

Lectio Divina

“Ever Ancient, Ever New: The Art and Practice”

St. Augustine of Hippo’s phrase “ever ancient, ever new” describes the renewed interest in praying with Scripture that has re-emerged in today’s Church. Around the country, parish Bible study groups, small Christian communities, and other faith sharers have rediscovered a simple, insightful way to hear and experience the Word of God with one another through an ancient prayer form, lectio divina.

Lectio divina is a form of meditation rooted in liturgical celebration that dates back to early monastic communities. It was a method practiced by monks in their daily encounter with Scripture, both as they prepared for the Eucharist and as they prayed the Liturgy of the Hours. Its use continued in the Middle Ages in religious orders, such as the Benedictines and Carmelites, that not only practiced lectio divina daily but passed this treasure from the past on to the next generations. The practice of lectio divina is resurfacing today as a wonderful way to meditate on God’s Word.

1. Reading

Choose a page from the Scriptures. A useful place to start would be somewhere from the Gospels.

Read a chapter, verse or phrase and think what does it say, in of itself? After you read it, find something that stands out to you.



2. Meditation

Begin to meditate on what phrase or word stood out to you.

Meditate on what is this Scripture saying to me right now, what is it speaking to my heart?



3. Prayer

St Teresa of Avila says “Prayer is simply a conversation with God.”

Take a few moments to speak to God in your own words about what you’ve read or meditated on. Through your prayer, ask God for His Grace to help you begin to live out what you’ve meditated on.

It might also be a good opportunity to say you’re sorry to God for when you may have messed up in any way, shape or form.



4. Contemplation

This step is a pure gift from God to us; we don’t make it happen. We simply spend time looking at God and especially letting Him look at us.

If during that time of gazing at the Lord and Him gazing at you, He desires to give you the gift of contemplation (where He takes us to a whole other level of prayer), He will.

If not, just chill and rest in the Lord’s presence.



5. Action

We end Lectio Divina with an action...

What concrete action can you do based on your time of reading, meditating, praying and contemplating with the Lord?

References:

- > www.usccb.org
- > www.youtube.com/watch?v=gKYE0c3ik9k



Scripture Passages

You can start *Lectio Divina* with some of these scripture passages:

1 John 4:7-11

God Is Love

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that God loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another.

Mark 4:35-41

Jesus Stills a Storm

On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, 'Let us go across to the other side.' And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great gale arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, 'Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?' He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, 'Peace! Be still!' Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, 'Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?' And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, 'Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?'

Matthew 5:1-10

The Beatitudes

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

'Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

'Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

'Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

'Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.