HOW TO PRAY A LECTIO DIVINA

Dear friend of Jesus, regard your copy of the New Testament as a precious possession. Take it up daily to read it, and refer to it for answers and direction. The Lord is speaking to you through it. Respond to God in your prayer and action.

One way to take and read the Scriptures is called *lectio divina*, or spiritual reading. Find a place to sit quietly. Choose a passage from the daily Mass readings, or following some theme, or a continuous reading of one of the New Testament books. Begin with a prayer begging God's help, like this one:

Come, Holy Spirit.
Give light to my eyes that I may see.
Open my ears that I may hear your voice.
Loose my tongue that I may praise you.
Strengthen me to act upon your word.
Amen.

Step One: Reading

Read the text slowly. This is God speaking to you. Listen for a word or phrase that catches your attention.

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Step Two: Meditation

Use your thought and imagination to ponder the text: Who is Jesus speaking to? What is Jesus telling them, you? Why did this word or phrase catch your attention? Maybe re-read the passage. When the text speaks to your heart, you have reached and received a precious fruit of meditation.

Step Three: Prayer

Respond to God in a personal, spontaneous way, as if to a friend. Your words do not have to be many or pretty; it is enough to say, for example: Thank you for telling me this; Help me to live out this message; I am sorry for my failings; I love you!

Step Four: Contemplation

Listen again to God speaking to you and respond silently, with love more than words, rejoicing in God's love and care for you.

The way you live is the test of the authenticity of your prayer; you must take what you read in Scripture and try to live it in your daily life.

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