

## **Lectio Divina:        They all ate and were satisfied**



Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

### **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 be touched by the generosity of Jesus in the giving of himself through his Body and Blood.

## **Reading      Luke 9:11b-17**

At that time: Jesus spoke to the crowd of the kingdom of God and cured those who needed healing. Now the day began to wear away, and the Twelve came and said to him, 'Send the crowd away to go into the surrounding villages and countryside to find lodging and get provisions, for we are here in a desolate place.' But he said to them, 'You give them something to eat.' They said, 'We have no more than five loaves and two fish — unless we are to go and buy food for all these people.' For there were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, 'Make them sit down in groups of about fifty each.' And they did so, and made them all sit down. And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing over them. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. And they all ate and were satisfied. And what was left over was picked up, twelve baskets of broken pieces.

## **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. You might want to imagine that you are one of the crowd accepting the bread Jesus has just blessed for you.

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 or startling?
3. '*Jesus spoke to the crowd of the kingdom of God and cured those who needed healing*'. What spiritual, emotional or physical healing do you need to be cured from? How can you reach out to those who are ill or housebound? What are you hungry for?
4. '*Give them something to eat*'. Who are you being called to feed? Who are you being called to give practical support to?
5. '*We have no more than five loaves and two fish*'. Have you ever thought of what effect your own small offerings given in love would have on the community? Do you know of any initiatives of persons who give the hungry crowd food to eat?
6. '*Make them sit down in groups of about fifty each.*'. How can you make what seems like an unsurmountable problem more manageable?
7. '*They all ate and were satisfied.*' What do you do to show your gratitude for the gifts that God has given you?

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

"They all ate", writes Saint Luke. As evening falls, the disciples counsel Jesus to dismiss the crowd so they can go in search of food. But the Teacher wants to provide for that too — he also wants to feed those who had listened to him. The miracle of the loaves and fish does not happen in a spectacular way, but almost discreetly, like the wedding at Cana — the bread increases as it passes from hand to hand. And as the crowd eats, they realize that Jesus is taking care of everything. This is the Lord present in the Eucharist. He calls us to be citizens of Heaven, but at the same time, he takes into account the journey we have to face here on earth. If I have hardly any bread in my sack, he knows and takes care of it himself.

Sometimes, there is the risk of confining the Eucharist to a vague, distant dimension, perhaps bright and perfumed with incense, but distant from the

straits of everyday life. In reality, the Lord takes all our needs to heart, beginning with the most basic. And he wants to set the example for his disciples, by saying, “You give them something to eat” (v. 13), to those people who had listened to him during the day. Our Eucharistic adoration comes alive when we take care of our neighbour like Jesus does. There is hunger for food around us, but also for companionship; there is hunger for consolation, friendship, good humour; there is hunger for attention, there is hunger to be evangelized. We find this in the Eucharistic Bread — Christ’s attention to our needs and the invitation to do the same toward those who are beside us. We need to eat and feed others.

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.