

Lectio Divina



Lectio Divina for the Twenty-fourth Week in Ordinary Time

We begin our prayer:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Look upon us, O God,
Creator and ruler of all things,
and, that we may feel the working of your mercy,
grant that we may serve you with all our heart.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

(Collect, Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time)

Reading (*Lectio*)

Read the following Scripture two or three times.

Matthew 18:21-35

Peter approached Jesus and asked him, “Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive? As many as seven times?” Jesus answered, “I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times. That is why the kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who decided to settle accounts with his servants. When he began the accounting, a debtor was brought before him who owed him a huge amount. Since he had no way of paying it back, his master ordered him to be sold, along with his wife, his children, and all his property, in payment of the debt. At that, the servant fell down, did him

homage, and said, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.’ Moved with compassion the master of that servant let him go and forgave him the loan. When that servant had left, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a much smaller amount. He seized him and started to choke him, demanding, ‘Pay back what you owe.’ Falling to his knees, his fellow servant begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.’ But he refused. Instead, he had the fellow servant put in prison until he paid back the debt. Now when his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were deeply disturbed, and went to their master and reported the whole affair. His master summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to. Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?’ Then in anger his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt. So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives your brother from your heart.”

Meditation (*Meditatio*)

After the reading, take some time to reflect in silence on one or more of the following questions:

- What word or words in this passage caught your attention?
- What in this passage comforted you?
- What in this passage challenged you?



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If practicing lectio divina as a family or in a group, after the reflection time, invite the participants to share their responses.

Prayer (Oratio)

Read the Scripture passage one more time. Bring to the Lord the praise, petition, or thanksgiving that the Word inspires in you.

Contemplation (Contemplatio)

Read the Scripture again, followed by this reflection:

What conversion of mind, heart, and life is the Lord asking of me?

Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive? What grudges am I holding? Is there anyone I have shut out of my life?

A debtor was brought before him who owed him a huge amount. What do I owe to the Lord? What does the Lord want me to offer him?

Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you? How can I share the gift of mercy that God has given me? How can I be an ambassador of reconciliation?

After a period of silent reflection and/or discussion, all recite the Lord's Prayer and the following:

Closing Prayer:

Bless the LORD, O my soul;
and all my being, bless his holy name.
Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits.

He pardons all your iniquities,
heals all your ills.
He redeems your life from destruction,
crowns you with kindness and compassion.

He will not always chide,
nor does he keep his wrath forever.
Not according to our sins does he deal with us,
nor does he requite us according to our crimes.

For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so surpassing is his kindness toward those
who fear him.
As far as the east is from the west,
so far has he put our transgressions from us.

(From Psalm 103)

Living the Word This Week

How can I make my life a gift for others in charity?

Read *God's Gift of Forgiveness: A Pastoral Exhortation on the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation*: <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments-and-sacramentals/penance/upload/Penance-Statement-ENG.pdf>

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