

LECTIO DIVINA

Lectio Divina is the practice of holy reading that invites the movement of the Spirit into a time of prayerful reading. Those accustomed to reading Scripture as an academic study may, at first, experience some discomfort. Lectio Divina is the invitation to let the words of Scripture intermingle with your thoughts and feelings at the moment. Both academic study and evocative readings provide important entry points into hearing Scripture anew.

The practice has four parts: lectio, meditatio, oratio, and contemplatio. The first step in Lectio Divina is to find a comfortable place to sit – in a chair or on the floor – and choose a passage to read. You may choose to practice alone or with a group. The following describes the process in a group setting.

Lectio – Reading

Take a moment of silence to move inward in preparation for the reading. Read the text aloud. As you listen to the sacred text, allow yourself to focus meditatively on evocative words, images, phrase, etc., that speak to you. Allow for several minutes of silence after the reading of the text.

Meditatio – Meditating

This is a time to reflect on the words that have been spoken to us. Share aloud with one another what the voice of God is saying to you in this text. Let your mind be playful. Consider the following questions: What insights and connections came to you when you heard the reading? What words, phrases, images, metaphors remain with you? What memories does this text recall from your life events?

Oratio – Prayer

After your conversation and sharing, have another group member read the text again. Allow for a period of silence after the reading. Let the words settle in more deeply, and notice the prayers that emerge. Invite members to offer an expression of prayer in response to what has been shared and read. This may be in the form of words, a drawing, a song, or movement of the body.

Contemplatio – Contemplation

If time allows, invite a member of the group to read the text a third time aloud. A period of silence follows and remains throughout this stage. In this silence, rest in the love of God. This final stage is a time to surrender self and be in the presence of a mystical union with the Divine.

The silence may be concluded with a communal prayer such as The Lord's Prayer.