

## **Lectio Divina**

*Lectio Divina* is Latin for “divine reading”, an ancient way of reading and meditating on scripture dating as far back as the 5<sup>th</sup> century, with the value of reading to be *formed* rather than *informed*. This is a posture of approaching scripture where the reader is not controlling his/her approach, interaction, and interpretation of the text, but where the reader allows the text by the Spirit of God to be the enactor of spiritual formation. Of course this requires that that we respond, but it is us responding to Scripture rather than Scripture responding to us. It is important to note that this does not replace the study of scripture, but allows us by the Spirit to internalize and personalize the passage in a way that exegetical study does not on its own, drawing both mind and heart into God.

### **Steps**

#### **1. Choose a text**

Identify what Scripture passage you will be reading. Choose a story, verse or short passage as longer passages are difficult to enter into in this way.

#### **2. Posture**

Position yourself in a way you can sit comfortably for the duration of the prayer. Quiet yourself inwardly, inviting God to meet with you, opening yourself to Him to hear what He may have to say. One way to do this is by focusing on your breath and/or repeating a simple phrase over and over.

#### **3. Read**

Very slowly and thoughtfully (uncomfortably slow!), read through the passage, do not be afraid of mental distractions but give them to God. Remember, there is no “one right way” to hear God speak to you from any given passage. Allow the Holy Spirit to lead you.

##### *1. First reading: What word, phrase, thought, concept jumps out at me?*

Listen for any words or phrases that may jump out to you. Take time to stay with any word or phrase that sticks out, take the word or phrase into yourself, repeating it over and listening for what God may be saying to you. Sometimes words will jump out to you in the first reading, but many times you may need to slowly read or hear the passage a few times.

##### *2. Second Reading: How does this idea/phrase/concept speak to my life?*

Invite God to dialogue with you about how this idea/phrase/concept speaks to your life.

##### *3. Third Reading: God, what do you want me to do with this? How do I respond?*

Ask God, “what do you want me to do with this? How do I respond?”

#### **4. Rest:**

Simply rest in God’s embrace knowing that God is with you in both words and silence. If you want to write down what you hear, you may, but sometimes what God wants to say to you is just for right now, so allow yourself to rest in the moment without trying to preserve it.

### **Here is the reading step simplified for easier focus**

#### *1. First Time:*

What word, phrase, thought, concept jumps out at me?

#### *2. Second Time:*

How does this idea/phrase/concept speak to my life?

#### *3. Third Time:*

God, what do you want me to do with this? How do I respond?