

## ***Lectio Divina: Divine Reading for Difficult Times***

### **Reading 22**

As we navigate difficult and challenging times, and we are unable to attend Church services, we offer some divine reading passages and guidance for following an ancient approach to contemplating passages from Scripture. Below, we will offer a text for you to follow this week.

We follow guidance from a wonderful little book entitled *Too Deep for Words: Rediscovering Lectio Divina*, by Thelma Hall.

This exercise can be carried out alone, or with others.

There are four steps to the *Lectio Divina* exercise:

1: *Lectio* – Reading and listening to the Word of God.

2: *Meditatio* – Reflecting on the word.

3: *Oratio* – The Word touches the heart.

4: *Contemplatio* – Entering the Silence “Too Deep for Words.”

Thelma Hall writes, “I prepare for this sacred reading by taking time to quiet my body and mind.” Take time to find a comfortable and favoured place to sit. Perhaps go through a few minutes of being conscious of your breathing.

Next, read the scripture passage with your full attention. This is step 1: *Lectio* – Reading and listening to the Word of God. Just read and re-read enough to take it all in.

Now, it’s time for *Meditatio* – Reflecting on the word. Perhaps think of fully seeing and understanding the passage for the very first time; even if you have read the passage before. You may find that a specific word or phrase seems to stand out from the rest of the passage. Take time to wonder why.

Thirdly, turn to *Oratio* – The Word touches the heart. Let the words tell you why you must listen to these words at this specific time. This is a ‘settling down’ moment where you can take as much time as you need to fully *be* with the words. You may wish to ask yourself, “Why is God focussing me on these specific words?”

Finally, turn to *Contemplatio* – Entering the Silence “Too Deep for Words.” Think of this as new beginning rather than the end of the process. Take time to imagine hearing these words for the very first time in terms of the depth of their guidance to you. God is taking over. Sit still. Do nothing for a little while.

With all this in mind, here are a couple of passages for you to take on in your *Lectio Divina* exercise this week:

For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. <sup>7</sup> For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. <sup>8</sup> So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, <sup>9</sup> who has saved us and called us to a holy life--not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, <sup>10</sup> but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. <sup>11</sup> And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. <sup>12</sup> That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day. <sup>13</sup> What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. <sup>14</sup> Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you--guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.  
(2Ti 1:6 NIV)

"I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. <sup>13</sup> But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. <sup>14</sup> He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. <sup>15</sup> All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you. (Joh 16:12 NIV)

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