



Lectio Divina

Using a visual focus



'Be still and know that I am God'

Our senses are working constantly.

We need to learn how to become still in mind and body in order to enter into prayer.

That is often best done through focussing on **ONE** sense: sight, sound, smell, touch, taste

You might wish to choose the style of prayer: visual, interactive, silent, using imagination, etc. according to the nature of the scripture passage.

'Beauty can draw us into prayer'

Using a visual focus you might choose to use a 'general' focal point e.g. a candle or an icon. You may wish to use coloured material or items from nature as a background

You might choose to use a focal point that reflects a **key image** or **word** or **phrase** in the scripture passage that you intend to use

e.g. **light, pottery, seeds, stones, Jesus walking, water, flame, salt, etc.**

The process

Set up your focal point – preferably **ONE** (but you might set up several and allow people to sit before the one they are 'drawn to').

Make sure that **everyone can see it** with ease (consider height, seating, lighting).

Give time to allow people to rest before what is in front of them – to **'look deeply'**.

Allowing time has the effect of clearing the mind and calming breathing – helping us to **become attentive**.

If there is a **recurring theme / image** in the reading you may wish to give each person a small visual object to hold.

Consider using some **gentle background music or a bell to begin ...**

Now you are **ready to listen** to the Word

Lectio Divina:

- **1/ *Lectio* or reading.** This is not speed-reading, but very slow, careful reading, letting the words sink in.
- **2/ *Meditatio* or thinking,** thinking about what one has read. This includes asking questions, being intellectually curious about a particular word or phrase, what is behind the words and so forth.
- **3/ *Oratio* or praying.** This is simply opening one's heart and pouring it out to our Father, saying what comes to mind and to our lips. It can take different forms: praise and thanksgiving for benefits and blessings, sorrow and contrition for failure and sin, petition and intercession for the needs of others.
- **4/ *Contemplatio* or silence.** After the first three steps, remain silent for some time. Just be in God's holy presence, listening for the 'music' that is silent.