

## WEEK FOUR SPIRITUAL PRACTICE:

### *LECTIO DIVINA*

Lectio Divina, Latin for Divine Reading, is an ancient prayer practice that allows us to connect with God through interacting with His written Word. Through this practice we are inviting God to speak to us as we meditate on a passage of scripture. This is done by reading through a passage multiple times, each time asking God to speak and reveal his truth to us. Lectio Divina journeys through four movements: read, reflect, respond and rest; it is designed to draw a person closer to God.

Your first time doing Lectio Divina may be awkward or clumsy as you transition through the four movements. With repeated time and practice, the transitions will become simple and easy and the prayer pattern will begin to flow naturally.

#### **PREPARE:**

Find a quiet place that minimizes distraction where you can calm your heart and open your soul to God. Take some time to slow your breathing and release your worries to God. Practice our breathing prayer: Calm, Quiet, Hope, Trust.

**PASSAGE:** For our time during this study we will be reading Psalm 131. In the future it is recommended to choose a short passage, preferably from the Psalms or a story from the Gospels.

Lord, my heart is not proud;  
my eyes are not haughty.  
I do not get involved with things too great or too wondrous for me.  
Instead, I have calmed and quieted my soul  
like a weaned child with its mother;  
my soul is like a weaned child.  
Put your hope in the Lord,  
both now and forever.

#### **MOVEMENT 1: READ** (Lectio)

Read through the passage the first time, opening yourself to God's presence. Read it slowly and prayerfully, pausing after each line. As you read, take in the words and the overall flow of the passage. After you have finished reading, sit in silence, allowing your soul to digest what you have just read.

#### **MOVEMENT 2: REFLECT** (Meditatio)

Read through the passage a second time, this time listening for a particular word or phrase in the passage that God is bringing to your attention. If no particular word stands out, choose one. Begin to silently reflect on that word or phrase. Talk to God about the chosen word and what He may be saying to you through that word. Ask Him any questions that may come to your mind and listen how he may answer you. After you have finished reading, sit in silence, allowing your soul to digest what you have just read.

**MOVEMENT 3: RESPOND (Oratio)**

On your third reading, invite God to invite you to respond. As you read this passage, listen for God's invitation. How is God inviting you to respond? Perhaps he is asking you to let something go or take something up, to do something or be something. After you have finished reading, sit in silence, allowing your soul to digest and direct you in how to respond.

**MOVEMENT 4: REST (Contemplatio)**

In your final reading, simply rest in the love that God has for you. Let the words of the passage wash over you and draw you into God's love and peace. There is no need to respond other than in calm, quiet, hope and trust, allowing God's Spirit to fill and refresh you for the journey. After you have finished reading, sit in silence, allowing your soul to rest, like a weaned child, calm and content.

**PROCESS:**

Once you have finished, take some time to process in your journal or through art. Reflect further on the word that God has given you and what God may be calling you to do. Return to you word throughout the day and continue to remind yourself of God's special message for His beloved child.