



surface to soul
going deeper with vibrant faith

FACILITATING LECTIO DIVINA DEVOTIONAL EXPERIENCES

“Lectio,” it is often called, is an ancient practice of reading the Bible and praying. It is a practice that assumes God’s Holy Spirit inspires the Scriptures and that the Holy Spirit also desires to speak to us today through the Scriptures. It is a practice that was developed mainly by monks, but can be used by anyone.

Lectio Divina can take 10 minutes or 2 hours as you walk through **four movements** designed to draw you closer to God through each prayerful reading of the chosen passage. Begin by quieting your heart and mind and turning your focus to God. Remember that you are entering into the presence of the Living God who is present with you in this holy space. Let everything else go, as best you can, to be with God and hear God’s voice.

STEP 1 | Select a scripture passage and READ it

Find a passage to read. It can be any passage in the Bible, but some are easier to read and contemplate than others. On the first reading, simply **open yourself to the presence of God**. Read the passage slowly and prayerfully, allowing short pauses between sentences. Over time you will discover whether it is more helpful for you to read silently or out loud- try them both. As you read, take in the words and the overall flow of the passage. Then allow a time of silence following the reading - continue to open yourself to the Spirit of God.

STEP 2 | REFLECT or MEDITATE on the passage

During the second prayerful reading of the passage, listen for words or phrases through which God may be speaking to you. You will notice your attention being drawn to something (or if this doesn't happen, just choose a word). **Focus and think on the words**, especially any words that “jumped” out to you during the initial readings of the passage. Once you have “received” the word or phrase, begin to silently meditate on that. Reflect on why God may have revealed these words for you today. Listen to what God has to say to you; make note of questions that come to mind, and items that seem important.

STEP 3 | RESPOND or WRESTLE with the passage, and with God

On the third prayerful reading of the passage, listen now for God's invitation and respond from your heart. The Living God is always inviting us in some way... to let go of something or to take up something; to do something or be something... the invitation can take innumerable forms. Like Jacob (Genesis 32), this is where we wrestle with God. This time of “wrestling” is filled with asking and listening.

STEP 4 | REST and be RENEWED in God presence

The focus of the fourth prayerful reading of the passage is to simply rest now in the love that God has for you. Let the words wash over you- there is no further need to reflect or respond. Allow the Spirit to draw you close and fill you with God’s love, grace, and peace. Feel free to just sit there and let God speak to you in the silence.

USE LECTIO DIVINA WITH YOUR FAMILY

Use favorite family scripture passages that you may already read frequently. Consider reading and reflecting on the gospel lesson for the upcoming week. Read the passage three times where a different family member reads it each time, pausing for about 30 seconds before it’s read again by another family member. Invite others to share words and phrases that stand out, sharing why those words have meaning for them. Close with each person offering a short prayer.

Many families do this at dinnertime as they wait for the food to be cooked. Light a candle to be reminded of God’s presence among you as we read the passage. Use Lectio Divina while in the car and as part of family worship gatherings. Download a Bible app on your phone so that you always have a Bible with you. Make practicing the presence of God a daily ritual!