

What Is Lectio Divina?

The Christian form of Lectio Divina was first introduced by St. Gregory of Nyssa (c 330-395), and also encouraged by St. Benedict of Nursia (c 480-547), the founder of the Benedictine order. It's a way of developing a closer relationship with God by reflecting prayerfully on His words. In Lectio Divina, the chosen spiritual text is read four times in total, giving an opportunity to think deeply about it and respond thoughtfully.

Here's how to get started:

Prepare

Spend a few moments sitting quietly so your mind is open to hearing from God.

Lectio (Read)

The first reading is an opportunity to get to know the Scripture passage. Listen for any words or phrases that seem to jump out.

Meditatio (Reflect)

The second reading of the same passage focuses you more. Try not to analyze the passage like you would in a Bible study, but instead listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit. For example, in the 23rd Psalm, the phrase "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want" might come up in your mind. Someone else listening to the same passage may hear "He restores my soul." The Holy Spirit interacts with us – what do we most need to hear?

Oratio (Respond)

After a third reading, it's time to respond. You can journal or you can respond in prayer. Staying with "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," this may lead you into a prayer of thankfulness that God provides for you, or it might lead to repentance as you realize you depend too much on things outside of God.

Contemplatio (Rest)

Spend some time in silent contemplation if possible. What is God teaching you through this passage? How will you live differently?

If you do this in the morning, it's amazing how it stays with you as you drive to work, go to the grocery store, fix supper, etc...that phrase "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want" may continue to work on you.

A few weeks ago, we talked about silence and solitude. This kind of prayer is wonderful for those times, especially for those who said they tend to get distracted.

It's great to have a Bible-reading program where we read a certain amount of scripture each day. It's also okay to simply read one passage a day and let the Holy Spirit work on us.

It's important to remember that Lectio Divina is not another spiritual practice to tick off our to-do list. It helps us hear specifically and individually from God through Scripture, guided by the Holy Spirit, and deepens our relationship with Him.

Example Passages

from www.soulshepherding.org

See the Burning Bush (Exodus 3:1-4)
Two Ways to Live and Lead (Psalm 1)
A Prayer of Lament (Psalm 3)
The Dark Night (Psalm 13)
With Christ at the Cross (Psalm 22)
Following Good Shepherd (Psalm 23)
Life Without Lack (Psalm 23)
God is our Refuge (Psalm 46)
Longing for God (Psalm 63)
One Day in God's Kingdom (Psalm 84)
Unhurried Grace (Isaiah 30:15-21)
A New Thing! (Isaiah 43:14-19)
God's Word is Like Rain (Isaiah 55:9-12)
The Gentle Protector (Matthew 1:18-25)
Work With Jesus (Matthew 4:17-22)
Just Say the Word (Matthew 8:5-13)
Jesus Calms the Storm (Matthew 8:23-27)
Jesus' Easy Yoke For You (Matthew 11:25-30)
See Jesus Seeing You (Mark 1:14-20)
Jesus' Sabbath Day (Mark 1:21-39)
Working and Sleeping (Mark 4:26-29)
Peace! Be still. (Mark 4:35-41)
Touch Jesus and Be Healed (Mark 5:24-34)
An Interrupted Retreat (Mark 6:30-44)
Ears to Hear (Mark 7:31-37)
Run to Jesus! (Mark 9:1-4, 14-15)
What Do You Want? (Mark 10:46-52)
Christ Goes Before You (Mark 16:1-8)

Receiving God's Word (Luke 1:26-38)
Fishing for Souls (Luke 5:1-11)
Spiritual Leaders Listen to God (Luke 6:12-23)
Jesus Shows Us How to Pray (Luke 11:1-13)
Don't Worry (Luke 12:22-34)
Jesus Sets Us Free (Luke 13:10-17)
Failure and Faith (Luke 22:24-34)
Life in the Kingdom of God (John 3:1-15)
More of Jesus, Less of Me (John 3:22-4:3)
Jesus' Food (John 4:27-36)
Do You Want to Get Well? (John 5:1-15)
Join the Father's Work (John 5:16-20)
Little is Much With Jesus (John 6:5-15)
Listen to Good Shepherd's Voice (John 10:3-14)
Abide in Christ (John 15:1-12)
Intimacy With Jesus (John 20:10-18)
A Radiant Life and Death (Acts 7:54-60)
Your Best Ministry is in Trials (Acts 16:22-34)
Facilitating a Spirit-Led Meeting (Romans 12:1-2)
Power in Weakness (2 Corinthians 12:7-12)
Trinitarian Prayer (Ephesians 3:14-21)
The Surpassing Worth (Philippians 3:7-11)
Pleasing God in Every Way (Colossians 1:9-14)
Appreciating Christ's Empathy (Colossians 3:12-17)
The Radiant Son of God (Hebrews 1:1-4)
The Pilgrimage of Faith (Hebrews 11 & 12)
Fix Your Eyes on Jesus (Hebrews 12:1-11)
Trust God (James 1:5-8)
Spiritual Leaders Are Humble (1 Peter 5:1-12)
Riveted by Jesus in His Glory (Revelation 1:9-19)
It's Jesus at the Door! (Revelation 3:14-22)

Some information taken from:

<https://bustedhalo.com/ministry-resources/lectio-divina-beginners-guide>
<https://www.soulshepherding.org>