

Lectio Divina

LECTIO (“reading”):

Read the passage attentively, reverently, slowly. *Lectio* is a listening kind of reading that patiently waits in trust for the Word (Jesus) to reveal Himself. You might read the passage several times or linger on one particular phrase or even one word. If one word, phrase, or image catches your attention, or seems to speak to you, spend some time with it, don't rush through it. Take that word, phrase, or image to the second step, meditation.

MEDITATIO (“meditation”):

Meditation is an act of the mind. Ponder what was read. Consider the part that particularly caught your attention or seemed to speak directly to you. Why did that word, phrase, or image strike you? What might God be trying to say? Is He comforting you, challenging you, answering a question you have?

ORATIO (“prayer”):

This is the prayer of the heart. It's unique, personal, honest and spontaneous, specific to the experience of encountering God in his Word. After spending some time considering what the Word of God was saying to you, talk to God about it.

CONTEMPLATIO (“contemplation”):

Finally, listen. You have spoken to God, now quietly give Him your attention and open yourself to His response. This stage is God's response to us, so it's totally beyond our control. We cannot create contemplation by ourselves. It is a divine gift that the Lord in His goodness gives us. In contemplation, one is totally passive, held by the mystery of God. Your whole self becomes focused on the Lord. It is nothing more than a close sharing between friends. It is deep, intimate, intense, sometimes tearful, and often too deep for words.

“Contemplative prayer is nothing else than a close sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with him who we know loves us.”(St. Teresa of Avila)