

## Oremus Lecture Talk #3: Lectio Divina

January 19, 2025, Sts. Anne and Joachim Catholic Church

Jeremiah 29:11-14 (English Standard Version): For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you, declares the LORD, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, declares the LORD, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

### 1. Summary of previous lectures

- a. “As the body cannot live without nourishment, so our soul cannot stay spiritually alive without prayer.” -St. Augustine
- b. Mission: Fall in love with God
- c. God’s search for man
- d. Goal is fifteen minutes a day with prayer on the Scripture passages from the workbook
- e. Practical considerations
  - i. Find the proper time to pray
  - ii. Have a plan to pray with before you begin
  - iii. Pray with the desires of our heart

### 2. Week 3: Lectio Divina

- a. Specific instructions on how to receive and pray with the Word of God
- b. “I would like in particular to recall and recommend the ancient tradition of Lectio Divina...” -Pope Benedict XVI
- c. The four steps of Lectio Divina
  - i. Lectio (reading), Meditatio (meditating on the Word), Oratio (conversation), Contemplatio (resting)
  - ii. Lectio (reading)
    1. The goal is to become familiar with what the text is saying, allowing the heart to read it a few times, becoming familiar with the text.
    2. Read three times (perhaps vocally), slowly, especially attentive to a word or words that touch your heart.
  - iii. Meditatio (meditating on the Word)
    1. What is the Word saying *to me* in my life?
    2. What are the implications of the text *to me* in my life?
  - iv. Oratio (conversation)
    1. Jesus is active and alive in our lives, what is he doing right now?
    2. Open and sincere conversation with God
    3. “Contemplative prayer in my opinion is nothing else than a close sharing between friends.” -St. Teresa of Avila
    4. Examples of conversation with God
      - a. “God, I’m disappointed with that response in prayer. I need help, I’m begging you to show me you are working in my life.”
      - b. “God, thank you for allowing me to spend this day with my children.”
      - c. “God, I don’t understand why you’d forgive me.”
      - d. Isaiah 55:10-11
      - e. God does not always sound like a booming voice from Heaven.
        - i. God will make a way when I don’t see a way.
        - ii. God will come through on His Word.

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- iii. Gratitude for being heard, living in hope that something is coming, and trusting that I can commit one more day.
- f. Conversation can come in many forms with many people
  - i. St. Ignatius of Loyola's example in the Spiritual Exercises
  - ii. Speak to the Father as Father, the Son as a brother, the Holy Spirit as an advocate
  - iii. Speak to the Blessed Virgin Mary
  - iv. Speak to St. Joseph, a patron saint, saints in the story, or another beloved saint
- v. Contemplatio (resting)
  1. An intense form of prayer that strengthens the inner being by being rooted and grounded in love.
  2. God longs for us, He knows everything, He knows our hearts.
    - a. The places in our heart that are closed off to the Father is exactly where He wants to go.
    - b. The Father cares about the process in addition to the outcome.
    - c. The Father wants to bless us and be in a relationship with us.
  3. Connection to practical things
    - a. Lives are busy or complicated or difficult. Dreams or hopes can change, we find crooked lines in our life.
    - b. Nothing is off limits to God, but he doesn't force His way in.
    - c. Broken, wounded parts of our heart is exactly where He wants to work and heal
- d. Jesus calms a storm in Matthew as an example to practice
  - i. (Matthew 8:23-27) And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. And they went and woke him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing." And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?" Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. And the men marveled, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?"

3. Homework

- a. Pray with the following passages, one a day
  - i. Day 1: Luke 12:22-32
  - ii. Day 2: Psalm 27
  - iii. Day 3: Psalm 23
  - iv. Day 4: John 4:7-19
  - v. Day 5: Wisdom 11:21-26
  - vi. Day 6: Deuteronomy 7:6-8
  - vii. Day 7: Revisit a passage that spoke well to you this week.
- b. With the prayer, answer the questions:
  - i. The "strongest" thought or feeling during my prayer was...
  - ii. My heart "rested" when...
  - iii. I sensed the Lord was telling me...
  - iv. I ended the prayer wanting...