

What is *Lectio Divina*?

Lectio Divina is a contemplative way of reading the Bible. It dates back to the early centuries of the Christian Church and was established as a monastic practice by Benedict in the 6th century. It is a way of praying the scriptures that leads us deeper into God's word. We slow down. We read a short passage more than once. We chew it over slowly and carefully. We savor it. Scripture begins to speak to us in a new way. It speaks to us personally, and aids that union we have with God through Christ who is himself the Living Word.

When undertaken in a group setting *lectio* is about listening to the experience of others and how that might inform your experience. Here is one way to enter into the practice.

Start with an opening prayer.

O Blessed Lord, who caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them that we may embrace and hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

First reading of the passage

As the first translation of the passage is read, listen for a word or phrase that attracts you. Allow it to arise from the passage as if it is God's word for you today. Sit in silence repeating the word or phrase in your head. You are invited to share the word or phrase aloud. Don't worry if nothing jumps out at you at first. God is patient.

Second reading of the passage

As a second translation of the passage is read, listen again for a word or phrase that attracts you. Sit in silence repeating the word or phrase in your head. You are invited to share the word or phrase aloud.

Third reading of the passage

As a third translation of the passage is read, listen for a word or phrase that attracts you. Discuss the passage as a group. Listen carefully to each other in the belief that God communicates with us through what others might say. Use the commentary as desired or needed.