

Lectio Divina: The Sacred Reading of Scripture

Practicing

- ❖ Go to a quiet place and set aside 15-20 minutes.
- ❖ Select a Scripture – shorter passages as opposed to several chapters
- ❖ Read it out loud to hear the words
- ❖ Go through the four steps below

The four movements of Lectio Divina

First, take a moment of silence, notice your breathing, settle in.

- 1) **Lectio or read:** read the passage slowly. Be in God's presence, no rushing, letting the words of Scripture be absorbed

- 2) **Meditatio or think:** when you are touched by a word or phrase, notice it, pause, wonder why

- 3) **Oratio or pray:** what is now on your heart? What do you want to say to God or ask Him?

- 4) **Contemplatio or rest:** resting in God's presence, like when a conversation with a close friend ends and you don't have to fill that lull with words

"Spiritual practices don't give us 'spiritual brownie points' or help us 'work the system' for a passing grade from God. They simply put us in a place where we can begin to notice God and respond to his word to us." – Adele Ahlberg Calhoun

Ways to Read the Bible

Maybe you've never picked up the Bible before, or it's been a while since you last read it, or you want a different way to continue reading Scripture. There are lots of Bible reading plans out there, and included below are several that might suit your reading pace.

Mix It Up

One site offers multiple plans – reading straight through the Bible or in chronological order; going through one book thoroughly or challenging yourself to read the entire Bible in just a few months; reading by genres (types of biblical literature, e.g.: wisdom) or themes (e.g.: Christmas). Go to www.biblestudytools.com/bible-reading-plan to see your choices.

The Lectionary

The Daily Office Lectionary will take you through *almost* the entire Bible in accordance with the church calendar over the course of two years. Each day there are three readings: Old Testament, Epistle, and Gospel or Acts. The Daily Office Lectionary is from the Book of Common Prayer and can be found and printed out at www.justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/lectionary.pdf.

If you prefer to view it online and have reminder sent to you daily, try www.biblegateway.com/reading-plans/revised-common-lectionary-complementary/today?version=NIV. Note that you can change which Bible translation you use for this latter plan.

Bible Reading Plan for Shirkers and Slackers—read at your own pace

Read through the Bible according to different genres. Sundays are Old Testament poetry and Mondays are the Pentateuch, etc. Check off readings as you do them. No dates are listed and there isn't pressure to get it done in a year. You can find this plan at www.ransomfellowship.org/article/bible-reading-program-for-slackers-shirkers/ and also read the hilarious-but-relatable reasoning for the plan.

Reading with Accompanying Devotionals

Read Bible passages and accompanying short devotionals which will help you understand Scripture better. Go to www.backtothebible.org and click on the "Devotions" tab for several options.

www.BibleGateway.com

This is a fantastic website with dozens of Bible translations available for free. The search function is very helpful and does all the work of a concordance without the expense. Didn't take Hebrew or Greek? Don't let that stop you from truly understanding a word or verse – the site does the work for you.