



*Forming faithful stewards, Caring for sacred waters*

## **Bible Study: Lectio Devina (Spiritual Reading)**

*Lectio divina* (literally "divine reading") is an ancient practice of the monastic and desert traditions where individual copies of the scripture were not available.

*Lectio divina* combines a sensing/intuitive and thinking/feeling approach to scripture. This prayerful way of approaching scripture works well in small groups but can also be practiced by individuals.

The classic form of *lectio divina* has four steps:

1. Reading (*lectio*)
2. Meditation (*meditatio*)
3. Prayer (*oratio*)
4. Contemplation (*contemplatio*)

Robert Mulholland, who wrote *Invitation to a Journey* suggests adding two steps; one at the beginning and one at the end: *Silencio* and *Incarnato*.

*Silencio* - Begin your time of reading, reflection, and prayer with silence. Give yourself time to center down and focus on seeking God's will.

*Lectio* - Read the passage you have chosen or listen to it being read. Try to experience the text as if you were there. Imagine the scene. Use all your senses.

*Meditatio* - Read or listen to the text again. Try to understand the context and the connection made in the text. Read it a third time, and wrestle with the text, or chew on one small portion of it. Listen for a word or phrase that "shimmers" with meaning for you.

*Oratio* - Respond to God through prayer. Pour out to God an honest expression of whatever you are feeling, whether it is contentment, grief, joy, or confusion.

*Contemplatio* - Place yourself receptively before God, making yourself available for whatever God desires or is saying to you.

*Incarnatio* - Reflect on what God is seeking to do in you. As a result of the previous steps, what does God need you to do or stop doing? How can you express the word God is speaking to you? Is there an action you are feeling called to take?