

Visio Divina (Divine Seeing)

2 Corinthians 3:18

And we all, with unveiled faces, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

Explanation

What we behold is what we become. As we are beheld by so many different images, it is important for us to take the time to behold the Lord. The Eastern Orthodox church has practiced this throughout the centuries by praying through icons. They believe that our souls are “iconic” as we are made in the very image of God, and that icons are windows to heaven and a mirror to our souls. In the Western church, we call this Visio Divina (sacred seeing) where we engage with our eyes and hearts through images and paintings (accompanied by scripture but not always). In either case, both are helpful ways of us beholding Jesus who meets us and transforms us into his image.

Steps:

1. Choose a painting or an icon that you want to reflect on.
 - a. Find a quiet place where you can get comfortable and relax.
 - b. If the painting is related to a bible passage, have that passage ready
2. Take a few minutes to breathe deeply, focusing on the very presence of Jesus who is with you.
3. Take time to gaze upon the picture:
 - a. What do you see?
 - b. What do you like or dislike?
 - c. What do you notice about the image?
 - d. Pay attention to your emotions and pay attention to what this image is drawing you to
4. Pray through the image
 - a. You can also read and pray through the passage related to this painting
 - b. What might God be inviting you to?
 - c. Stay in this space and contemplate on what God is saying to you
 - d. End your time in prayer or by staying in silent prayer, beholding the presence of Christ in you.