



What is Lectio Divina?

Lectio Divina simply means 'divine reading.' It is an ancient practice that combines scripture reading with prayer. The purpose is to engage scripture with more than our minds alone. With time, we learn to experience the real presence of God with us.

The Process

Plan on spending 10-20 minutes with this type of prayer - it's something to be savored and not rushed through. You will see below that there are 4 parts to the prayer, along with a few moments of preparing yourself. While this can be done with any part of scripture, Gospel narratives and the Psalms often are a great place to start experimenting with this type of prayer. The main thing is, pick a small section of scripture that you will read and pray through several times. (Some possible scriptures to start with are: Psalm 13, 23, 90, or 121, Matthew 11:25-30, Mark 2:1-12, Luke 5:1-11, John 10:7-18, or John 20:24-29)

Relax– First, try to eliminate distraction. Following the instruction of Psalm 46:10: *Be still and know that I am God.* Slow down and take a deep breath. Allow yourself the freedom to let go of the worries or thoughts that draw your mind away from God's presence.

I. Read (Lectio)– An attentive slow repetitious recitation of a short passage of scripture

- Slowly read through a passage scripture. Remind yourself not to rush.
- As you read, imagine the author talking to you.
- What words or phrases stood out to you?

II. Reflect (Meditatio)– An effort to understand the passage and apply it to one's own life

- Slowly read the passage a second time. Reflect on the specific words or phrases that stood out to you. Why did you notice them? What is their significance?
- What does the passage reveal about people? What does this passage reveal about God? What does the passage reveal about yourself?

III. Respond (Oratio)– Engaging or talking with God about the passage

- Slowly read the passage a third time. Make this reading a conversation with God.
- Some questions to consider:
 - How do you need to practice what the passage is telling you?
 - Where are you resistant or want to push back?
 - What do you need to pray for?
- The purpose of response is growth. Being observant and drawing conclusions for your life is an effective way to grow in maturity and faith.

IV. Rest (Contemplatio)– Become absorbed in the words of God and the presence of God

- After reading through the passage, allow some time for his word to sink into your soul. Learn to let go of other thoughts or distractions so the scripture can be the only focus of your attention.
- Consider writing down what you observed or learned as a reminder throughout the day.