

Lectio Divina for Holy Tuesday April 7, 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 13: 21-33, 36-38

Reclining at table with his disciples, Jesus was deeply troubled and testified,

“Amen, amen, I say to you, one of you will betray me.”

The disciples looked at one another, at a loss as to whom he meant. One of his disciples, the one whom Jesus loved, was reclining at Jesus' side. So Simon Peter nodded to him to find out whom he meant. He leaned back against Jesus' chest and said to him,

“Master, who is it?”

Jesus answered, “It is the one to whom I hand the morsel after I have dipped it.”

So he dipped the morsel and took it and handed it to Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot.

After Judas took the morsel, Satan entered him. So Jesus said to him, “What you are going to do, do quickly.”

Now none of those reclining at table realized why he said this to him. Some thought that since Judas kept the money bag, Jesus had told him, “Buy what we need for the feast,” or to give something to the poor. So Judas took the morsel and left at once. And it was night.

When he had left, Jesus said, “Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him.

If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and he will glorify him at once.

My children, I will be with you only a little while longer. You will look for me, and as I told the Jews, 'Where I go you cannot come,' so now I say it to you."

Simon Peter said to him, "Master, where are you going?"

Jesus answered him, "Where I am going, you cannot follow me now, though you will follow later."

Peter said to him, "Master, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you."

Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for me? Amen, amen, I say to you, the cock will not crow before you deny me three times."

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.