

Lectio Divina

Prayer from the Heart with the Word of God

“Prayer in my opinion is nothing else than a close sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with him who we know loves us.” (St. Teresa of Jesus, of Avila, *The Book of Her Life*, 8,5)

“Mary sat beside the Lord at his feet listening to him speak.... ‘There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part.’” (Lk 10:39, 42)

“*Lectio divina* is truly capable of bringing about an encounter with Christ.” (Pope Benedict)

Preparation

- When? – Choose a time which is free from distractions. Commit to a fixed amount of time.
- Where? – Choose a place which is comfortable and free from distractions.
- What? – Choose the Biblical passage which speaks to you of the grace you desire.
- How? – In your own words, ask Jesus and his Holy Spirit to speak to you through the word of God and ask them for the grace you desire. Then...

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- Read
 - Read the Bible passage attentively.
 - What is the passage saying? What does it mean?
 - Note the words or phrases which strike you, which move you.
- Reflect
 - Re-read the selection, pausing to consider the passages which struck you.
 - What is the passage saying to you? What does it mean for you?
- Speak
 - Respond to what the Lord has said to you through the passage.
 - Speak to the Lord from the heart: praise, ask, intercede.
- Listen
 - Listen to what the Lord says in answer to your prayer.
 - Linger on the text in loving union with the Lord.

Conclusion

- Take a short break after your prayer time, then review your prayer:
- Consolation
 - Where in my prayer did I find God? What inspirations did I receive?
- Discernment & Resolution
 - What choices was I moved to make? What should I do? What do I resolve to do?
- Action
 - Do what you have discerned and resolved with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Bibliography

- *Prayer Primer*, Thomas Dubay, S.M. Ignatius Press
- *Praying Scripture for a Change: An Introduction to Lectio Divina*, Tim Gray

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Gospels

³⁸ As they continued their journey he entered a village where a woman whose name was Martha welcomed him. ³⁹ She had a sister named Mary [who] sat beside the Lord at his feet listening to him speak. ⁴⁰ Martha, burdened with much serving, came to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me by myself to do the serving? Tell her to help me." ⁴¹ The Lord said to her in reply, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. ⁴² There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her." (Luke 10:38–42)

¹⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ [Jesus] said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²² And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the holy Spirit." (John 20:19–22)