

# LECTIO DIVINA “SACRED READING”

## INTRODUCTION

The simple prayer practice of Lectio Divina takes us through four movements, as we are drawn closer to The Father through each prayerful reading of the Scriptures. Choose a short Bible passage that is just a few verses long. We recommend the Book of Psalms or a story from one of the Gospels.

## PREPARATION

Make yourself comfortable in a place that is as free from interruptions as possible. Begin with silence for a few minutes, humbly asking the Father to quiet your heart and make you aware that you are in His loving presence.

When you are ready, begin reading and praying through the four movements, described below. With time and practice, these movements will become simple and easy as they flow naturally from one to the other.

## 1 LECTIO (READ)

On the first reading, simply open yourself to the presence of God. Read the passage slowly and prayerfully, allowing short pauses between sentences. Over time you will discover whether it is more helpful for you to read silently or out loud. Try them both. As you read, take in the words and the overall flow of the passage. Then allow a time of silence following the reading continuing to open yourself to God's Spirit.

## 2 MEDITATIO (RECEIVE)

On the second prayerful reading of the passage, listen for a particular word or a phrase through which the Father wants to speak to you. You will notice your attention being drawn to something. Once you have "received" the word or phrase, begin to silently meditate on that. Reflect on why the Father would highlight this for you today, ask Him any questions that come to mind, and note things that seem important as you meditate on what He has given you. Remember that the focus is on listening to what the Father has to say to you.

## 3 ORATIO (RESPOND)

On the third prayerful reading of the passage, listen now for the Father's invitation, and respond from your heart. The Father is always inviting us in some way... to let go of something, or to take up something; to do something or be something. The invitation can take innumerable forms. Following the reading, continue to listen for His invitation and then respond silently or out loud from an honest heart.

## 4 CONTEMPLATIO (REST)

The focus of the fourth prayerful reading of the passage is to simply rest now in the love that the Father has for you. Let the words wash over you. There is no further need to reflect or respond as you simply allow the Spirit to draw you close and fill you with His love, grace and peace. Linger in this place of deep connection. You are being filled and refreshed for your continuing journey.

Take your word, phrase or image with you. It is something to which you can return throughout the day. A reminder of the love of the the Father for you and the special word He had for you today.