

## LECTIO DIVINA or DIVINE READING

*When I found your words I devoured them. Jeremiah 15:16*

Lectio Divina is an ancient, reflective way of both studying and praying the Word of God. Lectio consists of four general elements. This prayer method may simply give form to what we already do. The elements of lectio may be likened to a cow chewing its cud or looking at a gem from different angles.

- 1–Reading**–(lectio)–After an opening prayer, simply slowly read the scripture passage aloud or silently and note what stands out to you.
- 2–Meditating**–(meditatio)–Read the passage again and think about it. You may use your mind to reconstruct the event described. This includes engaging the Word of God, listening to it and letting it interpret you. Another part of this may be to make a practical application from all of this lesson to your life.
- 3–Praying**–(oratio)–Meditation can be a springboard to prayer. It may lead us to pray for others or ourselves, e.g., Jesus healing a leper may lead us to pray for those who are lepers in our world today.
- 4–Contemplating**–(contemplatio)–This stage is the simplest and can also be the most challenging. It remains sitting with the Word in both exterior and interior silence, not thinking but resting in the Word and opening oneself up to God.

Some notes:

- 1–These four stages are *flexible*, not set in concrete and people may find themselves going back and forth among the different elements. While the structure may be valuable. It is not an end in itself.
- 2–With lectio, **less is more**. This is not a race. Simply spend as much time with a passage or even part of a passage or even a single line or word as feels appropriate.
- 3–This is suitable to both individual and common use.
- 4–Suitable in an ecumenical context
- 5–Some people find it helpful to make notes as they do lectio.

Some variations: Mini-Lectio, Macro-Lectio and Breaking Open the Word

*Reading you should seek; meditating you will find; praying you shall call; and contemplating the door will be opened to you.*

*Guigo II the Carthusian  
Twelfth Century*