

The French Benedictine monk,
Dom Marmion, described
Lectio divina like this:

We read
(lectio)

under the eye of God
(meditatio)

until the heart is touched
(oratio)

and leaps to flame.
(contemplatio)

Hall, p.44

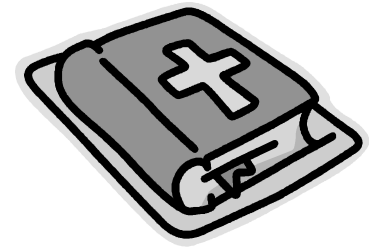
If you would like to read more about
Lectio divina, try

TOO DEEP FOR WORDS
Rediscovering lectio divina

by Thelma Hall (1988) Paulist Press

Prepared by Sue Pickering for SGM 2005

Lectio divina
or
sacred reading



What is Lectio divina ?

Lectio divina or sacred reading is a simple and ancient way of praying with Scripture. It leads us naturally from a rational consideration of how a few verses of Scripture might connect with our current life, to a personal response in prayer and a gentle resting in the love of God, the beginnings of contemplation.

This practice emerged in the early history of the Church, finding its way into European monasticism through Cassian and St Benedict.

Now it is being reclaimed by Christians as another gift of grace and growth in Christ.

The Practice of Lectio divina

Preparation quieten yourself for a few moments and then choose a short passage of Scripture or other spiritual reading

Lectio trusting that the Holy Spirit is there to help you, read through the passage several times really SLOWLY. Some people find that reading aloud helps to slow them down. Let the words move deeply into your being, like nourishing rain into the soil. Allow a word or a phrase to touch you.

Meditatio reflect on the word or phrase that has touched you, exploring what it means to you here and now. Let the word or phrase speak to your personal situation; believe that through this process God is communicating with you, perhaps giving a word of encouragement or of challenge, or calling you to a deeper awareness of God's love for you.

Oratio in this part of Lectio divina, you respond to God. You talk to God about what you have been thinking and what you have heard through the words of Scripture. You might pray your response or write in your journal, even sing or dance or paint your response ...pray as the Spirit moves you whether in gratitude, longing, repentance or intercession.

Contemplatio in this final and most important stage, sit quietly with God, at rest in the presence of the One who loves you. Do not worry that you may appear to be doing 'nothing'. Trust that the Holy Spirit is at work in the depths of your spirit, deepening your faith. Let the Word move from your head to your heart to dwell there in peace-full silence.



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