

# Lectio Divina

This method of prayer is attributed to St. Benedict (founder of the Benedictine monks and maybe Eggs Benedict as well). He lived from 480-550AD developed the rule (or structure) that guided the way monasteries functioned. Within his monastery, several sections of the day were devoted to prayer, Lectio Divina being one of them. (It's pronounced Lex-E-o Div-E-na)

The term Lectio Divina is Latin for Spiritual or Divine Reading. Rather than studying the Bible using a specific method, at its heart, Lectio is based on the premise that the Word of God is alive and active and is thus, very unstructured. It is meant to help us "chew" on the text rather than analyze it. Here's how it works. Basically it is four parts, focused on a short passage of scripture. To begin, choose a verse or two from a section in which Jesus is interacting with someone who needs his help. (John 4:13-15, Mark 10:17- 21, John 10:14-15, John 15:1-2, John 15:4-5, Matthew 11:28-29 are some good examples)

**Listening.** As you read a passage aloud, listen for a specific word or phrase to stick out, believing that God speaks directly through the Bible.

**Meditating.** Repeat the word or phrase, asking what connection it has to our lives and what God is trying to say through it.

**Prayer.** Bring the phrase before God, giving thanks for his word to you. What is God leading you to pray? Ask for guidance in how to implement this word into our lives, ask forgiveness if necessary, and finally, rest in God's love.

**Contemplation.** Simply rest in God's love and presence. You are his child and he loves just being with you. Silently wait before God, being fully present before him. This is not a time for words, but more a time of embrace and rest.

*This exercise can be extended for long periods of time, but try to spend at least 20 minutes on the passage you've chosen.*

