

Lectio Divina for Holy Monday, April 6, 2020

There are four steps to Lectio Divina: lectio, meditatio, oratio, and contemplatio, or reading, mediation, prayer, and contemplation. The goal of Lectio Divina is to encounter the Word of God and to be open to the Holy Spirit, to allow Him to guide one's thoughts and inspirations.

Before you begin, put yourself in the presence of God. Ask the Holy Spirit of inspiration and guidance and say an Our Father.

Lectio

In the lectio step, we should strive to hear the words of Scripture as if God is speaking directly to us—because He is! This means to read the words of Scripture slowly and intentionally. It may be helpful to read out loud, or, if possible, to have someone read to you. It is easier to listen while actually listening.

Read John 12:1-11

Six days before Passover Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. They gave a dinner for him there, and Martha served, while Lazarus was one of those reclining at table with him. Mary took a liter of costly perfumed oil made from genuine aromatic nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and dried them with her hair; the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. Then Judas the Iscariot, one of his disciples, and the one who would betray him, said, "Why was this oil not sold for three hundred days' wages and given to the poor?" He said this not because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief and held the money bag and used to steal the contributions. So Jesus said, "Leave her alone. Let her keep this for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me." The large crowd of the Jews found out that he was there and came, not only because of him, but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. And the chief priests plotted to kill Lazarus too, because many of the Jews were turning away and believing in Jesus because of him.

Meditatio

In the *meditatio* step, we are actively engaging the Scripture we just read. Focus on a key word or phrase from the Scripture selection that stood out to you, for any reason. Perhaps it “spoke” to you, confused you, challenged you, filled you with hope, anxiety, or love. Whatever the reason, ask yourself why you responded in this way. What is God saying to you? What is He calling you to do or change? Maybe it’s something very small, or maybe it’s something life-changing. The only way you’ll know is to consider and reflect on it.

Oratio

In the *oratio* step, we should respond to what God has revealed to us, no matter how big or small, by having a conversation with Him about it. Talk to God about what you read, what you don’t get, what is making you uncomfortable, what jumped out at you, and what the passage is calling you to do or change. Speak to God as if He were there having a conversation with you, because He is!

Contemplatio

Contemplatio translates as “contemplation.” This is perhaps the most difficult of the four steps of Lectio Divina because it requires silence. In the silence, rest for a moment in God and allow Him to move through you, to arrange your thoughts, and to speak directly to your heart. He began the conversation by speaking His Word, and He has allowed you to respond in prayer. Now it is time to pause and know that He is God and He is with you. It may seem as if there is little difference between meditation and contemplation, but in reality they are very different. In the *meditatio* step, we actively engage the Scriptures we have read and try to apply them to our own lives. In that step, we are doing something. In *contemplatio*, we must stop doing and learn how to be. In other words, we place ourselves in God’s hands and allow Him to fill us with His love and mercy.