

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF LECTIO DIVINA FOR GROUPS

Our Carmelite Secular Order communities and groups rarely have enough time together to engage in all four steps of *lectio divina* together. Since, under the Provincial Statutes, our meetings are to encapsulate our daily life, each meeting should include some *lectio*. As a practical matter, the best way to accomplish this may be to schedule the *lectio* immediately before the time for quiet prayer, and to engage in the first two steps of *lectio* aloud together, leaving the *oratio* and *contemplatio* steps to the individual in their personal quiet prayer. The practice of *lectio* can lead seamlessly into the practice of quiet prayer.

- Begin with a prayer to the Holy Spirit.

LECTIO (Reading)

Take the food into the mouth; acquaintanceship

- Read a very short passage of Scripture aloud, slowly and attentively
- Sit quietly for a moment.
- Retell the passage accurately, each person repeating a word or phrase from the passage until it has been retold.
- Listen in silence for a minute or two.

MEDITATIO (Meditation)

Chew the food; friendliness

- Read the selected passage aloud again.
- In silence, let Jesus speak to each person about the meaning of the passage for him or her, or its meaning in today's world for three or four minutes.
- Share aloud the insights received.
- Reflect on the insights in silence for another three or four minutes.

ORATIO (Prayer)

Swallow the food; friendship

- Read the passage of Sacred Scripture aloud a third time, slowly and attentively.
- In silence, ask, "What response does this passage of Scripture call forth from me to God?"
- Make the response from your heart.
- Spontaneous prayers may be spoken.
- Pray in silence for about five minutes.

CONTEMPLATIO (Contemplation)

Taste the fullness of the Word; union of life

- Read the short passage a final time.
- Rest in the presence of the Word, allowing the Holy Spirit to speak to your deepest self in and through the silence, for another five minutes.

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LECTIO DIVINA
Individual Application

1. *Lectio.* Read the selected passage of Scripture slowly and attentively. Let it sink in. Make sure you understand what it says, in itself. Consider the meaning of each phrase. “Listen” in silence.
2. *Meditatio.* Relate the passage to other Biblical texts. Ponder what Jesus is saying to you personally in the passage. Reflect on these insights.
3. *Oratio.* Read the passage again, slowly and attentively. Ask what response Jesus wants from you, and make the response to Him from your heart. This is the time for St. Teresa’s intimate conversation with the One we know loves us. Be spontaneous.
4. *Contemplatio.* Read the Sacred Scripture a final time, lingering with and resting in the presence of the Word, while the Holy Spirit speaks to your deepest self in and through the silence.
5. Be flexible with the timing, responding to God’s action in your soul.
6. Make a formal conclusion to your prayer, perhaps using a line from the selected passage that has particular significance.

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