

**Lectio Divina: He sent them out in pairs**



Jesus Sends Twelve Two by Two  
Clipart Source: Hermanoleon

**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:** Be like Mary and “ponder these things in your heart”. 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 so that we too can hear Jesus’ call to us to be his disciple. Let us pray that we put our trust in him so that we can have the courage to engage in the world around us.

## **Reading Mark 6:7-13**

Jesus summoned the Twelve and began to send them out in pairs giving them authority over the unclean spirits. And he instructed them to take nothing for the journey except a staff - no bread, no haversack, no coppers for their purses.

They were to wear sandals but, he added, 'Do not take a spare tunic'. And he said to them, 'If you enter a house anywhere, stay there until you leave the district. And if any place does not welcome you and people refuse to listen to you, as you walk away shake off the dust from under your feet as a sign to them.' So they set off to preach repentance; and they cast out many devils, and anointed many sick people with oil and cured them.

### **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. '*Jesus summoned the Twelve and began to send them out in pairs*'. Who supports you in your spiritual growth? Who journeys with you on the road to faith? Who do you journey with on their mission?
4. '*He instructed them to take nothing for the journey except a staff.*' What baggage is preventing you from carrying out your mission? In what ways does your relationship with your possessions help or hinder you from being a follower of Jesus? What support do you need for your journey that Jesus has invited you to take?
5. '*They cast out many devils, and anointed many sick people with oil and cured them.*' How do you feel about the mission Jesus has given to you? What are the visible fruits of your mission? Who have you invited to share the gift of the Gospel with?

### **Pope Francis tells us:**

The Twelve have the order to "take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts" (6:8). The Teacher wants them to be free and unhampered, without reserves and without favours, certain only of the love of the One who sends them, strengthened only by his Word which they go to proclaim. The staff and the sandals are the gear of pilgrims because that is what the messengers of the Kingdom of God are, not omnipotent managers, not irreplaceable officials, not celebrities on

tour. Let us think for example of this Diocese of which I am Bishop. Let us think about some saints from this Diocese of Rome: Saint Philip Neri, Saint Benedict Joseph Labre, Saint Alessio, Blessed Ludovica Albertoni, Saint Frances of Rome, Saint Gaspare del Bufalo and many others. They were not officials or business people, but rather humble workers of the Kingdom. This was the face they had. And to this “face” also belongs the way the message is received: it can happen that one is not welcomed or listened to (cf. v. 11). This too is poverty: the experience of failure. The experience of Jesus who was rejected and crucified anticipates the destiny of his messenger. And only if we are united to Him, who died and rose, can we find the courage to evangelize.

We shall now spend 10 minutes reflecting on this scripture passage by reading, repeating, responding and resting as described above. We will 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.

Scripture texts: from the Jerusalem Bible 1966 by Dartington Longman & Todd Ltd and Doubleday and Company Ltd