

## TOPIC: LECTIO DIVINA

**What:** A slow contemplative praying of the Scriptures which enable them to become a means of union with God.

The Benedictines (and others) set aside special time (with liturgy and manual labor) to discover an underlying spiritual rhythm in their lives.

**Lectio has no other goal than spending time with God through the medium of his Word**

We start by cultivating the ability to listen deeply, to hear with “the ear of our hearts” to that small voice of God which touches our hearts. This listening is an “attunement” to the presence of God in the Scriptures. (1 Kg. 19:12). In order to hear gentle sounds, we need to be silent.

**How:**

- 1) *Lectio* – Reading: reverential reading and listening in a spirit of silence and awe. Read slowly, attentively, gently listening to hear a word or phrase that is God’s word for us today
- 2) *Meditatio*: Reflection – once we find a word or phrase that speaks to us – we then ruminate on it – like Mary we ponder it in our hearts.
- 3) *Oratio* – Prayer – we dialogue with God, offering what has not yet been given over completely to God – allowing ourselves to be touched and changed by the Word we have heard
- 4) *Contemplatio* – contemplation – we just rest in the presence of the One has invited us and who transforms us. We don’t need words. We just enjoy the experience of being in the presence of God

**This can be done in a group process with some sharing or as a private practice**

**For individuals**

- 1) choose a text - the Scripture of the day, the upcoming weekend or another passage
- 2) get comfortable and become silent for a while (can use breathing or a mantra or prayer phrase to help quiet you)
- 3) read the text slowly and gently, savor it and listen for a word or phrase (we are not looking for major enlightenment).
- 4) Take the word or phrase – memorize it, repeat it slowly, let it interact in your inner world of concerns, memories, ideas

- 5) Pray about it – whatever came to your heart during the time, give back to God
- 6) Just rest in God’s embrace – let go of words when they aren’t necessary

**For groups – as a means of faith sharing**

**You can change the questions – these are starters**

Have a facilitator (group of 4-8 people works best); 3 readers

At any point people can pass (if you are going around the circle) or just share as they wish (or not)

- 1) read the selected text aloud twice and have time for silence – (at least 2 minutes) individuals listen for a word or phrase that touches their hearts and then each person shares the word or phrase that has touched his/her heart (a few words - no explanation)
- 2) Another person reads the passage aloud for the purpose of hearing or seeing Christ in the text. Ponder the word or phrase and reflect on how that word touches your life today. After some silence, each shares what he/she has heard or seen. “I hear . . . or “I see . . .
- 3) Read the text aloud again to see what Christ is asking you to do or become this week – and give time for silence. People share. “This week I believe God wants me to . . . This may be a longer sharing.
- 4) After another period of silence we end by praying aloud for the person on our right. If someone prefers to pray silently for the person, simply say this and end your silent prayer with **Amen**