

Lectio Divina

Lectio (read), the first step, is a slow reading of a brief passage of Scripture while listening for God to speak through it. We read it with a listening heart and invite God to speak to us through it. As we slowly read repeatedly, we look for any word or phrase that draws our attention. When we identify this word or phrase, we begin to meditate upon it.

Meditatio (mediation) is a time of quiet reflection in God's presence. Our goal is not to force ourselves into a mystical experience or even into deep insight, but to focus our affection and attention on God. We quietly read the words he's led us to in Scripture and slowly chew them. We interact with them, invite them to shed light on our thoughts and experiences, and permit God to connect these truths to our lives. Through this process we allow it to become his personal Word to us, speaking directly to our issues, decisions, hopes, and dreams—and his will for us in all of it.

Oratio (prayer) We respond to what God has spoken to us through Scripture. We often think of prayer as primarily talking to God, but what Scripture invites us to is conversational intimacy with God. We aren't coming to God with demands and petitions; rather, we're consecrating ourselves and asking that he take his Word into the deepest and most intimate places in our lives. We're inviting Christ into the places he's exposed or the moments he's taken us back to so that he might heal us and set us free (Luke 4:18).

Contemplatio, (contemplation), a time of rest. Here we entrust ourselves to God as we reflect on what he has spoken. We listen for any other words he may want to speak. We remain as still and close as friends or lovers who do not have the frantic need to fill the space with words. In contemplatio we come to a place of reverence and silence once again as we are released to fulfill God's purposes for us that day.