

# Lectio Divina

Themes: Pilgrimage and Jubilee



Melbourne Archdiocese  
Catholic Schools

*Lectio Divina* is Latin for 'Divine Reading' and is an ancient form of prayer in the Catholic tradition. The practice involves reading scripture in a contemplative way, using prayer and meditation to deepen understanding of a text. It can be undertaken individually or communally.

There are four 'movements' to the *Lectio Divina* which guide the participants:

- Lectio: **Reading** the scripture passage
- Meditatio: **Meditating** on the passage
- Oratio: **Praying** in response to the passage
- Contemplatio: **Contemplating** the passage

## Preparation

- Create a sacred space
- Set aside time - at least 30 minutes
- Gather materials – Bibles, scripture passages, notebooks or journals, writing/drawing implements, candles
- Select a scripture passage consider desired theme as well as participants needs.

## Scripture on the themes of pilgrimage and Jubilee

Genesis 12:1-17: The Call of Abram  
Leviticus 25:8-17: The Year of Jubilee  
Matthew 2:13-15: The Escape to Egypt  
Luke 4:16-20: The Rejection of Jesus at Nazareth  
Luke 24:13-35: The Road to Emmaus

## Example of lectio divina: The Road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35)

In a quiet space, participants find a comfortable position and become aware of God's presence. After a few deep breaths, begin with the sign of the cross or a short prayer.

### 1. Lectio (Read)

Read **The Road to Emmaus** (Luke 24:13-35) aloud, slowly.

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.' Then he said to



them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

- Consider the writing within the passage. Are there any words or phrases that stand out?

## 2. **Meditatio (Meditation)**

- Read the passage again. Focus on what drew attention during the first read.
- Enter into the world of the story.
- How do the travellers feel – before the encounter, during the walk and once they know their companion to be the risen Jesus?
- **Personal reflection.** Have you had moments where something has been revealed to you? Any moments of surprise where you felt closer to Jesus? Spend some time reflecting on how the content of this story might relate to your life. It might be a story from your past, something from the present day, or a hope for the future.

## 3. **Oratio (Prayer)**

- Read the passage one more time. This time, let it lead you to prayer.
- Have a conversation with God about what this passage is calling you to think about. Take the opportunity to talk about whatever feelings arose whilst reading the scripture, perhaps fear that you may miss an opportunity, expectation of encounter in your life, gratitude for the presence of the Lord. Make this conversation sincere and heartfelt, it is your chance to connect with God.

## 4. **Contemplatio (Contemplation)**

- Now is the time to relax and be with God. Sit in silence in the presence of God.
- If your mind wanders during this peaceful time, just gently bring it back into stillness. This should be a simple time, where you allow God's love to wash over you in a moment of silent connection.

At the end of the lectio divina, thanks could be offered to God for any clarity or insights gained through the practice. Commitment to action could be assured at this time. The activity could conclude with a short prayer and/or the sign of the cross.

