*), your response to the Word. I will wait to give you time to write in the space provided if you wish.

9. Second Response: I will share my prayer as an example then invite anyone in the group to share. You can offer a short prayer out loud now to express your emotion or life situation that's been touched by the Scripture.

10. Third Reading: Do I have a volunteer to read our scripture passage a third time? This time we focus on question #3 below. Our focus question is, what is God's personal invitation to you from the Bible passage? In 2 to 3 minutes of silent rest and quiet (*Contemplatio*) after the reading, you can write down what you sense God may be saying to you or offer a prayer of thanks for what God is showing you. To hear God you need to turn off

the critic or cynic in your mind that questions whether or not you're really hearing God. When God speaks, it's usually in thoughts that come into your mind. Later you can check what you discerned to see if it's consistent with God's authoritative words in the Bible. Ending the silence: *In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

11. Third Response: I will share what thoughts I felt were coming from God as an example, then I will invite you to share yours. We listen with prayerful empathy without needing to give advice or assurance.

12. Closing Prayer: Praise, thanksgiving, petitions (especially for needs expressed and any prayers requests).

MATTHEW 6

7 *In praying, do not babble like the pagans, who think that they will be heard because of their many words.*

8 *Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.*

9 *"This is how you are to pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,*

10 *your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.*

11 *Give us today our daily bread;*

12 *and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;*

13 *and do not subject us to the final test, but deliver us from the evil one.*

14 *If you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you.*

15 *But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.*

From: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/matthew/6>

Prayer / Journaling / Soul Talk Prompts

1. What is one word or phrase the Holy Spirit impresses on you? In silence meditate on that.

Our Father

2. What do you feel? What specific situation in your life today relates? Write down a prayer or pray quietly.

I imagine Jesus sharing his Father with me and all of us. I am overwhelmed that all of us are brothers and sisters of Jesus and of one another. I sense the love of Our Father, the generosity of Jesus, and the need for the Holy Spirit's inspiration to understand God's plan.

Come, Holy Spirit, enlighten me to understand how I am to share in the Divine Life as a family member of the Trinity.

3. What is God's personal invitation to you from the Scripture? You can write down what the Lord may be saying to you or a prayer of thanks. Or simply rest quietly in the Spirit's presence.

Thank you, Father, for your incredible love to include us in your eternal plan to be your sons and daughters, brothers and sisters of Jesus, in your family with the Holy Spirit. I rest in your love.

- This approach to *Lectio Divina* is based on <https://www.soulshepherding.org/lectio-divina-groups/>