

1. Lectio Divina is being misunderstood today bc. most people understand it as just a reflective (mind freely wondering) reading of the Scriptures. But it wasn't so for centuries. If we want to dive into the Word of God and make it alive, we need to follow those who practiced praying the Bible from the very beginning of the Church.

2. If we want to make praying of the Bible delightful and shaping our inner man, we can enter into singing Lectio Divina, a practice that will tremendously help in chanting of the LOTH, singing Mass responsorial Psalms, and skyrocket our individual prayer life.

3. These principles should guide us when we look into forming a habit of practicing Lectio Divina:

- **Make time.** Daily or several times a week, min. 15-20 min. for each session but do not police yourself. Find space that is free of distractions and a time when you are not tired.
- **Don't give** up after a week, or a month. Keep it up for at least several months to a year. You will have something valuable to say after several months. The greatest enemy is discouragement and hurry. Recognize your particular spiritual state in life and proceed accordingly with Lectio Divina. You will have months when 45 min will seem not enough and seasons when 5 min will seem as eternity.
- **Pray for a desire** to eat *the scroll*. Pray for a renewed thirst for God's Word because God has revealed Himself most fully through the Scriptures which come alive when we pray them.
- Lectio Divina leads to discovering Church as a sacrament. **Find another person or a group of people** who are willing to stick to the plan of practicing Lectio Divina for some time. Incorporate this practice into your small group or ministry that you are part of, especially to your worship band.
- **The purpose of Lectio Divina is to become like Christ**, to enter into the mystery of His existence, to become object of Christ's prayer and to unite with Him in His prayer. If you stick with it, you will experience the move of the Holy Spirit in your life taking gradually over your thoughts, decision making process, your behavior. You will see habitual changes and you will sense a tremendous growth on the inside, being affected by the living Word in everything you approach. Your feelings and deep affections will change for your heart will be immersed in eternity.

PROPHETIC MINISTRY SCHOOL
SEPTEMBER 2018
SINGING LECTIO DIVINA

Table from 'Sacred Reading' by Fr. Michael Casey, "The Four Moments of Lectio Divina"

SENSE OF SCRIPTURES	FACULTY	FUNCTION	PRAYER
Literal	Intellect	Understanding the text	<i>LECTIO</i>
Christological	Memory	Contextualizing the meaning	<i>MEDITATIO</i>
Behavioral	Conscience	Living the meaning	<i>ORATIO</i>
Mystical	Spirit	Meeting God in the text	<i>CONTEMPLATIO</i>

Most Christians usually know about the basics of each step but the confusion comes from our modern misunderstanding of the steps/moments of Lectio Divina. **You should practice the first three steps each time you pray Lectio Divina and be open to the contemplation as the result of your engagement.**

Reading puts as it were whole food into your mouth;

meditation chews it and breaks it down;

prayer finds its savour;

contemplation is the sweetness that so delights and strengthens. - Guigo II

1. LECTIO - READING

After invoking the Holy Spirit, reading should be done out loud, not mentally. You should hear yourself or someone else reading the passage slowly, like poetry, prayerfully and mindfully through the text, once or twice. Reading to understand the text is the goal but prayer really starts here as you engage with the Word that is alive and ready to possess you.

This type of reading is different from study although study of a particular passage that precedes Lectio Divina is extremely helpful for we want to read the Scriptures

from the Church. So do your Bible study or exegesis before you engage in Lectio Divina, as an introductory exercise.

If you are into journaling, you may write the passage down. Writing it down is already a beginning of meditation by itself.

2. MEDITATIO - MEDITATION

Isolate a shorter passage from the text and re-read it again. Create a space in your heart for a new experience. Ponder each phrase or word, repeating it quietly, tasting it, turning it over in your mind, expecting new illumination, new highlight, new understanding, new depth.

Assimilate the Word by purposefully keeping your mind engaged, your body focused, your heart open.

If the passage is descriptive, you may imagine it. Use simple Ignatian meditation, if appropriate:

Imagine:

- *What do you see?*
- *What do you hear?*
- *What do you smell?*
- *What do you feel?*

If practiced in a communal setting, this part could be spoken out spontaneously by one or several persons.

3. ORATIO - PRAYER

Meditative reading leads naturally to prayer. It happens spontaneously as you will feel a need to respond to the penetrating work of God's voice inside of you. The prayer based on the passage that you have meditated upon doesn't have to be elaborate. It should be a response of a heart following Beloved.

You may feel like writing or singing a prayer, a poem-prayer, a song, an exclamation, praise, petition, words of adoration or blessing. You may enter into the time of intercession. The response might be different on different occasions to the same passage of Scriptures.

If practiced in a communal setting, the prayers are spoken out loud.

4. CONTEMPLATIO - CONTEMPLATION

You will not always enter into this moment/stage but be determined and restful in promise of the Father who says that He will come and dwell within you. This is the mountain top of Lectio Divina, the moment when we enter into the eternity where the love of God flows freely and we are receptive and open to His movements. It is the moment of awe, adoration and delight, gazing upon Beloved and opening up our inner man for a download from heaven. It is the time when revelation of the nature of God transcends our being and we receive through contemplation what we could not achieve through the human efforts of meditation.

**PROPHETIC MINISTRY SCHOOL
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5. Actio - Action

An active resolution to implement the words received at the time of prayer into my own life as soon as the occasion arrives.

It was said of Ioannes Kolobos that, when he returned from the harvest or from a visit of the elder Fathers, he dedicated himself to prayer, meditation, and psalmody, until his thinking had again attained its original order.

*Reading is the first ground that that precedes and leads one into meditation; meditation seeks busily, and also with deep thought digs and delves deeply to find that treasure; and because it cannot be attained by itself alone, then he sends us into prayer that is mighty and strong. -
Guigo II*

**PROPHETIC MINISTRY SCHOOL
SEPTEMBER 2018
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“When I was at hard at work one day, thinking on the spiritual work needful for God’s servants, four such spiritual works came to my mind, these being: reading; meditation; prayer; contemplation. This is the ladder for those in cloisters, and for others in the world who are God’s Lovers, by means of which they can climb from earth to heaven. It is a marvellously tall ladder, but with just four rungs, the one end standing on the ground, the other thrilling into the clouds and showing the climber heavenly secrets. (...)” – Guigo II, On Lectio Divina

4. CONTEMPLATION



- feels what you desire
- the lifting up of the heart to God tasting somewhat of the heavenly sweetness and savour
- sweetness of the food that delights and strengthens
- comes and yields the harvest of the labour of the other three through a sweet heavenly dew, that the soul drinks in delight and joy.

There is a moment of being captivated by God somewhere in the midst of the whole cycle; it could be during singing of a chorus, or one singer might sing out a prophetic word, everyone may sing in tongues or there is an instrumental intermission while people are enveloped in God’s presence

3. PRAYER



- asks
- a devout desiring of the heart to get what is good and avoid what is evil
- finds the savour of the food
- is in the desiring asking
- rises to God, and there one finds the treasure one so fervently desires

Main singer or the worship leader forms a spontaneous chorus which engages the whole praying congregation and all repeat short phrase in a prayerful mode, uniting together in petition, declaration blessing or adoration

2. MEDITATION



- finds
- a studious insearching with the mind to know what was before concealed through desiring proper skill
- chews the food and breaks it down
- is like the pith, the nut
- seeks busily, and also with deep thought digs and delves deeply to find that treasure; and because it cannot be attained by itself alone, then he sends us into prayer that is mighty and strong.

The singers sing antiphonally, paraphrasing the verse or phrase the prayer leader just read. They sing around it, listening to the Holy Spirit’s creative inspiration within their hearts and sing it out, one by one, in form of declaration, prayer, insightful rephrase.

1. READING



- seeks
- busily looking on Holy Scripture with all one’s will and wit
- puts the whole food in your mouth
- is like bark, the shell
- first ground, preceeding and leading to meditation

After some time of praise and worship, prayer leader reads the passage from the Scriptures, often from the Psalms. He isolates the phrase, a word or a verse and repeats it out loud several times, making time for pondering.

**STEPS OF
LECTIO DIVINA**

GUIGO II

WORSHIP WITH THE WORD

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SEPTEMBER 2018
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LECTIO

Rom 8:14-17

Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you.

Read v. 14 out loud, at least twice, pausing in between.

14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.

15 For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption.

When we cry, "Abba! Father!" 16 it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

PROPHETIC MINISTRY SCHOOL
SEPTEMBER 2018
SINGING LECTIO DIVINA

MEDITATIO

Meditate on phrases and words that stand out. Repeat them out loud several times. Write down the fruit of your meditation in any form. Paraphrase, recall any cross reference Scriptures from memory. *Do it under the verses above.*

ORATIO

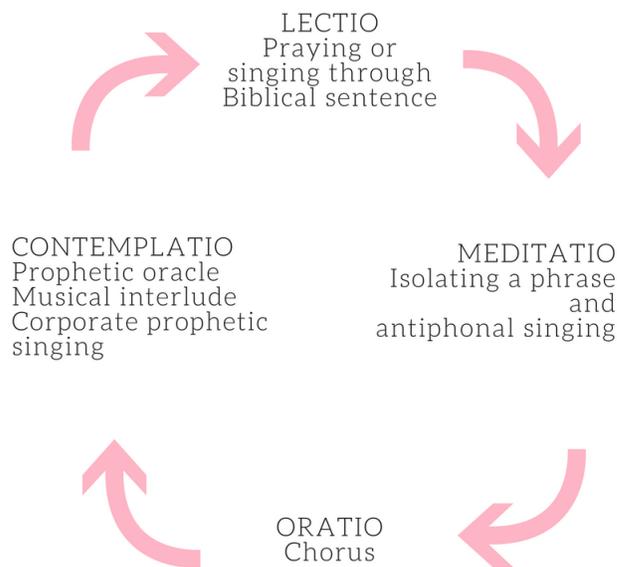
Pray. Write down your prayer, poem, song. Draw or doodle your prayer. Make a photo or journal it.

CONTEMPLATIO

Enter into **contemplation** but do not force it (because you can not). Wait for God to move on the inside of you. If nothing happens (something always happens but we sometimes have hard time perceiving it), finish with short thanksgiving prayer.

Singing Lectio Divina

At this moment we will switch to singing. Do not take longer than 15 min for one cycle. Roles and engagement:



Pick a **prayer leader** and **chorus singer** in your group.

LECTIO: PR reads: **14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.**

MEDITATIO: Go around circle and each person has to sing or say their spontaneous meditative thoughts based on that Scripture.

ORATIO: CS makes chorus: Make one or two line chorus. Repeat eight times. Everyone joins in, after the first or second time.

CONTEMPLATIO: Have a SELAH moment

Repeat for next two verses.

PROPHETIC MINISTRY SCHOOL
SEPTEMBER 2018
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	By yourself	In small group	In congregation
Worship Leader	you	leads musically	leads musically
Prayer Leader	you	leads prayer	leads prayer
Chorus Singer	you	designated singer or participants	composes choruses spontaneously
Other Singer(s)	you	participants	spontaneous antiphonal (responsive) singing

A cycle has the following stages:

1. **Corporate worship song** or a hymn (2-5 min): That all may engage in God's presence together in one accord. We value songs that direct us to sing to God instead of only about God. The worship leader's role is to lead the people into a God-Word focus with songs that are well known, so the whole room engages in God's presence together. Easy vocal range. Engagement: everyone.
2. **Spontaneous singing** (2-5 min): Devotional corporate spontaneous singing led by the worship leader, both from the Scripture and singing in the Spirit. Keep simple chords progressions so everyone can engage spontaneously for several minutes. All singers should engage boldly in order to lead the room by singing long notes in flowing melodies and harmonies instead of short syncopated notes going quickly up and down the scale. The worship leader should start with extended lower notes to give the congregation easy melody lines that help them find their own easy melody lines in their range. You want to create an atmosphere of corporate spontaneous worship of God. People are singing their own spontaneous songs or biblical passages. Unless the prayer leader is an approved singer, he/she shouldn't sing to the microphone. Engagement: everyone.

3. The core of singing Lectio Divina:

Even if the phrase is short, its power is great. Often, one word taken from there is enough to serve as viaticum for an entire lifetime." - St. John Chrysostom

PROPHETIC MINISTRY SCHOOL
SEPTEMBER 2018
SINGING LECTIO DIVINA

2. MEDITATIO:

- a. **Isolating a phrase:** the prayer leader designates one phrase (by speaking it out) from the biblical sentence. The goal is to narrow the focus on specific word or very short phrase.
- b. **Developing themes** through antiphonal praying (singing): the singers develop themes from the isolated phrase by singing short (5-10 seconds) songs or phrases to enhance the theme of the isolated phrase. We are unfolding the meaning of the phrase and creating prayerful dialogue between our hearts and the Word of God.
- c. Singers sing one at a time, without any gaps in between and sometimes starting by overlapping the last syllable of preceding singer. Singers need to listen to each other, worship leader and the prayer leader. They need to sing boldly.
- d. Singers will follow the prayer leader in concentrating on the isolated phrase, not going forward or backward in the fuller text. Prayer leader listens to the prophetic singers singing spontaneously and flows with them in going forward. This process is like a dance were both partners are dancing, one is leading by also following the subtle moves of the other partner. In that way, this process is not gonna get boring.
- e. A team can sing Lectio Divina over the same passage once a week for months and each time they will find it refreshing when they all are following the Holy Spirit because they will go in different direction almost each time. It is a fascinating and very creative process of meditating upon the Scriptures in a dynamic way.
- f. This cooperation between prayer leader and singers goes on until a chorus leader composes chorus. Chorus can be composed after each isolation of a phrase and singing antiphonally for 1-2 min or after several (two-three) isolating and developing passage times.
- g. They use **Rephrase, Refer, Repeat** principle.
 - Repeat* with exact language. Do not be afraid to repeat the same words. Make new melody.
 - Rephrase* with a similar language.
 - Refer* with other Scripture that will enhance.

3. ORATIO: **Spontaneous choruses.** The chorus leader and/or worship leader establishes "spontaneous choruses" for all to sing (8-10 times) at any time.

Chorus is a mini worship song, composed during meditative singing, summarizing antiphonal singing. They are made by a chorus leader or worship leader and require people to be gifted in it.

The melody line has to be easy for an average congregation member to repeat, middle range vocally. All prophetic singers should jump in to chorus after first or second time and sing it boldly, without harmonizing for the first four times so people can join in easily. Choruses are repeated 8-12 times and end with singing the name of God (...Jesus, Son of God, Comforter etc.). The same chorus can be repeated later on or at any time during one cycle, if the congregation is engaged well and responding to it.

PROPHETIC MINISTRY SCHOOL
SEPTEMBER 2018
SINGING LECTIO DIVINA

4. CONTEMPLATIO: (doesn't happen each time, so the most natural way is to go back to LECTIO or the beginning of another cycle):

- a. **Prophetic oracle:** worship leader or singer sings solo a prophetic word based on a Scripture. He starts with singing any passage from the Bible and then sings solo, ending with a chorus that all repeat 8-10 times.
- b. **Musical interlude:** prophetic music played by one exposed instrument or by all musicians together
- c. **Corporate prophetic** singing: all people are caught up in a moment in the Spirit and sing prophetically

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