

LECTIO DIVINA (sacred word)

Lectio Divina is a slow, contemplative way of praying the Scriptures which helps enable the Bible, the Word of God, to become a means of union with God.

St Benedict says it helps us cultivate the ability to listen deeply, 'to hear with the ear of our hearts'. This gentle listening is an 'atunement' to the presence of God in that special place of God's creation which is Scripture. In order to hear someone speaking softly we must learn to be silent. We must learn to love the silence. If we are constantly speaking or if we are surrounded by noise, we cannot hear gentle sounds.

Lectio Divina has 4 stages ~

Read and listen to God's Word in the Scriptures.

Meditate on a word or passage that speaks to us in a personal way.

Pray with the word or phrase which has spoken to us.

Contemplate ~ cease to 'do' and learn to 'be' as we sit in silence enjoying the experience of being in the presence of our God.

The Practice of Lectio Divina

- Choose a text of Scripture that you wish to pray.
- Place yourself in a comfortable position and allow yourself to become silent. You can do this by closing your eyes, focusing on your breathing or in your mind think about turning over a new blank page in a notebook.
- Read the text, outloud if possible, slowly and gently savouring each portion of the reading. Listen constantly for the 'still, small voice' of a word or phrase which somehow says 'I am for you today'. In Lectio Divina, God teaches us to 'listen' to him and to 'seek' him in silence. He softly, gently invites us ever more deeply into his presence.
- Next take the word or phrase into yourself. Memorise it and slowly repeat it to yourself allowing it to interact with your inner world of concerns, memories and ideas. Do not worry about distractions.
- Then speak to God using words, ideas or images. Interact with God as you would with one who you know loves and accepts you. Offer to him what you have discovered in your meditation.
- Finally, simply rest in God's embrace.

