

PRAYER - LECTIO DIVINA



Known by the Latin name of *Lectio Divina*, or 'Divine Reading', this is a centuries old method of praying with Scriptures. This method especially suited to praying the psalms, parts of the prophets, wisdom literature, and the epistles.

- First, choose the passage you intend to pray.

Matthew 6:7-15

Jesus said to his disciples: 'In your prayers do not babble as the pagans do, for they think that by using many words they will make themselves heard. Do not be like them; your Father knows what you need before you ask him. So you should pray like this:

**'Our Father in heaven,
may your name be held holy,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven those who are in debt to us.

**And do not put us to the test,
but save us from the evil one.**

'Yes, if you forgive others their failings, your heavenly Father will forgive you yours; but if you do not forgive others, your Father will not forgive your failings either.'

- Enter into the prayer in a quiet place in a comfortable yet attentive posture.
- Mark the start of the prayer by recognising you are in the presence of God.
- Be aware of your own needs
 - what gift or grace do you feel you need to ask of God?
- Slowly read the passage
- Stop where a word or phrase strikes you.
 - Savour it, stay with it as long as there is something in it for you.
 - The passage may trigger off thoughts on your own life - that is fine.
- Talk to God in your own words, or simply stay in silence before God.
- When you are ready, or if you become distracted, move on to the next phrase, and again,
 - stop when something strikes you. Take your time.
- When your prayer time is finished, end with a short prayer.

The idea is not so much to think about the passage as to let it engage your feelings, emotions and life.

The questions to ask when looking back on the prayer are:

What struck me?

How did I react and feel?

Does this tell me anything about God, myself, or the way I relate to God or to others?