

## Lectio Divina for Holy Wednesday, 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 Matthew 26: 14-25

One of the Twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said,  
“What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?”

They paid him thirty pieces of silver, and from that time on he looked for an opportunity to hand him over.

On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples approached Jesus and said,  
“Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?”

He said, “Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, ‘The teacher says, My appointed time draws near; in your house I shall celebrate the Passover with my disciples.’”

The disciples then did as Jesus had ordered, and prepared the Passover. When it was evening, he reclined at table with the Twelve. And while they were eating, he said,

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

Deeply distressed at this, they began to say to him one after another,

“Surely it is not I, Lord?”

He said in reply, “He who has dipped his hand into the dish with me is the one who will betray me. The Son of Man indeed goes, as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son

of Man is betrayed. It would be better for that man if he had never been born.”

Then Judas, his betrayer, said in reply, “Surely it is not I, Rabbi?”

He answered, “You have said so.”

## 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.

