

Lectio Divina – Peace, Be Still



Taken from the World Wide Web)

Lectio Divina – Listening to God’s Word with our hearts

“And the word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us”

In Imaginative Contemplation we pray with the Scriptures, allowing Christ in the Scriptures to speak to us through our imagination. In Lectio Divina we pray with the Scriptures by dwelling on God’s word by listening with our heart. In Imaginative Contemplation, Jesus’ words, actions, teaching and relationships with people become familiar to us when we enter into the Scripture passage using our imagination. In Lectio Divina, God’s word becomes familiar to us by listening with our hearts and dwelling on His words. Listening with our hearts is something we do automatically in everyday life when we for example dwell on the beauty of nature or listening to someone we love or recall a poignant memory.

Lectio Divina or divine reading has four parts: reading, repeating, responding and resting.

Reading: Begin by reading the Scripture Passage slowly until a word or a phrase resonates with you. Then stop for the moment.

Repeating: Dwell on the words you have chosen. Repeat them again and again as though God is saying them to you. Try not to analyse them, just let them speak to you. Savour the words.

Responding: Allow God's heart to speak to your heart. He wants to be close to you so ask yourself what this invitation could mean. Speak to God with your heart. Be open to what he is trying to reveal to you. Share with God whatever is coming into your heart and mind.

Resting: Rest in the embrace and love of God. It is God's response to us. Your whole being is focussed on God so dwell in the moment. When you feel ready, move on.

As you listen to the following passage, note which parts move you but don't analyse anything. Then when you are ready, **read, repeat, respond** and **rest** and when you have dwelt on the words that initially resonated with you, continue on reading the passage and repeat the process.

Prayer

We acknowledge we are in the presence of God so let us say:

Direct O Lord and guide and influence all that is happening in my mind and heart during this time of prayer: all my moods and feelings, my memories and imaginings; my hopes and desires; may all be directed and influenced to your greater glory, praise and service and to my growth in your Spirit.
Amen

Let the Spirit enter our hearts and minds filling us with trust so that we can see Jesus present in the midst of the storms of our own life bringing calm to the turbulence.

Reading Mark:4:35-41

With the coming of evening that same day, he said to them, 'Let us cross over to the other side'. And leaving the crowd behind they took him, just as he was, in the boat; and there were other boats with him.

Then it began to blow a gale and the waves were breaking into the boat so that it was almost swamped. But he was in the stern, his head on the cushion, asleep. They woke him and said to him, 'Master, do you not care? We are going down!' And he woke up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Quiet now! Be calm!' And the wind dropped, and all was calm again. Then he said to them, 'Why are you so frightened? How is it that you have no faith?' They were filled with awe and said to one another, 'Who can this be? Even the wind and the sea obey him.'

Questions for Reflection

As you slowly read this Gospel passage, allow its words to soak into your mind. You may want to light a candle to help you ponder the passage, reflect on the image above or on the words of Pope Francis below.

1. What is this passage saying to you?
2. What word(s), sentence or phrase in this Gospel passage most caught your attention; most touched your heart; most challenged you; most comforted you? Is there anything in this passage that you found uncomfortable?
3. *“Then it began to blow a gale and the waves were breaking into the boat so that it was almost swamped”*. When have the waters of the sea of life overwhelmed you? Who saved you? Who did you turn to for help? What are the seas and winds that agitate you? Do you rely more on God in these situations or do you try to resolve them on your own?
4. *‘He was in the stern, his head on the cushion, asleep’*. When have you felt that Jesus was asleep amidst the storms of your life? How did it make you feel?
5. *‘Master, do you not care?’*. Have there been times you have felt that God was not listening to you? When have you felt Jesus’ loving presence in the midst of a storm?
6. *‘Quiet now! Be calm!’* What steps can you take to find more space for quiet stillness in your busy life? How can you nurture a peaceful, patient and calm spirit?

Pope Francis tells us:

Jesus, begged by the disciples, calms the wind and waves. And he asks them a question, a question which also pertains to us: “Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?” (v. 40). The disciples were gripped with fear, because they were focused on the waves more than on looking at Jesus. And fear leads us to look at the difficulties, the awful problems, and not to look at the Lord, who many times is sleeping. It is this way for us too: how often we remain fixated on problems rather than going to the Lord and casting our concerns to him! How often we leave the Lord in a corner, at the bottom of the boat of life, to wake him only in a moment of need! Today, let us ask for the grace of a faith that never tires of seeking the Lord, of knocking at the door of his Heart.

Let us now spend 10 minutes in silence reading, repeating, responding and resting and then share what we thought, felt etc. only if you are comfortable to do so.

End Prayer Suscipe of St. Ignatius of Loyola

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty,
my memory, my understanding,
and my entire will,
All I have and call my own.
You have given all to me.
To you, Lord, I return it.
Everything is yours; do with it what you will.
Give me only your love and your grace,
that is enough for me.