

LECTIO DIVINA – Group Setting



Lectio Divina (LECK-tzi-oh dih-VEEN-ah) literally means “divine reading.” It is an ancient (6th Century) Benedictine prayer practice with roots in the *Haggadah* devotional practice of Jews in the days of Jesus. *Lectio Divina* approaches Scripture not as a text to be studied, but as the Living Word of God, applicable to our everyday lives. The idea is to listen to the text of the Bible with the “ear of the heart,” as if you’re in conversation with God, and God is suggesting the topics for discussion.

Lectio Divina includes moments of reading (*lectio*), reflecting on (*meditatio*), responding to (*oratio*) and resting in (*contemplatio*) the Word of God, with the aim of nourishing and deepening our relationship with God. This practice also includes intervals of silence.

Finally, although *actio* is not considered to be a part of *lectio divina* proper, it is an essential result of the encounter with God in Sacred Scripture. As Pope Benedict XVI wrote in *Verbum Domini*, “the process of *lectio divina* is not concluded until it arrives at action (*actio*), which moves the believer to make his or her life a gift for others in charity” (no. 87).

It helps to write down your thoughts through *lectio divina* by strengthening your resolve to act on your inspiration, and by providing a record of God at work in your life.

The leader walks the group through the steps, inviting participants to join in the opening prayer and to read, and posing the questions.

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PRAYING SCRIPTURE WITH *LECTIO DIVINA*

+ Begin with a prayer aloud, together:

Jesus, help me to quiet my mind and open my heart, that I may hear what you want to tell me through your Word today.

+ *Read Scripture passage aloud* [LECTIO]

1) What word or phrase caught my attention? *Pause for 1 min, meditating on the word/phrase.* [MEDITATIO] ***Share the word or phrase with the group, without elaboration or discussion.***

+ *Read Gospel again, different reader*

2) How does this text relate to my life experience? *Pause for 2 min, asking God to reveal your personal connection to the Scripture.* [ORATIO] ***Share briefly.***

+ *Read Gospel again, different reader*

3) How, through this text, might God be inviting me to reconsider my thoughts or actions and what practical steps can I take to act upon this invitation? *Pause for 3 min. opening yourself to God working in you.* [ACTIO] ***Share briefly.***

4) As we close, let us pause to rest in God's reassuring presence, confident that we are known and loved. *Pause for 1 min of stillness.* [CONTEMPLATIO]

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