

## **Lectio Divina for Small Groups**

*Lectio Divina*, or sacred reading, is a contemplative approach to praying with sacred texts. The layered and relational process emphasizes deepening and widening your engagement with the selected text first by offering attention to key words and images that catch your attention (which requires a slower-than-usual pace), and then by noticing how God may be gifting you with that word or image as it interacts with your daily life experiences.

In individual prayer sessions, the process of *Lectio Divina* is often broken down into a layered process: 1) begin with *lectio*—reading (take the words in); and then 2) move into *meditatio*—meditation (think about their meaning; 3) followed by *oratio*—prayer (dialogue with God about the meaning); 4) lastly with *incarnatio*—incarnation (taking the message into daily life).

### **First Reading and Sharing (grounding your self)**

One person reads the passage out loud, slowly.

1. Listen for a word or phrase that captures your attention.
2. Observe one minute of silence after the reading. Allow the word or phrase to enter your mind, heart, and spirit.

For your own silent reflection: *How do I come today, in what state? What am I open to hearing from God today?*

3. After a few moments of silence, share with the group one gifted word, phrase or image. (No explanation, background or discussion is necessary; just briefly share the word.)
4. Allow the gifted words of the others in your group to enter your prayer as well.

### **Second Reading and Sharing (opening to others)**

Have another person read the passage out loud for the second time.

1. Listen again for a word or phrase that moves you (could be the same word or phrase).
2. Observe one minute of silence after the reading.
3. Offer a moment to allow it to enter the depth of your mind, heart and spirit as a personal gift from God for you today.
4. Ponder how this gifted word or phrase touches your life today, and consider the following:

*What specific aspect of my daily life might God be speaking to today?*

5. Share out loud (1-2 minutes each) about how the meaning of the text touched your life today.

### **Third Reading and Sharing (responding to God)**

A third person reads the passage for the third and final time.

1. Listen for a word or phrase that calls you forth into doing and being (could be the same word or phrase).
2. Observe one minute of silence after the reading.
3. During a few moments of quiet for reflection, consider:

*What it is that God might be inviting me to do, be, or change today through the message of the text?*

4. Share with the group (1-2 minutes each) what you feel called to do or be for today.

### **Closing**

- Invite each person in the group to share one word or phrase as a symbol of gratitude or petition.
- OR
- As a group, recite the following: “May this prayer experience impact our ways of being with God and with others.”