

Lectio Divina



Lectio Divina for the First Week of Lent

We begin our prayer:

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

Bestow on us, we pray, O Lord,
a spirit of always pondering on what is right
and of hastening to carry it out,
and, since without you we cannot exist,
may we be enabled to live according to your will.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

Collect, Thursday of the First Week of Lent

Reading (*Lectio*)

Read the following Scripture two or three times.

Matthew 4:1-11

At that time Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry. The tempter approached and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread."

He said in reply, "It is written:

*One does not live on bread alone,
but on every word that comes forth
from the mouth of God."*

Then the devil took him to the holy city, and made him stand on the parapet of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written:

*He will command his angels concerning you
and with their hands they will support you,
lest you dash your foot against a stone."*

Jesus answered him, "Again it is written,

*You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the
test."*

Then the devil took him up to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their magnificence, and he said to him, "All these I shall give to you, if you will prostrate yourself and worship me." At this, Jesus said to him, "Get away, Satan! It is written:

*The Lord, your God, shall you worship
and him alone shall you serve."*

Then the devil left him and, behold, angels came and ministered to him.



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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?

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?

Take care not to perform righteous deeds in order that people may see them. What motivates me to perform righteous deeds? How can I purify my motivation?

When you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. Where can I pray without distraction? What time in my day is dedicated to prayer?

And your Father who sees what is hidden will repay you. What parts of me does only God know? How do I experience God's loving kindness and favor?

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

Closing Prayer:

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness;
in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense.

Thoroughly wash me from my guilt
and of my sin cleanse me.

For I acknowledge my offense,
and my sin is before me always:
"Against you only have I sinned,
and done what is evil in your sight."

A clean heart create for me, O God,
and a steadfast spirit renew within me.
Cast me not out from your presence,
and your Holy Spirit take not from me.

Give me back the joy of your salvation,
and a willing spirit sustain in me.
O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

From Psalm 51

Living the Word This Week

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

Decide how you will observe Lent with practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

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