



Extended Group Lectio Divina

KNOWN: EXPERIENCING GOD IN DAILY PRAYER
APPENDIX



Overview:

Lectio Divina (Latin for “divine reading”) is an ancient form of prayer popularized by Benedictine monks but gaining renewed popularity amongst today’s lay faithful. The purpose: to pray the scriptures. Though meant to be a private practice of prayer and contemplation, it also serves as a fantastic way to pray and discuss as a group.

What is incredible is that teens get to witness that the scriptures are, in fact, alive. As they read and discuss the scripture slowly, certain words will “jump out” at them, but entirely different words or phrases will “jump out” for their neighbor.

Best of all, you don’t have to plan much! Just prayerfully choose a small section of scripture and then follow the outline below. Remember, this outline is for a group setting - private prayer would look different.

Theme Scripture:

HEBREWS 4:12

The word of God is living and active.

A Key to Using this Guide:

ANYTHING IN ITALICS: Important information for leaders. Not necessary to share with the group.

REGULAR FONT: To be shared aloud with the group.

LEADER TIPS: Check out the “Leader Tip” boxes in the margins for helpful hints.

How to Choose a Passage for Reflection

Yes, this will be a discussion, but it is foremost a method of prayer. Therefore, when you choose the scripture for reflection, it should always be done in the context of prayer. The second most important factor in selecting a verse is that it is short. The passage you choose should be fairly brief – no more than 5-7 verses. The point of Lectio is to hone in on a single word or phrase, and if you are starting with too big of a passage, it becomes difficult to focus. As the leader, you can give the group the context of the passage if needed without reading more than is appropriate for Lectio. Below are some good places to start:

- Readings from the upcoming Sunday Mass
- Readings from the current daily Mass
- A Psalm from the day’s Liturgy of the Hours
- Common scriptures that are often taken for granted (i.e. John 3:16, 1 Corinthians 13, Psalm 139:1-6)
- Have the teens submit their favorite verses and choose a different one every week

Leading Lectio Divina

1. Start with a prayer.

Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you and speak to you.

2. Lectio (Read)

Start by reading the scripture aloud slowly to the group. Ask the group to follow along in their Bibles and look for/listen to words or phrases that stick out to them. Then, read it aloud again. Ask each person in the group, "What word or phrase popped out to you when I read this? Don't elaborate, just say the word or phrase." Make sure everyone gets a chance to share.

3. Meditatio (Reflect)

Take some time to ask them why they think certain words or phrases popped out. Why did this phrase stick out? What relevance does this have to their lives? What does that word or phrase mean? What does this word/phrase make you think of when you first hear it?

Leader Tip

It is appropriate for the leader(s) to share as well; just be sure that you are not usurping the conversation.

4. Oratio (Respond)

What is God trying to say to you through this scripture? What is he asking of you? Where in your life can you put this into practice?

5. Contemplatio (Rest)

Once the conversation has died down, reread the scripture, and allow some time for silence. Thirty seconds is enough to make most teens uncomfortable, but that's okay because God speaks in the silence.

After a moment or two of silence, ask the teens to pray aloud for whatever they would like after this exercise. Maybe it's something for themselves, or perhaps they want to pray for someone else. End your time with a common prayer like the Our Father.

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