



LECTIO DIVINA

One way of praying, *lectio divina* (which means “*sacred reading*”), is an ancient Christian form being rediscovered and reclaimed in our time. Through it, we are invited to listen deeply to the voice of God with “*the ear of our heart*,” as St. Benedict (480-547 A.D.) wrote in his Rule 1500 years ago. Our study of the Word informs our prayer. Through *lectio* we read formation, which is a heart centered way of experiencing God and our world.

There are four movements to the *lectio divina*. Begin by choosing a scripture text to pray over and quieting down your mind. Read the text (*lectio*) and listen for the word or phrase that is touching your heart at this moment. Sit with it for a few minutes, repeating it silently within yourself. Read it again, taking time to reflect (*meditatio*) on the images, thoughts, feelings, and memories that are stirred in you. Read it a third time, (*oratio*) listening for where God might be calling you (a change, new direction, area that needs some work) at this time in your life. How are you being invited by God to respond to His Word? After holding this in your heart, take time to rest (*contemplatio*) in silence.

(+ = instructions for doing in a group)

Lectio

(+ read text aloud, silence – word/phrase)

- Choose a passage from Scripture (e.g. Daily Lectionary, LSB p. 299)
- Read the passage to yourself. Rather, listen for the **word**, **phrase**, or **person** that catches your attention.
- Silently focus on that word or phrase. Allow it to sink into your heart and mind.

Meditatio

(+ read text aloud, silence – image/thought)

- What **images**, **thoughts**, **feelings**, or **memories** come to mind?
- Continue to ask God to speak to you through this word and listen for a reply

Oratio

(+ read text aloud, silence - what is God saying to you?)

- What **desires** has your prayer awakened in you?
- Maybe you have found an **area** of your **life** that **needs** some **work**.
- Maybe you find you are **grateful** for something .
- Maybe you feel called to a **new course of action** in your life.

Contemplatio

(+ silence, prayer time, gratitude for this time)

- The conversation with God comes to a close. Having heard a word from God and responding, you now rest in silence.
- When you feel that the prayer has come to an end, express your gratitude to God.

