

# Lectio Divina – Divine Reading

## Lectio – Reading

Choose a text to pray from. This method works best for Sacred Scripture, but can also be used for other spiritual texts.

Set aside a set amount of time – 15 minutes minimum. Best practice is to set a timer so you are not distracted looking at the clock.

Invite the Holy Spirit into your heart to lead this time of prayer. HE is the one who will be speaking to you. Suggested Prayers:

Come Holy Spirit (Said each time you inhale deeply).

My Lord and my God, I firmly believe that you are here, that you see me and that you hear me. I adore you with profound reverence. I ask pardon for my sins, and the grace to make this time of prayer fruitful. My immaculate mother; St. Joseph, my father and Lord; my guardian angel; intercede for me.

Begin reading. If it is a small piece of scripture, such as the Gospel for the day, read the passage once through. Then go back, and slowly read, letting each word hit your heart. If you find you have read a line or sentence without processing it, go back and read it again.

As you read, something will strike you. This is a little different for each person, but you will quickly recognize how God chooses to catch your attention. This is the Holy Spirit tapping you on your shoulder saying that this is something He wants to talk with you about.

## Oratio – Prayer

Once you feel that nudge, put down the text and begin to pray. Start discussing with the Holy Spirit why He caught your attention.

What does this mean for me?

What did you want to say to me?

What did that last point mean?

At first this will probably be an inner dialogue going on, but you will quickly learn how to move into

## Meditatio – Meditation

Here is where you and the Holy Spirit hit a groove and can have a deeper back-and-forth going on. Keep in mind, prayer is a surging of the heart to God (Catechism 2558). Prayer properly belongs in the heart, not the head.

For those who struggle moving out of a mental exercise, St. Ignatius offers the suggestion to pray “With the mind, in the heart.” Envision if you need to the union of the heart and the mind.

## Contemplatio – Contemplation

This stage is pure, unhindered union with God! It is a free gift He offers as He sees fit. We do not always hit contemplation, and we can never force it. All we can do is dispose ourselves to be open to this gift.

As you follow the steps, if you find your mind wandering and are no longer praying, go back to Lectio, re-read the last part that struck you. Sometimes the Holy Spirit brings you back to where you left off, but if not then continue on following this process until time is up.

When finished, offer a prayer of thanksgiving, then make a small resolution:

Suggested prayer: My Lord and my God, I thank you for the good resolutions, affections, and inspirations you have had with me in this time of prayer. I ask for the grace to help me to put them into effect in my life. My immaculate mother; St. Joseph, my father and Lord; my guardian angel; intercede for me.

Resolution: A thought or word you can carry with you throughout the day to return to your time of prayer.

## *Process of Accepting Suffering and Offering Up Suffering to God*

1. **Reflect** on life events that are troubling you over a period of time (hours, days, week, month, etc...)
2. **Name** the suffering experienced (i.e. what physical/emotional/spiritual pain, disappointment, failure, frustration, loneliness, anxiety, being overwhelmed...) There could be one suffering or a list, a litany of suffering.
3. **Acknowledge** these suffering(s) to yourself recalling that you are in the presence of God. "God, I know you are present to me. These are the sufferings (name) that I have experienced (over a period of time – day/week/month...)"
4. **Accept** these sufferings in a spirit of prayer. The burden has to be accepted by one's self alone. This is the hardest part. "I accept these sufferings (can be named again.)"
5. **Offer** to God the sufferings that you have just reflected on, named, and accepted. A person can't offer up to God what they haven't accepted. You can't give what you do not possess. "Lord, I offer to You all these sufferings (can be named again) which I have just accepted. The acceptance and offering up of sufferings have now become sacrifices. "Lord, these are my sacrifices given to you."
6. **Entrust** them to your guardian angel. Next time you go to Mass, he will bring them forward and place them at the altar for you during the Preparation of the Gifts. Ask him to help you at Mass to know the beauty of what has just happened.