

Lectio Divina

The practice of lectio divina (holy reading) can open us to deeper insights about a Scripture text at this moment and time. We also can practice holy reading in books, poems or with hymns and songs for deeper meaning and insights. Both the use of Bible text, books, poems, hymns and songs can be used as foundations to write a devotional. To be open and face oneself honestly and to write openly and truthfully can produce insightful devotions (inspirational writing).

Light a candle.

Try to quiet your mind and seek connection to the presence of God who is always with us.

Say a prayer in free form:

- Breathe in deeply and breathe in God's unconditional love.
- Breathe slowly out and fill the space around you with God's love.
- Be aware that God fills you and soaks you with God's own presence.
- God loves you as you are and God is always conscious of you.

- Relax your body, feet, ankles, calves, knees, thighs, buttocks, spine, all the way up to your shoulders.
- Relax your shoulders.
- Relax your fingers; your hands, your wrists, forearms, elbows, and all the way back to your shoulders.
- Relax your neck, your head and your face.

- Focus your attention on the sensation of the air at your nostrils as you breath.

First reading:

- Read from the **Psalms** or from the **Gospel**. Listen to what God's word is trying to convey to you.
- Stop when a word (God's word) or sentence speaks to you. Do not read further.
- Write the word or sentence down and reflect on it.

Second reading

- Ask the question: "How does God's word speak to me?" Have a dialogue with God, a conversation about the word or sentence.

Third reading

- Write a prayer incorporating the word or sentence in the prayer.

Fourth reading

- Be with God the Word – rest in God without thought, in silence. It is in the silence that you meet God. Surrender to God and let the spirit pray in you.
- Carry the word with you throughout the day and read the word or sentence you scribbled on a piece of paper. Stay in dialogue with God what God is trying to tell you in the word or sentence.
- Or write a sentence using the words you have written and begin a process called spiritual writing.
- Do not pay attention to grammar or spelling; that can be corrected later.
- Read what you have written and within your written words. You might find insights about the text from Scripture or you might see a poem or prayer. Or you might find devotional material that you might want to share at a later time.

This exercise is transforming; it is not theology or a head job (intellectual) it is in the heart and transformational. We are only transformed when the word touches the heart through the Holy Spirit.

By Christel S. Hilgarth