

Lectio Divina: Your Faith has made you well



Image 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: 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 enlighten our minds to the truth that faith is found in unexpected places and it is God we must thank for this gift.

Reading Luke 17:11-19

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices, saying, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.' When he saw them he said to them, 'Go and show yourselves to the priests.' And as they went they were cleansed. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus answered, 'Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?' And he said to him, 'Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well.'

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 lepers asking Jesus for his mercy.

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. *'And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers.'* Where, amidst your busy life, do you meet Jesus? What do you say when you lift up your voice to him? Have you met Jesus today?
4. *'They stood at a distance'*. When have you felt distanced from God? What was it that caused this distance? Have you ever felt isolated? Who are the people around you who are marginalised?
5. *'Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks.'* What are you grateful to God for? How do you show your gratitude to God and those who have helped you? Do you ever share your healing stories with others so that they too can know Jesus is also there for them?
6. *'Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?'* Do you ever take your blessings for granted and so giving thanks for them is far from your mind? Are there people in your life that have shown you kindness but you have taken for them granted?

Pope Francis tells us:

In the group of the ten lepers, there was only one who, realizing that he was cured, turned back to praise God and to show gratitude to Jesus. The other nine were healed, but then went their own way, forgetting the one who had healed them. It is essential to know how to say "thank you". To thank the Lord each day and to thank one another. In our families, for the little gifts we receive daily and so often do not even think about. In the places we spend our days, for the many services which we enjoy and for all those people who support us. In our Christian communities, for the love of God that we experience in the closeness of our brothers and sisters who, often silently, pray, sacrifice, suffer and journey with us. So please, let us not forget to say these key words: thank you!

In this month of the Rosary let us remember Mary our Mother. After the Annunciation, her first act is one of charity towards her elderly kinswoman Elizabeth. Her first words are: "My soul magnifies the Lord", in other words, a song of praise and thanksgiving to God not only for what he did for her, but for what he had done throughout the history of salvation. Everything is his gift. If we can realize that everything is God's gift, how happy will our hearts be!

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.