

St. John's Newsletter



Praying with Lectio Divina

Prayer is one of the foundations of our Catholic faith. How can we improve our prayer life? One way is to use **Lectio Divina**, a tradition of contemplative prayer. *Lectio divina* is Latin for “divine reading.”

The steps are simple, but can take some time to master since we have been conditioned by today's world to seek instant gratification. Be patient and give it a try. Don't give up – it takes time to learn to slow down. It is worth it.

Step One: *Lectio* (Reading)

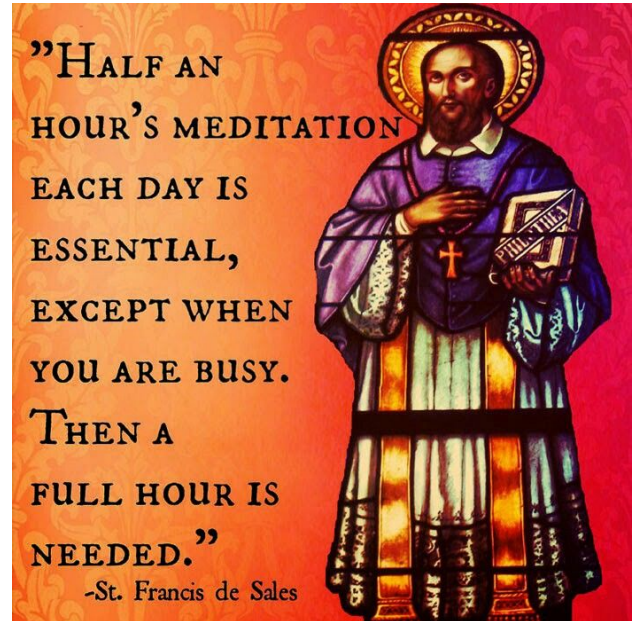
- Start with a passage from Sacred Scripture and become familiar with the text. (*It doesn't have to be a long passage... maybe choose from the daily readings or start with your favorite.*)
- Slowly read the passage a second time.
- Very, very slowly read the passage a third time.
- Pay attention to which word, words or phrases rest in your heart. It may not be the same words or phrase that you noted in the past, but the words that speak to you TODAY.

Step Two: *Meditatio* (Meditation)

- Think about the significant text you chose. What is God saying to you?
- What are the implications of the text in your life?
- What does this text say to me, today, and to my life?
- “To meditate on what we read helps us to make it our own by confronting it with ourselves....To the extent that we are humble and faithful, we discover in meditation the movements that stir the heart and we are able to discern them.” (CCC 2706)

Step Three: *Oratio* (Prayer)

- Talk to God... talk with God...about everything. Open your heart to God in an honest conversation. It is a simple conversation with



God that may come in various forms: we ask petitions, we give him thanks and we give him praise.

- What can I say to the Lord in response to his Word?

Step Four: *Contemplatio* (Contemplation)

- Rest in God's presence.
- Listen.
- Give God your questions so your heart is more disposed to his answer.
- Through contemplation we come to an understanding of the parts of our lives that need to be transformed by God's grace. What conversion of the mind, heart, and life is the Lord asking of me?

Step Five: *Actio* (Action)

- Having received God's love and grace, we go forth to serve others out of love we have been given. While not an official step of *Lectio Divina*, action is a natural outpouring as we reach out to share God's grace and live our faith confident in knowing God's love through his Word.

Source: *Oremus, A Guide to Catholic Prayer, Ascension Press, 2013.*