

## How to Practice

### Lectio Divina

Perhaps the best way to learn to pray with scripture is to follow the ancient Christian practice of lectio divina ("divine reading"). It encourages and makes possible an encounter with God, with God's revelation, God's communication, God's Word, God's saving plan, God's will, and God's way so that we can experience anew the Kingdom of God in our midst, a foretaste of heaven on earth.

Before you begin: Choose a time and place to engage in Lectio Divina. Then choose the biblical text to be read and invoke the Holy Spirit. These are the three essential elements that address the practical, the spiritual and the theological.

Spend a few moments preparing your heart and asking God to meet you in His word. For example, you can pray the Invocation of the Holy Spirit.

#### Invocation of the Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit,

Fill our hearts

And light the fire of your love within us.

Holy God, you have enlightened the hearts of your children with the light of the Holy Spirit; make us receptive to your inspiration, so as to always be nourished with your goodness and to rejoice in your love through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

**Step 1:** Read (lectio): Slowly read the Scripture two times, letting the words sink in and take hold. Look for key words, patterns, details, and images. What does the text say in terms of what is its objective? What does it affirm? What does it reject? What does it question? What is its strength? What does it confront? Also look at the literary genre (NT: Parables, Hymns, Controversies, Catalog of vices/virtues.

OT: Epic stories, Dreams and visions, Chronicles, Vocational accounts)

**Step 2:** Meditate (meditatio): Ask yourself, "What does God say to me in this text?"

"What does God reveal to me?" "What is it that impacts me in a special way today?"

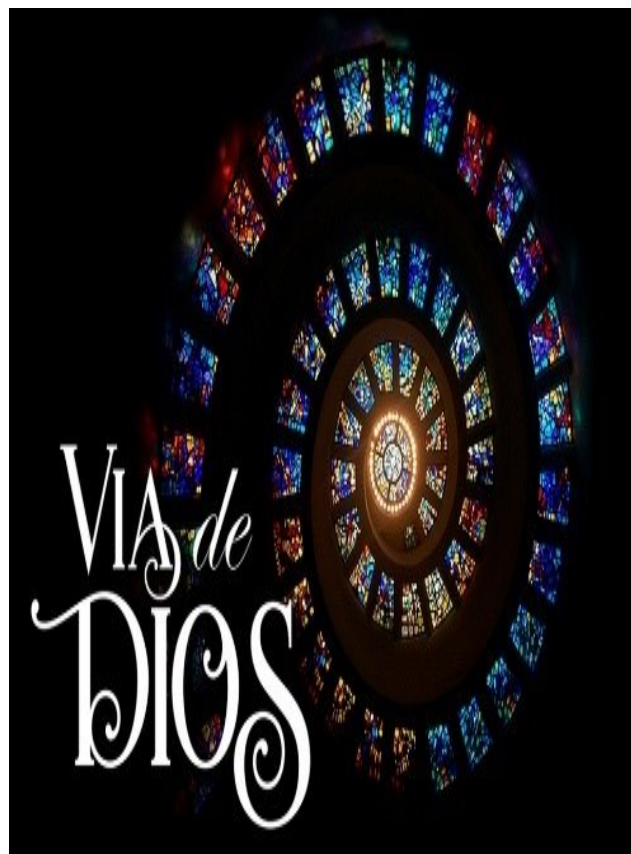
What we read in Step 1 resounds now in our lives and in our hearts. Share out loud what God has said to you in a particular way through this text.

**Step 3:** Pray (oratio): This is a time of Silence. Ask yourself, "How do I respond to God who speaks to me in the Sacred Text?" Your prayer may exhibit a variety of forms: Prayer using my own words spontaneously or written from a prepared text. Recitation of a well-known prayer Hymns, poems or religious songs that express the inner emotions. Use of another bible text as a response to God.

The content of the prayer can be: Seeking Forgiveness, Thanksgiving, Praise and blessing, Supplication and Petition

**Step 4:** Contemplate (contemplatio): Read the text again. Savor being in God's presence in an inner state of communion. This is a time when words are done, sit with God as you would a loved one, enjoying and experiencing God's joy and peace through the Holy Spirit.

**Step 5:** Resolve to act (actio): Make a practical resolution, based on your prayerful meditation, by which you hope to conform your life more perfectly to that of Christ and/or to bring His word to the world. Identify a concrete action or steps: When? Where? How?



## Praying Scripture With Lectio Divina



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