

Praying with Scripture (Lectio Divina)

The practice of Lectio Divina goes back to the third century and has been used and developed by many different religious orders and people throughout time.

The phrase Lectio Divina means “divine reading.” The Bible is the living word of God. It is God literally speaking to us. Lectio Divina is a practice of reading the Bible that enables us to open ourselves to what God really wants to say to us. It’s less of us talking, and more of us listening to God. The amount of time you dedicate to each stage is flexible. When we open ourselves to the Word of God, we allow ourselves to be transformed by God’s Word.

Steps for Lectio Divina:

Lectio (Reading)

Take your time and read the passage. Pay attention to who’s in the passage, where, what’s happening. Read the passage a second time. Imagine what’s occurring. Listen for any words or phrases that strike you, and listen in your heart.

Meditatio (Reflecting)

Read the passage again, slowly. As you pause on the words or phrases that strike you, take time to consider what the word, phrase, or passage means, particularly in your life.

Oratio (Responding)

Read the passage again, slowly. Consider now how God has spoken to you in this passage and respond back to Him. You may want to consider how this passage is asking you to act differently.

Contemplatio (Remaining)

Now take some time to simply remain in the presence of God.

Adapted from the Catholic Youth Prayer Book, St. Mary’s Press, Winona, MN, 2006.