

HOPING—We respond to what God is doing in our lives, in the world, in creation.

The voice of God echoes in the depths of the human heart (Gaudium et Spes §16)

In the **third movement**, we pray: having attended to the word, and to life, we turn and attend to the Lord “**in whom we live and move and have our being**” (Acts 17:28). The saints and the mystics show us how the prayer of greatest value is a prayer that arises from the realities of our lives.

What do we do?

We permit our prayer to flow spontaneously from our realization of what is HAPPENING, or has happened, in our lives, in our families, in the world.

How do we do this?

We read the passage anew, and we ask, What do I want to say to the Lord about this? At first we pray in our own words, but eventually we need to go beyond this and pray in the words of the passage. Like Mary, “we pray making our own the words of God: we pray to God with the words of God.” (Masini)

Some Resources for Nourishing and Deepening our Journey in Lectio Divina

- The Resource Portal at the Pontifical University, Maynooth: www.maynoothcollege.ie/about/our-mission, you will find guides for the home and for parish, reading lists, links to other lectio resource sites from across the world.
- A very worthwhile guide to prayer with the Scriptures and to lectio by Carlos Mesters OCarm, may be found on www.carmelite.org/mesters/
 - LectioYouth.net—an online resource for young adults, particularly in Africa and Madagascar. 
- “Lectio Divina: Four Acts” — Pages 103–109 in Mariano Magrassi, *Praying the Bible. An Introduction to Lectio Divina* (Collegetown: Liturgical Press, 1998) — A wonderful 17 page overview.
 - Give us this Day (www.giveusthisday.org)
- Books: Mario Masini’s *Lectio Divina: An Ancient Prayer That is Ever New* (New York: Alba House, 1998) provides a pastoral introduction to the method with an excellent presentation of the tradition. Enzo Bianchi’s *Praying the Word* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1998) and Michael Casey’s *Sacred Reading: The Ancient Art of Lectio Divina* (Ligouri: Triumph Books, 1996) will repay the time spent with them.

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Real Reading for Real Families—*Lectio Divina* in Home and Parish

HEARING HAPPENING HOPING



THE GOSPEL
OF THE FAMILY
Joy for the World



Reading God’s word with family and friends
Listening for God’s word with family and friends
Praying God’s word with family and friends

The Bible is full of families, births, love stories and family crises.
(Pope Francis—*Amoris Laetitia* §8)

Lectio Divina—a dialogue between God’s word and our experience.

Lectio Divina—a way of hearing God’s word in our lives.

Lectio Divina—a way of prayer and a guide to living. It is a means of descending to the level of the heart and of finding God. (Michael Casey OCSO)

Lectio Divina—a way of loving God.

As *Lectio Divina* is a way of prayer, we begin in prayer

God our Father, source of all light
you have sent your Son into the world,
to reveal yourself to all your children.

Send your Spirit upon us now
that we may meet Jesus in the Word that comes from you.
May we come to know him,
may we come to love him more deeply
and so be drawn closer
to the blessedness of your Kingdom. Amen.

(adapted from a prayer by Enzo Bianchi)

Words of Life ... Reading for Life ...

The word of God comes to us in *lectio* to awaken the heart.
André Louf OCSO (1983)

Rather than offering the healing power of grace and the light of the Gospel message, some would “indoctrinate” that message, turning it into “dead stones to be hurled at others.”
(Pope Francis—*Amoris Laetitia* §49)

A Story of a Real Family ... for Real Families ... from the Gospel of Luke

Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem every year at the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to the festival according to the custom.
When the festival was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know. Thinking he was in the travelling group, they went a day's journey. They searched for him among their relatives and acquaintances; and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him.
After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions; and all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When they saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him,
“Child, why have you treated us like this?
See! your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.”
And he said to them,
“Why were you searching for me?
Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?”
But they did not understand what he was saying to them.
And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them;
and his mother kept all these things in her heart;
and Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature,
and in favour with God and people.

(Luke 2:41–52)

HEARING—we read so that we may hear!

Speak Lord, your servants are listening! You have the words of eternal life!
(see 1Sam 3:10, John 6:8)

In *Lectio Divina*, the text itself is important. It is not just the message of the text but the text as it is to which we attend. The words of the passage are the Lord's gift to us in the Holy Spirit. Like the words of those who love us, they are the sacrament of God's love.

What do we do?

We read the words
We notice the words
We savour the words
We feel the words
We let the words resonate within us
We spend time with these words of God's love

How do we do this?

We read and re-read the text so that “the important points are highlighted, the events, the words, the characters involved, the emotions, the circumstances, the unfolding of the action. This careful exploration results in many surprising discoveries as we get to know the text.” (Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini)

HAPPENING—we read so that we may recognise ... so that we may see!

Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing! (Luke 4:21)

The first movement in *lectio divina* is attention to the text; the **second movement** is attention to life. We attend to *what* happens in our lives and in the world. We permit the light of Christ—which has begun to shine from the text—to illuminate our lives, the lives of our families, the life of our communities, the life of our world.

What do we do?

We read the passage anew, and we ask where does this happen in (our) life?

How do we do this?

We read our lives! We seek to recognise ourselves and our world in the people and patterns of the passage? **The word of God is alive and active** (Heb 4:12), it happens. What Scripture recounts has happened to us, and is happening all around us.
The only question ... is whether we will open ourselves to meeting [the Lord in the text]. Not only can every Bible passage touch but us, but each one can touch us deeply. However, much of our reading remains on the surface both of the passage *and of ourselves*. When we have done a good *lectio*, however, we have the feeling that the passage was written especially for us and that *our whole lives* are in it. (Michel de Verteuil CSSp)