

How to Pray the Scriptures (Lectio Divina)

By Carol D'Annunzio (Simple Catholic Living)

Praying the scriptures is an integral part of a Christian's life. How can someone get to know Jesus and the heart of God without reading His Word? And, although it seems like a "well-kept secret" for us Catholics, praying the Scriptures (Lectio Divina) is a long-time tradition within the Catholic Church. In fact, reading/praying the bible wasn't just for priests or religious, but for the laity as well.

There are many books on Lectio Divina, but the simplest instructions I found is on the [Plain Catholic](#) site (used with permission – italics are my insertions):

How to do Lectio Divina

1. "Take up the Bible in your quiet prayer place. Say a simple prayer such as the opening lines to the Liturgy of the Hours: "God come to my assistance, Lord make haste to help me. Glory be..." or "Lord open my ears and steady my heart to hear Your Word," (*I like to pray the 'Come Holy Spirit' prayer*).
2. Open the Bible to the Mass Gospel [readings for the day](#) (*or other scripture verses that speak to your heart*). Slowly and prayerfully read the passages. Imagine yourself listening to Christ Himself, just as Mary did at His feet.
3. Sit with the Scripture you have just read, listening with the ear of your heart (As St. Benedict called it in the Prologue of the Rule). Do not rush it. Simply move through it gently.
4. At the end of the prayer time, thank Jesus and offer praises to the Holy Trinity; offer up your day to Him. (*I pray an Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be...*)

Notes:

The average time for Lectio Divina is 20 minutes (you don't have to use a timer unless you want/need to). Some days it will take 10 minutes. Other days it will take longer. Give what you can to the Lord and be at peace about it.

When you first begin Lectio Divina, stick with the gospels. They are easier to start with because it will feel more natural to "sit with Jesus' words and listen to them". Eventually, you will find the Psalms, Proverbs, and all of the New Testament as fertile ground for Lectio Divina.

If you are having difficulty during your prayer time, try and remember that there is no such thing as “wasted prayer time.” If you get distracted, simply offer Jesus that distraction. Do not force yourself into trying to conform what you think they prayer time should look like. Most importantly, do NOT let yourself give into discouragement: instead, do the best you can and give the rest to God.

Listen to the Advice of St. Benedict:

‘LISTEN carefully, my child, to your master’s precepts, and incline the ear of your heart (Prov. 4:20). Receive willingly and carry out effectively your loving father’s advice, that by the labor of obedience you may return to Him from whom you had departed by the sloth of disobedience.

To you, therefore, my words are now addressed, whoever you may be, who are renouncing your own will to do battle under the Lord Christ, the true King, and are taking up the strong, bright weapons of obedience.

And first of all, whatever good work you begin to do, beg of Him with most earnest prayer to perfect it, that He who has now deigned to count us among His children may not at any time be grieved by our evil deeds. For we must always so serve Him with the good things He has given us, that He will never as an angry Father disinherit His children, nor ever as a dread Lord, provoked by our evil actions, deliver us to everlasting punishment as wicked servants who would not follow Him to glory’

Therefore, if you don’t already spend a part of your day with the Lord, reading the Bible and praying over God’s Word, I highly encourage you to do so. Even if you can only find 5 minutes to read the Bible, and pray the Scriptures, I promise you, the time will be well worth it.

About Carol



Like many of us, Carol is a jack of all trades: wife, homeschooling mother, homemaker, and most importantly, a child of God. She is featured on [Ezinearticles.com](http://ezinearticles.com), a contributor to [The Catholic Bloggers Network](http://TheCatholicBloggersNetwork.com), and blogs at [Simple Catholic Living](http://SimpleCatholicLiving.com) where you will find encouragement and resources for living out your womanly Christian vocation.

Let's Connect!

I'd love to hear from you. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at carol@simplecatholicliving.com.

Where to find me on social media:

Don't forget to friend / follow me on the following social media sites. I will do my best to follow you back as soon as possible!

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