

## *Lectio Divina*

### **Part 6 – *Lectio* as One Way to Pray**

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It is worth noting here that, while *Lectio* is a way of praying, it is only ONE way of praying. There is no 'right' way to pray, no 'better' way to pray. There is only the way that works for you. While my aim is to encourage you to see *Lectio* as a good and excellent way of praying and to try it, it is not my intention to say that this is The Way you must pray. Further, there is no one way to pray *Lectio*, for there are probably as many variations on how to do it as there are practitioners of it. What I will put forward are only suggestions. Each person must develop his or her own way of doing *Lectio*. It is, after all, a conversation, and just as there is no one way to converse, we each of us will speak to God in Christ in our own way, which is personal to us.

It is also good to speak here of changing how we pray. In the course of our lives we will change how we pray. How we pray as a child is not how we pray as an adult; how we pray as a young adult will not be how we pray when we are old. Many do little work on their spirituality and their prayer-life once they leave school and childhood, and probably they will not look to pray — until struck by some crisis. Then it is too late to learn how to pray. All they will have in their time of need are the words of a child, and these they will find childish and unsatisfactory, and they will be left feeling abandoned by God (The reality is, though, it is they who had abandoned God ... long before this time of need).

We do need to develop our prayer as we grow. We may find, as we go along, that we do pray well, and this may continue for some time. But there does come times when our prayer seems no longer to work. If this is more than just a 'dry period', which inevitably and periodically punctuates everyone's prayer life, if we are truly in need of a new way

of praying, we must not just simply jettison all that we have done previously. How we used to pray has sustained and nourished us spiritually up until now; it will continue to do for a little while longer as we explore new ways to pray. In the transition we should keep doing what we have always done, only abandoning our previous practice when it begins to impede us as we move into the new way, which we have found to be attractive and which seems to be working for us.

Change is inevitable. It may be destabilising and uncomfortable, but it is not to be feared. It does not mean that something has gone wrong. When we have to change, all it means is that what sustained us up until now is no longer adequate for the journey that lies ahead. There is no fixed way to pray; we can give ourselves permission to change. *Lectio* is a good adult way of praying, for it implies a whole process, a way of spirituality. It is a simple, connatural way of spiritual life and growth. It is a guide to living. It will help fan the sparks of our fervour, and draw us out of ourselves to live more unselfishly. *Lectio* will help us to live, which is what we all seek to do and have to do.