

Lectio Divina Process

Learning how to benefit from the spiritual discipline of silent prayer is a challenge for many people, but it is central to Lectio Divina. For many people profiting from silent prayer requires **caring for anxious feelings** that underlie their antsiness and wandering thoughts.

Praying Scripture in Lectio Divina is like *marinating* in the juices of God's life-giving words. **Lectio, Mediatio, Oratio, Contemplatio OR**, read, reflect, respond, and rest.

1. Reading

In Lectio to read the word of God is to *take it as food and put it into your mouth*. You listen carefully to Scripture — without hurry or intellectual strain. You wait quietly for Holy Spirit to bring God's word to life. Then you pause on the portion of the passage that you're drawn to. This is an opportunity to get to know the Scripture passage. Listen carefully for any words or phrases that seem to jump out. It's important not to force things, but wait patiently for God to give gentle guidance.

2. Reflect

To meditate on Scripture is like *chewing your food*. You reflect and ponder its deep meaning. Gently repeat to yourself a phrase from the Scripture, turning it over and over in your thoughts and feelings to renew your mind (Romans 12:2). Reflect on what I believe God is trying to say. Try not to analyze the passage. It's easy to slip into "study mode" and think about interesting points rather than listening to what God might be saying. It helps to ask God to make His focus clear.

3. Respond

Praying Scripture is like *tasting your food*. You respond to the words with feelings, confess your sins or struggles, and ask God for what you or others need. Maybe record thoughts by journaling because we forget! We can respond in prayer too, which gives us the opportunity for a conversation with God. Share how you need to hear this message today. In what ways are you under a bad yoke?

4. Rest

To contemplate on God's word is to *digest its sweetness*. You rest quietly in God's loving arms. No words are necessary at this point and may detract from simply being in God's loving presence. This is the goal of Lectio Divina. After the final reading, I spend around 10 minutes in silent contemplation. This isn't a time of prayer or meditation — I just sit quietly and allow God to work. When my mind starts to wander and dart here and there, I bring it gently back to stillness again. If your mind wanders TOO much – pray this passage slowly through silently or muttering it.

Three Questions in Lectio Divina

1. One Word

What is one word or phrase the Holy Spirit impresses on you? In silence meditate on that.

2. Feelings

What do you feel? What specific situation in your life today relates? Write down a prayer or pray quietly.

3. Invitation

What is God's personal invitation to you from the Scripture? You can write down what the Lord may be saying to you or a prayer of thanks. Or simply rest quietly in the Spirit's presence.