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For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material. Lectio divina is an ancient Catholic prayer method for reading and praying with the Bible. Don't let the Latin scare you away from learning to do it yourself or from sharing it with your students. It is an essential practice for all Catholics to learn and certainly not something we should avoid teaching young people to do. In the eBook, Lectio Divina for Children and Teens, I provide a number of handouts and activity suggestions to help teach young people to do. In the eBook, Lectio Divina for Children and Teens, I provide a number of handouts and activity suggestions to help teach young people to do. In the eBook, Lectio Divina for Children and Teens, I provide a number of handouts and activity suggestions to help teach young people to do. In the eBook, Lectio Divina for Children and Teens, I provide a number of handouts and activity suggestions to help teach young people to do. 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Check out what the bishops of the Church have said in the General Directory for Catechesis: "The Church desires that in the ministry of the word, Sacred Scripture should have a pre-eminent position. In concrete terms, catechesis should be 'an authentic introduction to lectio divina, that is, to a reading of the Sacred Scriptures done in accordance to the Spirit who dwells in the Church'." (General Directory for Catechesis, 71) How to Pray Lectio Divina in Four (+1) Steps When you introduce lectio divina: The text version of this video can be read, copied and shared below. The Lectio Divina Steps According to Pope Benedict XVI in the post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation, Verbum Domini (nos. 86-87), lectio divina is broken down into the following steps named in Latin: Lectio (reading), Meditatio (meditation), Oratio (prayer), and Contemplation). Then, as a result of the encounter with God in Scripture, we are also called to Actio (action). Each of these steps together form a process by which we encounter God in his sacred word and respond to his grace. They form parts of a larger whole, but each one comes with a certain set of skills for our us to master. Let's look briefly at each step. Lectio (Reading) In the first phase of lectio divina we understand what the passage we are reading says in itself. This is the literal meaning of the Scripture passage and the lessons everyone should recognize in reading it. At this stage we do not yet consider our own lives in connection with the Scriptures. We do not let our opinions influence our reading, but seek to understand the message of the passage as interpreted by the Church independently of anyone's opinions. This phase is summarized with the question: What does the text say to me, today, and to my life? We allow God to pull up certain memories of people, places, and events in our lives that relate to the passage we are reading. Meditation is also an opportunity to see ourselves in the text. We can consider our own feelings as if we were a participant in the text. We can consider our own feelings as if we were a participant in the text. In this way we come to a deeper appreciation of how God is working in our lives through the sacred word. Having entered into the story ourselves, we can return to the present and consider the areas in our own lives that God is calling us to contemplate. Oratio (Prayer) Through a meditation on Scripture, we experience an intimate encounter with God that leads us to respond in prayer. Having met our Lord in his holy word, we courageously speak to him in our own words. In this way we consider prayer to be a simple conversation with God. It is a conversation that comes in various forms: we ask petitions (or requests) of him, we give him thanks, and we give him praise. We might also ask for the intercession of Mary or the saints represented in the passage we read. At this phase we can ask ourselves: What can I say to the Lord in response to his word? Contemplation (Contemplation) A true encounter with the Lord always leads to transformation. Indeed, the Lord God proclaimed, "Behold, I make all things new" (Revelation 21:5). Through contemplation we come to an understanding of the parts of our lives that need to be transformed by God's grace. We humble ourselves and open our lives up to his transformative power. This step comes with the willingness to change, an openness and trust in God, and the decision to follow God's will rather than our own. With this decision comes a fear of losing what we find comfortable and safe. At the same time we feel the excitement of a call to heroic adventure and a hopeful future of living the life we are meant to live. At this step in the lectio divina process, we ask ourselves: What conversion of the mind, heart, and life is the Lord asking of me? Actio (Action) Finally, although this phase is often not considered to be a part of lectio divina proper, it is an essential result of the encounter with God in Sacred Scripture. As Pope Benedict XVI wrote in Verbum Domini, "We do well also to remember that the process of lectio divina is not concluded until it arrives at action (actio), which moves the believer to make his or her life a gift for others in charity" (no. 87). Having received God's love and grace, we go forth to serve our brothers and sisters in Christ. These acts are done not so much out of a sense of duty, but out of the inspiration we receive from the acceptance in faith of God's love. If you are interested in teaching your students how to pray lectio divina, check out Lectio Divina for Children and Teens, a collection of handouts and activities for young people to learn to pray with. A go-to suggestion is the day's Gospel reading. As well, it's a good idea to open in prayer and ask God for the grace to hear Him, stay focused and open your heart in this practice. Here's an example of a preparatory prayer to use: Father, Thank you for the gift of this day. Thank you for the gift of faith and the grace you've given me to respond to you. Thank you for the grace to hear Him, stay focused and open your heart in this practice. Here's an example of a preparatory prayer to use: Father, Thank you for the gift of this day. Thank you for the gift of faith and the grace you've given me to respond to you. Thank you for the grace to hear Him, stay focused and open your heart in this practice. Thank you for revealing yourself in your Son. Help me to stay focused in this time of prayer. Please grant me the grace to hear your voice and respond. Amen. Step 1: Eyes to See Start with your prayer for this first step; here's an example of what this can sound like: Father, Your Word is alive and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing between joints and marrow. (Hebrews 4:12) Pierce my heart today with your Word. Allow me to be attentive to how you are speaking to me today through this passage. As I read the passage: Be on the lookout for a word or phrase that jumps out at you. Ask yourself: What is God highlighting for you today? What from this passage strikes you? Feel free to read it once or twice more if needed. Then, take some time in silence to sit with the word or phrase God has shown you. Mull it over, and allow yourself to think deeply about what is being said. Step 2: Ears to Hear Begin again with a quick prayer, an example for, "Ears to Hear," goes like this: Father, Your Word is living and active (Hebrews 4:12) that it goes forth from your mouth and does not return to you empty, but accomplishes that which you intend (Isaiah 55:11). Send your Word into my heart now. Give me the ears to hear your voice. As I reread this passage, may I hear what you wish to tell me today. Amen. Carefully read the passage a second time: Be on the lookout for what God in prayer, "I find myself going back to this word; what are you trying to show me by this?" "You're telling me (fill in with the passage or word) through this passage, help me understand why." Having a small conversation about what He's telling you allows you to go deeper into the Scripture. Be silent and allow the Lord to speak. Step 3: Grace to Change Any encounter with God should change our lives. Praying with Scripture is no different. In this step, we ask God to show us what to change. It could be something big or small, something we need to start (or stop) doing or a change in perspective. Pray a quick prayer for this third step, use this example: Father, You've told us that in the beginning, the Word was God, and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:1, 14). May my encounter with you through your Word be as strong as if Jesus were here in the room speaking with me face to face. Allow me to receive your call to change in my life and the strength to do it. Amen. Next, you'll carefully read the passage for a third time: During this time, pause to think, reflect, and pray on the change you recognize from this passage. Ask yourself: What is God inviting you to change? Where are you being asked to take a step closer to Him? Take some time in silence, and allow the Lord to speak. Take it in, and respond to Him? Take some time in silence, and allow the Lord to speak. Take it in, and respond to Him? Take some time in silence, and allow the Lord to speak. Take it in, and respond to Him? Take some time in silence, and allow the Lord to speak. ask him for the grace to stick to your new resolution. Conclusion: Follow this example: Father, Thank you for revealing yourself to me in prayer today. Thank you for revealing yourself to me, and showing me how to change my life. May any and all seeds you have sown in my heart, speaking to me, and showing me how to change my life. May any and all seeds you have sown in my heart today, by your grace, grow to maturity and bear fruit for you that will last. I ask all these things in Jesus' name and by his blood. Amen. After closing, take a few extra minutes to reflect on how your prayer went. Consider the environment, your experience, your prayers, your posture and any distractions. Allow this to help you the next time you pray Lectio Divina, replicate what was helpful and adjust what wasn't. Ultimately, this practice of praying Lectio Divina with Scripture passages can significantly influence how you communicate with God. You can share and teach these steps to others and even engage within a group or Bible study to read God's Word together and hear what He has to say. Additional Resources For a more in-depth teaching on Lectio Divina, watch Fr. Scott Traynor's session from FOCUS Summer Training. For other resources on prayer, check out Jeff Cavin's talk from SEEK on praying and hearing God's voice in Scripture. Check out Jeff Cavin's talk from SEEK on praying and hearing God's voice in Scripture. praying the rosary. Sign up via this link. "Lectio Divina", a Latin term, means "divine reading" and describes a way of reading the Scriptures whereby we gradually let go of our own agenda and open ourselves to what God wants to say to us. In the 12th century, a Carthusian monk called Guigo, described the stages which he saw as essential to the practice of Lectio Divina. There are various ways of practicing Lectio Divina either individually or in groups but Guigo's description remains fundamental. He said that the first stage is lectio (reading) where we read the Word of God, slowly and reflectively so that it sinks into us. Any passage of Scripture can be used for this way of prayer but the passage should not be too long. The second stage is meditatio (reflection) where we think about the text we have chosen and ruminate upon it so that we take from it what God wants to give us. The third stage is oratio (response) where we leave our thinking aside and simply let our hearts speak to God. This response is inspired by our reflection on the Word of God. The final stage of Lectio Divina is contemplatio (rest) where we let go not only of our own ideas, plans and meditations but also of our holy words and thoughts. We simply rest in the Word of God. We listen at the deepest level of our being to God who speaks within us with a still small voice. As we listen, we are gradually transformed from within. Obviously this transformation will have a profound effect on the way we live is the test of the authenticity of our prayer. We must take what we read in the Word of God into our daily lives. These stages of Lectio Divina are not fixed rules of procedure but simply guidelines as to how the prayer normally develops. Its natural movement is towards greater simplicity, with less and less talking and more listening. Gradually the words of Scripture begin to dissolve and the Word is revealed before the eyes of our heart. How much time should be given to each stage depends very much on whether it is used individually or in a group. If Lectio Divina is used for group prayer, obviously more structure is needed than for individual use. In group prayer, much will depend on the type of group. Lectio Divina may involve discussing the implications of the Word of God for daily life but it cannot be reduced to this. The movement of the prayer is towards silence. If the group is comfortable with silence, more time could be spent resting in the Word. The practice of Lectio Divina as a way of praying the Scriptures has been a fruitful source of growing in relationship with Christ for many centuries and in our own day is being rediscovered by many individuals and groups. The Word of God is alive and active and will transform each of us if we open ourselves to receive what God wants to give us. Taken from: www.ocarm.org Click here to read today's Lectio Divina from the website of Carmelite Order. "Lectio Divina from the website of Carmelite Order. "Lectio Divina from the website of Carmelite Order." the "most important stages" of this way of meditatio, or meditatio, or meditatio, or meditatio, or meditatio, or meditation on that which we have read; the oratio, or prayer which is when we enter in dialogue with God; and finally the contemplation stage in which we abandon ourselves to holy thoughts. This is when we leave behind our own thoughts and get ready to listen to God's voice, who speaks within us. Lectio Divina can be done individually or in a group. It's the latter that makes the structure necessary. Today, we present a way to develop this meditation finds, prayer asks, contemplation feels. Reading puts as it were whole food into your mouth; meditation chews it and breaks it down; prayer finds its savour; contemplation is the sweetness that so delights and strengthens. Reading is like the bark, the shell; meditation like the pith, the nut; prayer is in the desiring asking; and contemplation is in the desiring asking; and contemplation is in the delight of the great sweetness." (Blessed Guigo The Carthusian - Fragment about contemplation is in the delight of the great sweetness." the Scripture reading. Before starting the Lectio Divina it's important to prepare yourself by looking for the Gospel that corresponds with the day's Mass readings (or another Bible passage that you want to meditate on). Also, look for quotes and commentary that could help deepen your understanding of the Scripture. Prepare some questions for personal reflection. Carefully read different reflections and look for the points that stick out to you. Next, you can begin the actual prayer - a quiet, comfortable place free of distraction, but suitable for concentration. The next step (which can seem obvious, but it's important to remember) is that a Catholic always starts theirprayers with the Sign of the Cross. 3. Initial Prayer There are many prayers that we can use to begin Lectio Divina. One suggestion is to invoke the Holy Spirit so He enlightens us and allows us to listen to the message God wants to give us through His Word. Here we give you an example but you can just build the initial prayer with your own words. "My Lord, in your presence I want to enlighten me and open my mind and heart to everything You want to tell me today. Thank you Lord, for nourishing me with your Word." 4. Scripture Reading It's at this point when the scripture reading of the previously selected Gospel is done. It can be the day's Gospel or any other Bible and slowly, that way you can understand what is written. 5. Brief Reading This is the point when we re-read the commentary or reflection of the Gospel we found in our preparation. This brief reading's aim is to help you go deeper into the scripture's sense and to predispose yourself to listen to God's voice. 6. Brief personal meditation properly starts. The idea is to reflect on what the Gospel has to do with your life and to welcome it into your thanks to God for the lived moment and we pray to Him for our intentions. It's a moment of "free time," in which you raise a prayer to God from the experience of the encounter you just had with Him, you contemplate Him and let your heart be transformed with His Word. 8. Final prayer and Consecration to Mary We've reached the end of our Lection Divina prayer time. As we said at the beginning of this post, it's not a rigid structure. We can finish the Lectio with a prayer of thanksgiving. Another beautiful way to close it is by consecrating ourselves to Mary and asking for her intercession. We suggest you pray an Our Father, a Hail Mary, and a Glory Be. 9. Sign of the Cross Having finished our meditation and after doing a consecration to Mary, we end the same way we started, with the Sign of the Cross. To conclude these instructions, here are a few websites where you can find each day's Gospel, as well as commentaries and resources that will help you during your next Lectio Divina. We hope they will be of great use! Order of Carmelites What is Lectio Divina? USCCB on Lectio Divina Benedict XVI on Lectio Divina Weekly Lectio Divina with the Order of Carmelites Daily Mass Readings and Lectio prom St. Louis Parish, Clarksville, MD This post, ¿Cómo se reza la Lectio Divina? El Papa Francisco te lo enseña, paso por paso was written for Catholic-Link Spanish by Silvana Ramos, and was translated into English by Maria Isabel Giraldo. More Lectio Divina Resources A Step-By-Step Guide To Not Read The Bible Like A Robot: Lectio Divina How To Pray Lectio Divina How to speak to your heart, unlike any others on the page? I was taken aback the first time this happened, couldn't understand how these words seemed to speak so profoundly and personally to me. Now, one of my favorite phenomena of studying God's word is experiencing how the Bible is a living text and God can speak through its words to the core of my heart. Lectio Divina, "divine reading," is a way to connect with God's word through prayer. It's sometimes described as reading scripture with the "ear of the heart." The Lectio Divina prayer method was founded by Saint Benedict and Pope Gregory in the 6th century, although its roots date back to the Christian scholar Origen in the 3rd century. It has been a core part of monastic life for centuries but has been growing in use outside the monastery too. Over the last century, Lectio Divina has become more widely practiced within the Catholic church, as well as with Protestants. It's a prayer method with deep roots and a powerful connection to God. This form of prayer is different from reading the Bible for study or analysis. Rather the passage is read as the living Word of God, through which he can speak into your heart.Lectio Divina is a process of reading, reflecting, responding, and resting in a piece of scripture. It's a way to engage God in a conversation and listen for His words to you. Lectio Divina has become one of my favorite forms of prayer. I love the intimacy of choosing a small verse of scripture and diving deep into it. Soaking in each word and then listening for what God wants me to hear. Sometimes He speaks something else He wants me to hear. Sometimes the scripture and scriptur a way to "feast on God's Word", so we'll use that analogy as we walk through the four steps of this prayer and it will be opened to you in contemplation." ~St. John of the Cross explaining the four steps of Lectio DivinaREAD a brief passage of Scripture - "take a bite" REFLECT and meditate on the word or phrase that caught your heart - "chew" RESPOND in prayer to what God called to your attention - "savor" REST in God, contemplating his word to you - "digest" Choose a passage of scripture. You can use any scripture for Lectio Divina. Remember, though, this isn't a study exercise, so you don't need a whole chapter or lengthy passage. A short passage or even a single verse or two is sufficient. As you get started, find a comfortable and quiet place to sit. Begin to quiet your mind. Open your time of prayer by calling upon the Holy Spirit to guide your reading. In this first step, we're "taking a bite" of the scripture (lectio) by reading a passage of Scripture.Read the verses at least four times. It may even help to listen to the verses read either from an audio Bible or by another person.Is there a word or phrase that begins to stand out to you? The word or phrase that grabs your heart may not be the main idea of the passage. Listen and be open to how God wants to use his Word to speak into your heart in the words. Next, spend some time "chewing" on the words or phrases God placed in your heart. Reflect and meditate on the words you heard in the Scripture passage, attentive to what speaks to you feel heart. Sit in the silence and allow God the space to speak to you feel words over in your mind. Ponder what these words mean for your life. What hope or encouragement do these words bring to you? What next step do you feel responding to his Word. Finally, "digest" what God's spoken to you, embedding it deeply into your heart. Rest in God and contemplate his words for your life. Sit in the silence and just "be" with God for a few minutes. Open your heart to God's presence and allow His words to permeate your soul. You may want to journal your experience so you can see how God is moving in your life. Record the verse you used and what you heard God speak to your heart. Write down how those words apply to your life and how is God calling you to action in response. Are you ready to give Lectio Divina a try? Follow the guided prayer below and experience Lectio Divina for yourself. Prepare: Open your Bible to John 10:24-30 (or queue up an audio Bible version). Get comfortable and clear your mind for prayer. Ask God to come into this time and speak to you through his Word. Read: Read John 10:24-30 again, slowly. Listen to each word, opening your heart to hear God. Reflect:Sit back and close your eyes. Think about the word or phrase that seemed to catch in your heart as you read through this passage. Turn just those words over and over in your mind. Listen for what God wants to speak into your heart through these words. Respond: After you've reflected on these words and God's whispers to your heart through these words. respond to him in prayer. Discuss with God what you've heard and how your heart feels led to respond. Rest: Keeping your eyes closed and body relaxed, sit in the silence with God. Spend time in his presence, allowing his words and your eyes closed and body relaxed, sit in the silence with God. Spend time in his presence, allowing his words and your eyes closed and body relaxed, sit in the silence with God. Spend time in his presence, allowing his words and your eyes closed and body relaxed, sit in the silence with God. Spend time in his presence, allowing his words and your eyes closed and body relaxed, sit in the silence with God. Spend time in his presence, allowing his words and your eyes closed and body relaxed, sit in the silence with God. Spend time in his presence, allowing his words and your eyes closed and body relaxed, sit in the silence with God. Spend time in his presence, allowing his words and your eyes closed and body relaxed, sit in the silence with God. Spend time in his presence, allowing his words and your eyes closed and body relaxed, sit in the silence with God. Spend time in his presence, allowing his words and your eyes closed and body relaxed, sit in the silence with God. Spend time in his presence, allowing his words and your eyes closed and body relaxed, sit in the silence with God. Spend time in his presence, allowing his words and your eyes closed and your eyes clos scripture, it can be helpful to use a guide as you get started. The Pray As You Go app has a beautiful collection of prayers available, including several guides online. About Lectio Divina @ Contemplative OutreachLectio Divina Resources @ BibleGateway.comPray as You Go{These are affiliate links - and my own books - so any purchases help grow and sustain this blog.} Lectio Divina is one of the Eucharist in The Liturgy of the Hours. Lectio Divina gives you a good experience of all three levels of prayer. Vocal, Meditative, and Contemplative. It is also encouraged by the Catechism of the Catholic Church as a way to meditate! (CCC 2708) What is Lectio Divina? The goal of this guide is to make Lectio Divina? The goal of this guide is to make Lectio Divina? The goal of this guide is to make Lectio Divina? The goal of this guide is to make Lectio Divina? The goal of this guide is to make Lectio Divina? The goal of this guide is to make Lectio Divina? The goal of this guide is to make Lectio Divina? The goal of this guide is to make Lectio Divina? The goal of this guide is to make Lectio Divina? The goal of this guide is to make Lectio Divina? The goal of this guide is to make Lectio Divina? The goal of this guide is to make Lectio Divina? The goal of this guide is to make Lectio Divina? The goal of this guide is to make Lectio Divina? involved, Scripture examples to follow, and when to take some time in silence as well as when is a good time to journal. Lectio Divina is a Latin phrase meaning Divine Reading. It dates all the way back to the 3rd Century. Over the years, it was developed by some of the early Church Fathers, Saints of the Church, and religious communities such as Origen, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, Saint Benedict, St. John of the Cross, St. Teresa of Avila, the Desert Fathers who formed the first monasteries in the Eastern Church, the Carthusians, the Desert Fathers who formed the first monasteries in the Eastern Church, the Carthusians, the Desert Fathers who formed the first monasteries in the Eastern Church, the Carthusians, the Desert Fathers who formed the first monasteries in the Eastern Church, the Carthusians, the Desert Fathers who formed the first monasteries in the Eastern Church, the Carthusians, the Desert Fathers who formed the first monasteries in the Eastern Church, the Carthusians, the Desert Fathers who formed the first monasteries in the Eastern Church, the Carthusians, the Desert Fathers who formed the first monasteries in the Eastern Church, the Carthusians, the Desert Fathers who formed the first monasteries in the Eastern Church, the Carthusians, the Desert Fathers who formed the first monasteries in the Eastern Church, the Carthusians, the Desert Fathers who formed the first monasteries in the Eastern Church, the Carthusians, the Desert Fathers who formed the first monasteries in the Eastern Church, the Carthusians, the Desert Fathers who formed the first monasteries in the Eastern Church, the Carthusians and the Eastern Church in 1965, that one of the Church's most important documents emphasized the use of Lectio Divina. That document was "Dei Verbum" and is a dogmatic constitution or teaching on the Word of God. In 2005, Pope Benedict XVI, reaffirmed the importance of Lectio Divina on the 40th anniversary of "Dei Verbum": "I would like in particular to recall and recommend the ancient tradition of Lectio Divina: the diligent reading of Sacred Scripture accompanied by prayer brings about that intimate dialogue in which the person reading hears God, who is speaking, and in praying, responds to Him with trusting openness of heart [cf. Dei verbum, n. 25]. If it is effectively promoted, this practice will bring to the Church - I am convinced of it - a new spiritual springtime." Saint John Paul II, when he was the pope, described how to enter into this ancient form of prayer. One condition for Lectio Divina is that the mind and heart be illuminated by the Holy Spirit, that is, by the same Spirit who inspired the Scripture. That the Scripture is approached with an attitude of "reverential hearing". As is often said about Scripture, this type of prayer is itself "Ever Ancient, Ever New." The practice of Lectio Divina is best when it is experienced. The best way I can explain it is that it is an experience of Lectio Divina is best when it is experienced. The best way until God speaks to you through his Word. As we "hear" it over and over, meditate upon it, and contemplate it, the Word of God takes flesh in us. We become one with Christ. We experience this wonderful union with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. As with all prayer, the "way" that we do prayer is not important, butsometimes, especially for beginners, it is really helpful to have a structure and a routine to "get us into" prayer. Lectio Divina consists of four steps:Lectio (reading), Oratio (praying), Meditatio (meditation), and Contemplating).Let's use the analogy of eating for this. When I found your words, I devoured them; your words were my joy, the happiness of my heart (Jeremiah 15:16). I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world" (John 6:51). Now let's apply the four steps of Lectio Divina to eating. Lectio (reading) is like looking at the meal that is placed before you, deciding which part you want to eat first, which looks the best, what you want to save for last, and taking that first bite. Meditation (meditation) is chewing on the food, tasting it, deciding whether you like it or not or if you want more of it or want to try another part of the dish. This is often related to "chewing". Sometimes we eat our food so fast we don't even know what it tastes like, and we can do the same with Scripture For us to really meditate we need to take it slow and notice all the textures and flavors of the Scripture. Interesting enough, my last name "Denk" is a German word that means to think deeply or to ponder. This part comes naturally to me! The important thing though is that we are not doing any of these steps on our own, but rather reading with God and pondering with God. If we do it alone that is when it can become a rather dark and frustrating experience. This is where it is important to pray with God, with Scriptures, and always have Christ at the center. So "chew" until your heart's content, but just remember you are "chewing" Scripture and not your own thoughts! Oratio (pray) means speech, discourse, or dialogue. It is kind of like when we share a meal with anyone, especially with God, conversation tends to flow naturally. During this step you not only savor the food but you savor the company and your heart naturally wants to say something and hear something in response. This could be various spontaneous prayers or a more formal vocal prayer that you write out or say to God. Contemplatio (contemplation) There is nothing better after having a good meal than "resting" in the company you are with. Think about an Italian dinner where nobody gets up from the table right away. Or a Thanksgiving meal. You have tasted the food. You drank the wine. You have talked, laughed, and loved. Now you just spend that last moment in silence, completely content, taking it all in, savoring it, just "being" there with the people that you love..." (CCC, 2717) in which the Father allows us to dwell in His Son, to become one with His Son, to be infused with the Holy Spirit and experience the closest thing to heaven that we can on this earth. Preparation: It's important to take some time to prepare before you pray so that when you do enter into prayer you can be as focused and undistributed as possible. 5 P's of Prayer (Blog post *Coming Soon*) Prepare Know your passage ahead of time and meditate on it throughout the day. When you transition into prayer, take time to breathe, relax, slow down, and just rest. Place - go to your prayer place, room or chair. 90% of prayer is just being there. Posture - we pray using our bodies. Try one of the four postures: standing, sitting, kneeling, or prostrating Presence - make the Sign of the Cross and invite the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit into this time of prayer. Invite God the Father to hold you, the Son to be the Good Shepherd to you, and the Holy Spirit into this time of prayer. Invite God the Father will speak to you! Have you already signed up for Pray40Days? Review Lectio Divina in the Prayer Exercises section of "Types of Prayer" in Appendix I in your book or eBook. Want to grow your prayer life and try Pray40Days for yourself? Sign up here Now You're Ready to Begin Pray Tip: It is always good to hold your Bible on your lap; there is something about holding the Word of God that I think helps us focus on it and really reverence it. If you don't have a bible and want to order one you can get it here*. Tip: The same is true for a physical journal. There is nothing like it. If you don't have a journal you can get them here*. Step 1: Lectio The first step of Lectio Divina is Lectio, which is to read. Lectio should always be done with Scripture and in the presence of God - that is what makes it divine reading. It should never be forgotten that the Word of God is what we are focusing our attention on. It is through praying with Scripture in a very personal way with God that this truly becomes an experience of God. As Lectio Divina was developed over the centuries, one of the things that remained consistent was the first step: reading the passage, over and over. The first time slowly, the second time more slowly. You may even try and read the Scripture passage out loud during one of the times. Exercise, we will use Psalm 23. Read it now slowly. Notice any words or phrases that speak to you. The LORD is my shepherd; there is nothing I lack. In green pastures he makes me lie down; to still waters he leads me; he restores my soul. He guides me along right paths for the sake name. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff comfort me. You set a table before me in front of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Indeed, goodness and mercy will pursue me all the days of my life; I will dwell in the house of the LORD for endless days. This is a familiar Psalm, but maybe this is the first time you have actually heard it or read it straight through. Read it again a second time, a little bit slower. Try to notice one word or phrase that sticks out to you. The LORD is my shepherd; there is nothing I lack. In green pastures he makes me lie down; to still waters he leads me; he restores my soul. He guides me along right paths for the sake name. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff comfort me. You set a table before me in front of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Indeed, goodness and mercy will pursue me all the days of my life; I will dwell in the house of the LORD for endless days. Did you enjoy it more the second time around? What word or phrase did you notice? Read it a third time, even slower. Maybe you paid attention to different parts of Psalm 23 or noticed things that you didn't notice the first or second time around. It will probably happen again in this next reading. So read it one last time, very slowly paying attention to any word or phrase that strikes you. The LORD is my shepherd; there is nothing I lack. In green pastures he makes me lie down; to still waters he leads me; he restores my soul. He guides me along right paths for the sake name. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff comfort me. You set a table before me in front of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Indeed, goodness and mercy will pursue me all the days of my life; I will dwell in the house of the LORD for endless days. Journal Your Thoughts What word or phrases stuck out to you. The Word of God, we believe, is alive; so right now, God is speaking to you as you read this. He is saying something to you. Step 2: Meditatio The second step of Lectio Divina is meditation, which is meditation, to think about it, to ponder, and to apply it to your own life. To wrestle with it, to question it, and to ask God what it really means for you. With that in mind, we will walk through this meditation together. Meditation: Psalm 23 Now we will take some time to meditate and reflect on the different words, phrases, and images of Psalm 23. The Lord is my shepherd. I think this is the part that we have this Good Shepherd that will lead us and guide us. There is nothing I lack Wow! Have you ever thought about this before? You lack nothing. Right now, with Jesus as your shepherd, you lack nothing I lack, we have everything that we need, we have everything that we need, we have a good shepherd to guide us. In green pastures he makes me lie down. Try to think about this, a restful image of the green pasture. Have you ever done that one a warm summer day, laid out in the grass in the sun? Such a relaxing feeling. To still waters He leads me. Imagine yourself by that water, completely still. There is a beauty in water up by life - tired. Right now, He is refreshing and restoring your soul. He guides me along right paths / for the sake of his name. Maybe there is a decision you have to make right now, just brings you a sense of assurance or trust that He is guiding you. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. My grandfather told me before he died that this was a prayer that he would repeat this: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, / I will fear no evil for you are with me." What are you going through in life right now that is difficult? Is this a time in your life that is like the shadow of death, / I will fear no evil. Why? For you are with me. He is with you right now. Whatever you are going through in life, whatever dark valley you are walking through, you have the Good Shepherd right with you. Your rod and your staff comfort me. Shepherd soften use the rod and your staff comfort me. Shepherd soften use the rod and your staff comfort me. Shepherd soften use the rod and your staff comfort me. Shepherd right with you. Your rod and your staff comfort me. Shepherd soften use the rod and your staff comfort me. Shepherd right with you. Your rod and your staff comfort me. Shepherd right with you. Your rod and your staff comfort me. Shepherd right with you. 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With His rod and staff, He comforts you. You set a table before me. What is it like to share a meal with God? To have everything that you need? All the food is provided for you. Not only is there food, but there is wine. There is gladness and there is joy. Imagine being at that table with God. In front of my enemies. Is there anybody that has been an enemy to you, that has been anybody that you are afraid of right now, being protected. That God has chosen you right now because you are reading this, and praying with this, and meditating on this. There is something special about you. God has chosen you for this. You anoint my head with oil. Oil is a sign of protection and of being chosen. When you were baptized your head was anointed with oil. If you have been confirmed, your head was anointed with oil and you were sealed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Meditate upon this reality. Imagine Jesus right now anointing your head with oil. My cup overflows. When you look at everything you have in life and all that God provides for you, gratitude tends to be overwhelming. Indeed goodness and mercy will pursue me / all the days of my life. What does this mean for you, that all the days of your life, God is going to pursue you with goodness and mercy? Isn't that a wonderful thing? I will dwell in the house of the LORD / for endless days. You never have to leave, you can always be here with Him in His house with this meal. The Good Shepherd protecting you. Lacking nothing. Journal Your Thoughts: Psalm 23 Take some time now to journal. What was most vivid for you? What was most real for you? What was most vivid for you? What was third step of Lectio Divina is oratio or prayer. Chances are that after meditating upon this passage there is something you feel He is saying to you. In some way or another, allow yourself to pray with God. To talk this over with God. To speak to Him, to question Him, and to let Him respond to you. Journal Your Thoughts Take a moment of silence and journal when you are ready. Let whatever comes to mind flow through you and be written out on the page. Often times, without even realizing it, we will write the very thing that God is speaking to us. So spend some time in prayer and journal what God speaks. Step 4: Contemplatio The fourth step in Lectio Divina is contemplation. This fourth step is very simple. Sometimes it is a difficult step for people because it involves silence. It is doing nothing. It is just resting. Take a moment to savor it and take it all in. This is your opportunity to rest. You don't have to say anything or do anything. Just be with God. It might help to look at the Scripture passage once more to contemplate a Word or phrase. Or read through your journal your Thoughts Take a moment now to rest with it, to enjoy this experience and spend some time in silence. When you are ready, journal your Director. This prayer is meant to be an experience that brings you closer to God and allows you to focus on what he is speaking to you. By practicing this prayer more frequently, you will learn preparation and steps involved, as well as which Scripture passages you can follow, and finally, you'll know when it's best to have a moment of silence to journal. Now you know the steps to pray Lectio Divina! Try it with your favorite scripture passage. You can also use the daily mass readings every day! Did you find this prayer helpful? Do you have any insights or questions? Or do you find this prayer helpful? Do these affiliate links with an asterisk for your transparency. Topics: How To Pray This website contains affiliate links. As an Amazon Associate, I earn from qualifying purchases. The content on this website was created with the help of AI. Feeling like you're missing Scripture's deeper wisdom? Lectio Divina might be your answer. This ancient prayer practice helps unlock hidden treasures in the Bible. It encourages us to slow down and truly listen to God's voice. There are four steps of Lectio Divina: reading, reflecting, responding, and resting. These steps can transform how we interact with Scripture. It's about more than just learning facts. It's about meeting God in a meaningful way. This method can make our prayer life richer. It can also help us understand God's Word better. Let's see how this time-tested technique can change our Bible reading, reflection, prayer, and contemplation Lectio Divina slows use down and enhances our engagement with the Bible It's a method for encountering God through His Word Lectio Divina means "sacred reading" in Latin. It's a spiritual practice from the 6th century. St. Benedict created it as a monastic tradition for connecting with sacred texts. Lectio Divina is a structured way to read and reflect on Scripture. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops outlines four steps; reading, meditation, contemplation, and prayer, This method focuses on specific words or phrases. It allows for deeper reflection and personal connection with the text. Lectio Divina began with the Desert Fathers in the 4th century. Benedict of Nursia developed it further in the 6th century. Guigo the Second formalized it in the 12th century. For 1500 years, this practice has been used across various Christian traditions. Lectio Divina offers many spiritual benefits: Develops a listening heart to God amidst worldly distractions Fosters a surrendered heart through submission to God's word Reveals God's heart in Scripture beyond intellectual understanding This leads to personal transformation by aligning our hearts with God's Short Scripture passages are ideal for reflection. They allow God's word to speak to us personally. This ancient practice of sacred reading. It helps people connect with Scripture in a powerful way. This method from early monastic communities is gaining popularity today. Lectio involves reading Scripture with an open heart. We read a chosen passage slowly, letting the words sink in. It's about listening deeply to God's voice through the text. Meditatio is biblical meditation. We ponder the words we've read, connecting them to our thoughts and feelings. This step allows Scripture to speak to our personal lives meaningfully. Oratio is our prayer response to the text. We have a heartfelt conversation with God about our thoughts and feelings. This step is inspired by what we've read and reflected upon. Contemplatio invites us into silent contemplation. We rest in God's presence, moving beyond words. This step leads to deep connection and peace. Lectio Divina enriches many people's spiritual lives. Catechists use it to explore justice themes in Lectionary readings. This method fosters a prayerful approach to Scripture. Practicing these four steps can deepen our engagement with God's Word. It helps us grow in our faith journey. Try lectio divina to experience its transformative power. Set the stage for a transformative Psalm 86:11-13, Isaiah 40:28-31, or John 1:1-14. Find a quiet spot for your practice. This peaceful environment helps you focus on God's Word. The sacred reading practice thrives in silence, letting you listen deeply to God's voice. Begin with a Holy Spirit invocation. This prayer invites divine guidance into your practice. Open your heart and mind to receive God's message. Keep a pen and paper nearby for noting insights or distractions, "Lord, as we approach Your Word, fill us with Your Holy Spirit, Guide our hearts and minds to hear Your voice clearly," Lectio Divina improves with time and patience, Don't worry if it feels challenging at first, Regular practice can deepen your relationship with God and His Word. Choose a Scripture passage Find a guiet space Offer a prayer to the Holy Spirit Keep a journal handy Approach with patience and an open heart These steps prepare you for a meaningful Lectio Divina experience. This ancient practice, dating back to the 6th century, still transforms lives today. It offers a unique way to encounter God through Scripture. Try this Lectio Divina experience to deepen your spiritual journey. With time, you'll discover new insights and grow closer to God. Lectio Divina, a timeless prayer practice, offers a powerful path to spiritual growth. This ancient method invites us to engage deeply with Scripture meditation. Through reading, reflecting, responding, and resting, we open ourselves to God's transformative presence. Our journey begins with a single reading, focusing on a captivating word or phrase. Multiple readings deepen our understanding, leading to thoughtful reflection and heartfelt prayer. The final step encourages silent contemplation, allowing God's word to sink in. Committing to just ten minutes of Lectio Divina daily can bring profound spiritual changes. Pope Benedict XVI recommended this practice for the Church's spiritual renewal. Through Lectio Divina, we cultivate a deeper connection with God and foster personal transformation. Lectio Divina is an ancient prayer practice meaning "sacred reading" in Latin. It involves four steps: reading, reflecting, responding, and resting. This method helps us encounter God through Scripture and listen to the "Voice" behind the text. Lectio Divina offers deeper Scripture engagement and improved prayer life. It enhances spiritual connection and fosters a closer relationship with God. Regular practice leads to spiritual growth and greater awareness of God's presence. The four steps are: Lectio (reading), Meditatio (reflection), Oratio (response), and Contemplatio (rest). In Lectio, we read the Scripture passage slowly and attentively. Meditatio involves pondering the text and relating it to our experiences. During Oratio, we formulate a prayer in response to God's word. Finally, in Contemplatio, we sit quietly in God's presence, allowing for a deeper connection beyond words. Choose a Scripture passage and find a guiet place to calm your thoughts. Offer a prayer to the Holy Spirit for guidance. Keep a pen and paper nearby to note any distractions. For beginners, starting with gospel stories can be a good approach. Remember, preparation helps set the stage for a meaningful experience. Yes, Lectio Divina is suitable for both beginners and experienced practitioners. It's a spiritual practice that improves with time and patience. Don't be discouraged if it feels challenging at first. Start with short passages and gradually increase the length. As you become more comfortable, you'll find the practice more rewarding. Yes, Lectio Divina can be a powerful group experience. In groups, participants can share their reflections and insights. This enriches everyone's understanding of the Scripture passage and fosters a sense of community. Incorporate Lectio Divina into your regular spiritual routine. Some practice daily, while others do it a few times a week. Consistency is more important than frequency. Find a rhythm that works for you and allows deep engagement with Scripture. The key is to make it a regular part of your spiritual life. You can use any Bible translation you're comfortable with for Lectio Divina. Some prefer literal translations, while others find paraphrased versions helpful. Try different translations to gain new insights into familiar passages.

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