

## Spiritual Practice: Lectio Divina or “Sacred Reading”

Materials needed: Bible and Journal

If you are using this guide for a group gathering your preparation may include the following - Please select a passage of scripture (either on your own or from the suggested passages below) and decide who you would like to read the passage aloud the 2nd and 3rd time through. Offering different voices for each reading allows everyone to engage in the passage in different ways. Please email this document to everyone in the group or print it out. It is helpful to have the questions in front of you while you reflect after each reading.

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**Lectio Divina** or “sacred Reading” is an ancient way of prayerfully receiving the Word of God. The process of Lectio Divina engages the whole person before Christ by reading a passage in Scripture through four times. Each time we engage with the Word in an intentional way. There are typically four movements that we engage in after each reading.

*Begin your time by taking 2-3 minutes of silence to quiet your heart and soul before the Lord.*

**First Reading (Lectio/Listen)** - This first reading is a way for us to listen, to be still before the Lord and simply hear the Word. During the first reading, simply listen for an overall sense of the passage. Listen with your whole self, mind, body, soul, and spirit. As you listen, get familiar with the ideas; if it's a story, use your imagination to place yourself in the scene. Pay attention not only to your thoughts, but try to engage emotions and physical sensations.

*Read the passage aloud for the first time, then allow a short period of silence for people to process and journal if desired. (See the last page)*

**Second Reading (Meditatio/Meditate)** The second reading is a chance for us to reflect on the passage. In this reading, listen for any particular word or phrase that stands out. It may be for a reason or it may feel random. It can be positive or negative. What is one word or phrase from the passage that resonates with you? Write this word down and it will be the Word you can rest in and ruminate on today/this week.

*Read the passage aloud for the second time, then allow a short period of silence for people to process and journal if desired. After a period of silence invite people to share their word or phrase aloud if they are comfortable sharing. (See the last page)*

**Third Reading (Oratio/Pray)** The third reading is an opportunity for us to bring our hearts to God, offering our loving God whatever surfaces during the readings, our emotions, our longings, whatever is stirred in us, we offer it to God in conversation with him. After this reading, take several minutes to reflect and pray on how the Lord is inviting you to engage with him and the word or phrase you have been given. What feelings does it stir in you? Do you feel prompted to act or change anything? Come before God as you are, and be honest about what this story is stirring in you. Ask for His invitation.

*Read the passage aloud for the third time, then allow a period of silence for people to process and journal if desired. After the time of reflection invite people to share your invitation with the group. (See the last page)*

***Fourth Reading (Contemplatio/Contemplate)*** This reading is a time for us to rest in God's presence, in His embrace. No words are needed, no action, this is a time for us to simply sit in the presence of God. Awake to Him in a new way.

*Read the passage aloud for the fourth time, then allow a period of silence for people to process and journal if desired. After the time of reflection, close in prayer. (See the last page)*

***Resources*** - To learn more about Lectio Divina, check out the resources below.

**Gravity Center:** <https://gravitycenter.com/practice/lectio-divina/>

**Soul Shepherding Inc:** <http://www.soulshepherding.org/search/Lectio+Divina/>

**Bible Gateway:** <https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/scripture-engagement/lectio-divina/home>

*Reflection adapted from Dr. Bill Gaultiere Lectio Divina reflection from [soulshepherding.com](http://www.soulshepherding.com).*

## **Suggested Readings**

Please feel free to select one of the passages below to reflect on or read a passage from scripture you feel led to explore.

### **Matthew 8:23-27 (NIV)**

#### **Jesus Calms the Storm**

Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him. Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!"

He replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm.

The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!"

### **Mark 10:13-16 (NIV)**

#### **The Little Children and Jesus**

People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.

### **Mark 10:46-52 (NIV)**

#### **Blind Bartimaeus Receives His Sight**

Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (which means "son of Timaeus"), was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Jesus stopped and said, "Call him."

So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you." Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.

“What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him.

The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.”

“Go,” said Jesus, “your faith has healed you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.