

What Is Lectio Divina?

The Christian form of Lectio Divina was first introduced by St. Gregory of Nyssa (c 330-395), and also encouraged by St. Benedict of Nursia (c 480-547), the founder of the Benedictine order. It's a way of developing a closer relationship with God by reflecting prayerfully on His words. In Lectio Divina, the chosen spiritual text is read four times in total, giving an opportunity to think deeply about it and respond thoughtfully.

Here's how to get started:

Prepare

Spend a few moments sitting quietly so your mind is open to hearing from God.

Lectio (Read)

The first reading is an opportunity to get to know the Scripture passage. Listen for any words or phrases that seem to jump out.

Meditatio (Reflect)

The second reading of the same passage focuses you more. Try not to analyze the passage like you would in a Bible study, but instead listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit. For example, in Psalm 46, the phrase "God is our refuge and strength" might come up in your mind. Someone else listening to the same passage may hear "Be still and know that I am God." The Holy Spirit interacts with us – what do we most need to hear?

Oratio (Respond)

After a third reading, it's time to respond. You can journal or you can respond in prayer. Staying with "God is our refuge and strength," this may lead you into a prayer of thankfulness that God provides for you and protects you, or it might lead to repentance as you realize you depend too much on things outside of God.

Contemplatio (Rest)

Spend some time in silent contemplation if possible. What is God teaching you through this passage? How will you live differently? If you do this in the morning, it's amazing how it stays with you as you drive to work, go to the grocery store, fix supper, etc...that phrase "Be still and know that I am God" may continue to work on you.

Psalm 46

**For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah.
According to *alamoth*. A song.**

¹ God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.

² Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,

³ though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging.

⁴ There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy place where the Most High dwells.

⁵ God is within her, she will not fall;
God will help her at break of day.

⁶ Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;
he lifts his voice, the earth melts.

⁷ The LORD Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

⁸ Come and see what the LORD has done,
the desolations he has brought on the earth.

⁹ He makes wars cease
to the ends of the earth.

He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.

¹⁰ He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."

¹¹ The LORD Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.