



Praying the Scriptures in the Benedictine Tradition

When praying with Scripture you will first want to get yourself quiet so you can be present to and aware of God's presence. Choose a passage and take the time to read it slowly. Sit with the text for awhile. Don't analyze it. Imagine God speaking to you through the passage. Read it as if God is speaking to you personally.

The Benedictine tradition practices a way of praying called Lectio Divina or Sacred Reading. This method leads one into a deeper encounter with the Word of God through participating in four steps:

- Lectio** Read the text with faith and openness.
- Meditatio** Meditate on what you read by pausing where something strikes you. Repeat a word or phrase that is meaningful for you. Ponder what you have read.
- Oratio** Pray in your own words. The text may stimulate some matters for prayer.
- Contemplatio** Be present to God in a loving, attentive way. No words are necessary. Take "a long loving look at the Real".

There is no set amount of time to be spent in each of the four phases. Contemplation is a gift. Most days we might find ourselves doing lectio, meditatio, and oratio and then heading out for the day. Welcome the gift that comes. We cannot force contemplation or earn it by working for it.

Here are some Scripture passages that you might select for starters:

Psalm 139	Romans 8	Mark 4: 35-39	Proverbs 3: 3-61	Luke 5
Kings 19	Psalm 23	Jeremiah 1: 4-10	Ephesians 1: 3-12	Isaiah 55:1-11

For a more extended explanation of Lectio Divina you may wish to read:

[Accepting the Embrace of God: The Ancient Art of Lectio Divina](#)