

# Lectio Divina

*Lectio Divina*, or sacred/divine reading, is a mystic practice that specifically deals with sacred texts, principally the Bible. In this practice, a participant selects a portion of a reading and then reads through it multiple times. Each reading has a specific purpose beyond comprehending the historical meaning of the text. The practice helps one to meditate on scripture in order for one to meet God.

## How to Practice

1. The first stage of *lectio* is *oratio*. In this stage, choose a scripture passage and read it slowly and repetitively. (You may choose a different reading for each session.) Read it aloud if you can. Focus on what God is saying to you. Look for a specific word or phrase that stands out to you.
2. The second stage of *lectio* is *meditatio*. In this stage, concentrate on the word or phrase that stood out to you when you were reading. Focus on how God could be speaking to you today through this word or phrase.
  - a. End your prayer time with the Lord's Prayer, and keep meditating on the word or phrase which stood out to you from your reading throughout the day.
3. The third stage of *lectio* is *contemplatio*. This stage is something the individual cannot control. This is where God meets you, and it can happen any time or anywhere. The process of *lectio* helps one to be attentive to these "eureka" moments when an insight strikes you suddenly.

## Resources

Casey, Michael, *Sacred Reading: The Ancient Art of Lectio Divina* (Ligouri MO: Ligouri Publications, 1995)

Finley, James, *Christian Meditation: Experiencing the Presence of God* (San Francisco CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 2004)

Hall, Thelma, *Too Deep for Words: Rediscovering Lectio Divina* (New York NY: Paulist Press, 1998)

Kelsey, Morton T., *The Other Side of Silence: A Guide to Christian Meditation* (New York NY: Paulist Press, 1976)

Main, John, *Moments of Christ: The Path of Meditation* (New York NY: Continuum, 1998)

Paintner, Christine Valters and Lucy Wynkoop, *Lectio Divina: Contemplative Awakening and Awareness* (New York NY: Paulist Press, 2008)

Pennington, M. Basil, *Lectio Divina: Renewing the Ancient Practice of Praying the Scriptures* (New York NY: Crossroad, 1998)

von Balthasar, Hans Urs, *Christian Meditation* (San Francisco CA: Ignatius Press, 1989)

## Potential Journaling Prompts

1. What positive experiences did you have while practicing this practice?
2. What negative experiences did you have while practicing this practice?
3. How did you adapt this structure to your situation?
4. What scripture(s) did you pray? What word or phrase stood out to you?
5. How did praying scripture help you to connect to the characters of the Bible? How did praying scripture help you to listen to God?
6. How did you meet God in this practice?