

Praying the Scriptures or Lectio Divina

Preparation:

1. Go to a quiet place alone.
2. Settle down into a comfortable position.
3. Consciously relax muscle tension. Take some deep breaths.
4. Pray, “Lord Jesus, speak to me. I am listening.”

Read/LECTIO – read aloud with a desire to be addressed by God, invite the Holy Spirit to show you what you need to see. Read the passage slowly. Listen deeply with the ears of your heart to hear a word or phrase that resonates with you personally. Focus on that word or phrase, allow it to sink in.

Reflect/MEDITATIO – Read the passage again. Question, ponder, study. Put yourself in the story. Integrate the scripture into your life story. Use your senses—all five of them to enter the story or passage. See it. Feel it. Smell it. Taste it.

Respond/ORATIO – Read the passage again slowly. Allow yourself to be touched by God’s word. Listen for God’s invitation of how you can respond. Pray, responding to what you have read and heard. Spend time conversing with God about the possibilities.

Rest/ CONTEMPLATIO – Read the passage one more time—the final time. Rest in loving silence and receive. Listen attentively with your heart to God. Enjoy the experience of sitting with God and listening to His Voice.

“Reading seeks for the sweetness of a blessed life,
Meditation perceives it,
Prayer asks for it
Contemplation tastes it.

Reading, as it were, puts food whole in the mouth,
Meditation chews it and breaks it up,
Prayer extracts its flavor,
Contemplation is the sweetness itself which gladdens and refreshes.”

(Guigo II, a 12th c. Carthusian monk)