

Lectio Divina Individual Guide

Lectio Divina is Latin for “Holy Reading.” It is a way of reading scripture as the Living Word of God rather than as an artifact to be scrutinized.

Lectio Divina goes back centuries to a time when most people could not read. It was also common for one monk to read a passage of scripture aloud for other monks to reflect upon.

In the Eleventh century, a monk of the Carthusian order wrote a letter describing Lectio Divina as a four-rung ladder to Heaven. The four steps are reading, meditation, prayer, and contemplation.

Statio (Position)

Find a place that is quiet and peaceful, without distractions.

Settle into a relaxed position.

Light a candle and welcome God’s presence as the Living Word moving through scripture.

Begin with 1-2 minutes of silence.

Lectio (Reading)

Read a passage of scripture out loud. A couple of paragraphs (about a dozen verses) is usually a good length. You can use the scripture passage from the previous week’s sermon. Or perhaps a random reading from one of the four gospels in the New Testament. Read slowly.

Meditatio (Meditation)

Take a moment and reflect on the reading.

What parts of the passage catch your attention?

What words, phrases, or images do you hear as though for the first time?

Read the passage again, if you like, savoring each word.

Oratio (Prayer)

Pray for insight into how this scripture is calling you to live. And ask God for strength to carry out this insight in your life.

Contemplatio (Contemplation)

Now rest in the presence of God and give thanks for this reading. Dwell in silence for 1-2 minutes. Extinguish the candle.