

Lectio Divina

A slow, meditative reading of scripture. At a time when we are alert. In a quiet and restful place. You need time enough so there is no sense of being hurried.

1. Select a passage; possibly in advance, the day before. Possibly a section of a reading from the Daily Office readings or next Sunday's Eucharist.

2. **Lectio** Read the passage slowly, pause as you want. Read slowly, gently listening for God's word for you. Read it again, and possibly again. Notice the phrases and words. What word or phrase draws your attention or touches you? Possibly read it aloud. Let the facts settle in; brood over them, allow them to enter imagination & memory. It is a matter of our spiritual development to cultivate the ability to listen deeply, to hear "with the ear of our hearts."

3. **Meditatio** - Reflection on the text. Bring to mind memories and associations related to the text. Allow the reading to sink into your heart and mind. Join Mary "pondering in her heart." Gently repeat the word or phrase, allow it to touch your thoughts, longings and hopes.

4. **Oratio** - Listening & responding to God. Respond silently or aloud with thoughts, words, desires, feelings, commitments, sorrow, and gratitude. Are there major concerns or joys in your life at the moment that this reading is addressing? Is there some area of your life where God may be inviting you to grow?

5. **Contemplatio** - Sit and enjoy the presence of God. Allow God to enter a deeper place in us. Trust that God is working within even if we do not notice. Rest in God's presence

Do not be overly tight about the steps. In practice they may flow from one to another; may happen at the same time. It may be a useful learning method to stay with the steps as separate acts for an initial period.

The Rhythm of Christian Life and of Lectio

The Christian life can be seen as a cycle between being renewed in our baptismal identity and purpose and an apostolate in which we are instruments of God's love in the world. The cycle is between a conscious and intentional attention to God, prayer life, our relationships, Christian formation **and** a subconscious reliance upon God as members of the Body of Christ, in the workplace, family, friendship, civic life and congregational life. (See *Fill All Things*, Robert A. Gallagher, Ascension Press, 2008)

The practice of lectio *divina* depends on that cycle. It is grounded in our developing the capacity for a gentle oscillation between action/practice and receptivity and renewal. In the one we are being transformed into the likeness of Christ. In the other we are actively cooperating with God's grace in human life.