

# Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church Newsletter

## August 2, 2020

My Dear Parishioners,

This weekend we are celebrating First Holy Communion with many of our young children and their families. These celebrations always bring back fond memories of my own First Holy Communion and the First Holy Communion of my older brother and younger sister. They took place at St. Philip Neri Parish in Pennsburg, where we grew up.

Of course, on the day of our First Holy Communion we always acted like little angels (at least for a short time). We got dressed up. We had the nice dinner with family and friends afterward. We received beautiful cards and nice gifts such as Rosaries and Miraculous Medals. Most importantly though, I remember the excitement of receiving Jesus in the Holy Eucharist for the first time. Did I fully understand what was going on as a little child? Of course not. But that didn't bother me, for all I knew was that the Host was special, and it was special because Jesus was there for me.

We wish all of our First Holy Communicants and their families a very happy weekend, and we also thank our Director of Religious Education, Mrs. Joanne Roberts, and all of those who helped to prepare our children for this most special moment. Lastly, we pray that our children and their families remain faithful to their participation in the Holy Eucharist and that they receive all of the promises that come with faithfully receiving Jesus in Holy Communion.

On a different topic, some of our parishioners are putting together a "Virtual" Lectio Divina. They will be starting on Thursday, August 6<sup>th</sup>. You can use your phone, laptop or desktop computer to join. Email Lisa at [rodgersclan@comcast.net](mailto:rodgersclan@comcast.net) for more details. More information will be available in the coming weeks. They are approaching the Scriptures through an ancient technique of praying the Scriptures called "Lectio Divina." You have heard me preach on this and write on this before, but it is such a powerful way of praying the scripture that it is worth repeating. To help you understand Lectio Divina better, I have included a guide by Fr. Luke Dysinger, O.S.B. Fr. Dysinger is a Benedictine priest from St. John's Abbey in Collegeville, MN, and Benedictines, along with Jesuits, are great promoters of Lectio Divina.



Here's a little exercise using Lectio Divina. Pick a Scripture passage with which you can easily relate. I would suggest for starters the Wedding Feast at Cana (John 2:1-12). Slowly read and then meditate on the passage, but as you meditate actually imagine yourself in the passage. Yes, use your imagination, and not only use it, but let it run wild.

Imagine yourself as actually there and then let your imagination answer some of these questions: What was the house like? What was the courtyard like? What flowers or trees are in the garden? What was the weather that day? What did the sky look like? Was there a breeze? Was it humid or comfortable? What time of day is it? What were people wearing? What colors? What type of food was being served? Was the food to your liking? Was the celebration loud? What were people talking about? Is anyone speaking to you? Are you part of the conversation? Are you now part of the celebration? Did you know the bride and groom beforehand? Are you just meeting them now? What are their names?

Did you get to taste the wine that was water? What color was it? Was it sweet? Was it dry? What was it served in? A beautiful glass? A metal goblet? A simple ceramic cup?

Then you can continue onward and let your imagination answer these questions: What did the Blessed Mother look like? What was she wearing? Did you get close to her? What was her voice like? Was she smiling, laughing, have a good time? Did she speak with you personally? If she did, what thoughts or feelings were you experiencing at that moment?

Did you get close to her Son, Jesus, or His Disciples? What did they look like? What were they wearing? What was their demeanor? Did you get close enough to hear their conversation? Did you have the opportunity to speak with any of them? What did you talk about? Did the conversation change you in some way.

I hope you find this little exercise in Lectio Divina rewarding, and if the Spirit moves you, I encourage you to join the "Virtual" Lectio Divina.

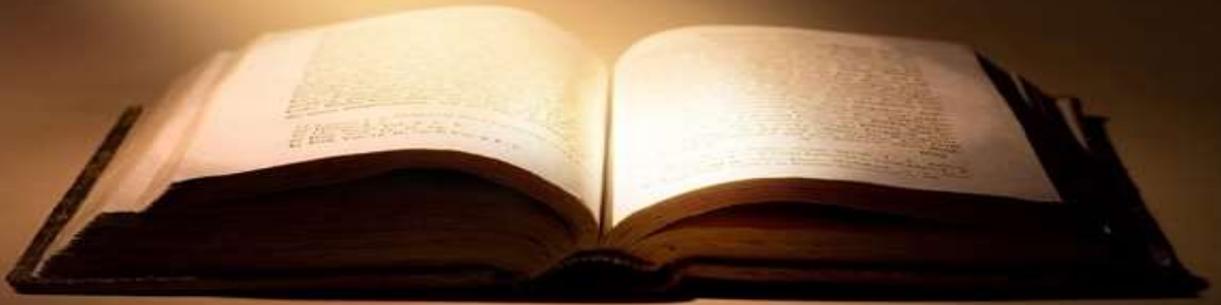
Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us!  
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, pray for us!

Fr. Michael J Pawelko



# The Process of Lectio Divina

By Fr. Luke Dysinger, OSB



A VERY ANCIENT art, practiced at one time by all Christians, is the technique known as lectio divina - a slow, contemplative praying of the Scriptures which enables the Bible, the Word of God, to become a means of union with God. This ancient practice has been kept alive in the Christian monastic tradition, and is one of the precious treasures of Benedictine monastics and oblates. Together with the Liturgy and daily manual labor, time set aside in a special way for lectio divina enables us to discover in our daily life an underlying spiritual rhythm. Within this rhythm we discover an increasing ability to offer more of ourselves and our relationships to the Father, and to accept the embrace that God is continuously extending to us in the person of his Son Jesus Christ.

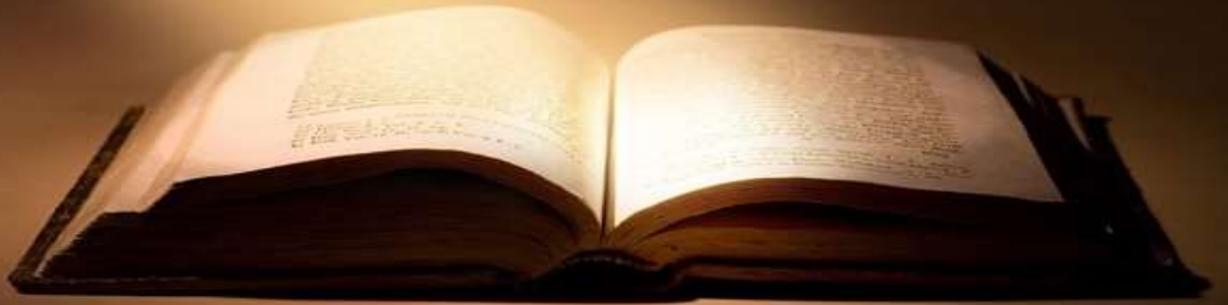
## LECTIO - READING/LISTENING

THE ART of lectio divina begins with cultivating the ability to listen deeply, to hear “with the ear of our hearts” as St. Benedict encourages us in the Prologue to the Rule. When we read the Scriptures we should try to imitate the prophet Elijah. We should allow ourselves to become women and men who are able to listen for the still, small voice of God (I Kings 19:12); the “faint murmuring sound” which is God's word for us, God's voice touching our hearts. This gentle listening is an “atunement” to the presence of God in that special part of God's creation which is the Scriptures.

THE CRY of the prophets to ancient Israel was the joy-filled command to “Listen!” “Sh'ma Israel: Hear, O Israel!” In lectio divina we, too, heed that command and turn to the Scriptures, knowing that we must “hear” - listen - to the voice of God, which often speaks very softly. In order to hear someone speaking softly we must learn to be silent. We must learn to love silence. If we are constantly speaking or if we are surrounded with noise, we cannot hear gentle sounds. The practice of lectio divina, therefore, requires that we first quiet down in order to hear God's word to us. This is the first step of lectio divina, appropriately called lectio - reading.

# The Process of Lectio Divina

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THE READING or listening which is the first step in lectio divina is very different from the speed reading which modern Christians apply to newspapers, books and even to the Bible. Lectio is reverential listening; listening both in a spirit of silence and of awe. We are listening for the still, small voice of God that will speak to us personally - not loudly, but intimately. In lectio we read slowly, attentively, gently listening to hear a word or phrase that is God's word for us this day.

## MEDITATIO - MEDITATION

ONCE WE have found a word or a passage in the Scriptures that speaks to us in a personal way, we must take it in and “ruminate” on it. The image of the ruminant animal quietly chewing its cud was used in antiquity as a symbol of the Christian pondering the Word of God. Christians have always seen a scriptural invitation to lectio divina in the example of the Virgin Mary “pondering in her heart” what she saw and heard of Christ (Luke 2:19). For us today these images are a reminder that we must take in the word - that is, memorize it - and while gently repeating it to ourselves, allow it to interact with our thoughts, our hopes, our memories, our desires. This is the second step or stage in lectio divina - meditatio. Through meditatio we allow God's word to become His word for us, a word that touches us and affects us at our deepest levels.

## ORATIO - PRAYER

THE THIRD step in lectio divina is oratio - prayer: prayer understood both as dialogue with God, that is, as loving conversation with the One who has invited us into His embrace; and as consecration, prayer as the priestly offering to God of parts of ourselves that we have not previously believed God wants. In this consecration-prayer we allow the word that we have taken in and on which we are pondering to touch and change our deepest selves. Just as a priest consecrates the elements of bread and wine at the Eucharist, God invites us in lectio divina to hold up our most difficult and pain-filled experiences to Him, and to gently recite over them the healing word or phrase He has given us in our lectio and meditatio. In this oratio, this consecration-prayer, we allow our real selves to be touched and changed by the word of God.

## CONTEMPLATIO - CONTEMPLATION

FINALLY, WE simply rest in the presence of the One who has used His word as a means of inviting us to accept His transforming embrace. No one who has ever been in love needs to be reminded that there are moments in loving relationships when words are unnecessary. It is the same in our relationship with God. Wordless, quiet rest in the presence of the One Who loves us has a name in the Christian tradition - contemplatio, contemplation. Once again we practice silence, letting go of our own words; this time simply enjoying the experience of being in the presence of God.



# Sunday Mass Readings

## **Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary**

### **Reading 1: [IS 55: 1-3](#)**

Thus says the LORD:

All you who are thirsty,  
come to the water!

You who have no money,  
come, receive grain and eat;

Come, without paying and without cost,  
drink wine and milk!

Why spend your money for what is  
not bread;

your wages for what fails to satisfy?

Heed me, and you shall eat well,  
you shall delight in rich fare.

Come to me heedfully,  
listen, that you may have life.

I will renew with you  
the everlasting covenant,  
the benefits assured to David.

### **Responsorial Psalm: [PS 145:8-9, 15-16, 17-18](#)**

R. (cf. 16) The hand of the Lord feeds us; he answers all our

► The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness. The LORD is good to all and compassionate toward all his works. **R.**

► The eyes of all look hopefully to you, and you give them their food in due season; you open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. **R.**

► The LORD is just in all his ways and holy in all his works. The LORD is near to all who call upon him, to all who call upon him in truth. **R.**

### **Reading 2: [ROM 8:35, 37-39](#)**

Brothers and sisters: What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### **Alleluia**

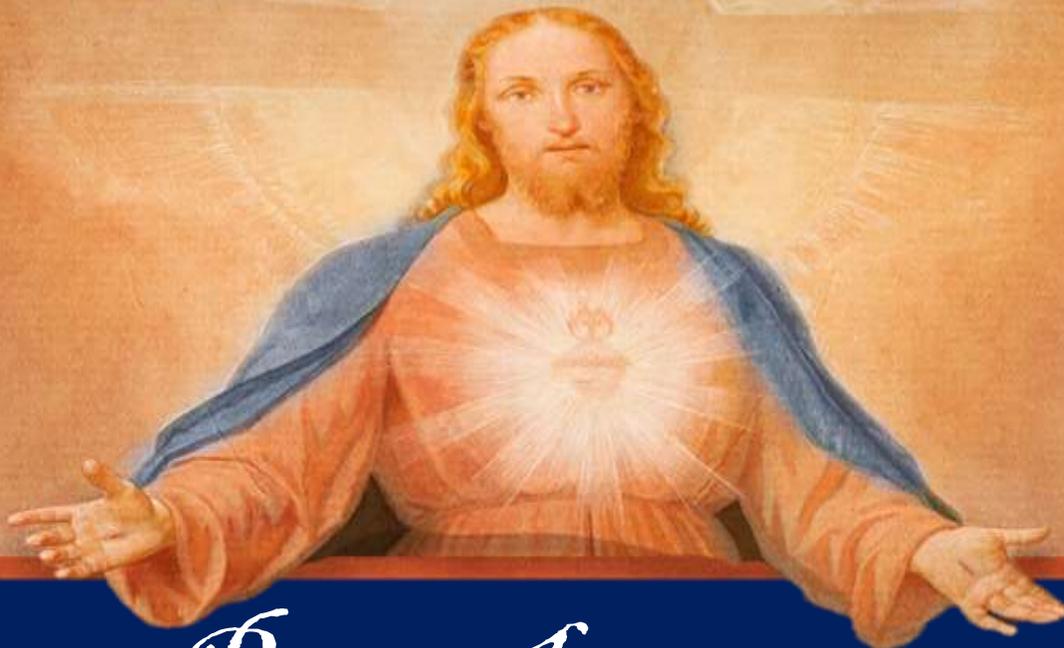
R. **Alleluia, alleluia.**

The seed is the word of God, Christ is the sower. All who come to him will have life forever.

R. **Alleluia, alleluia.**

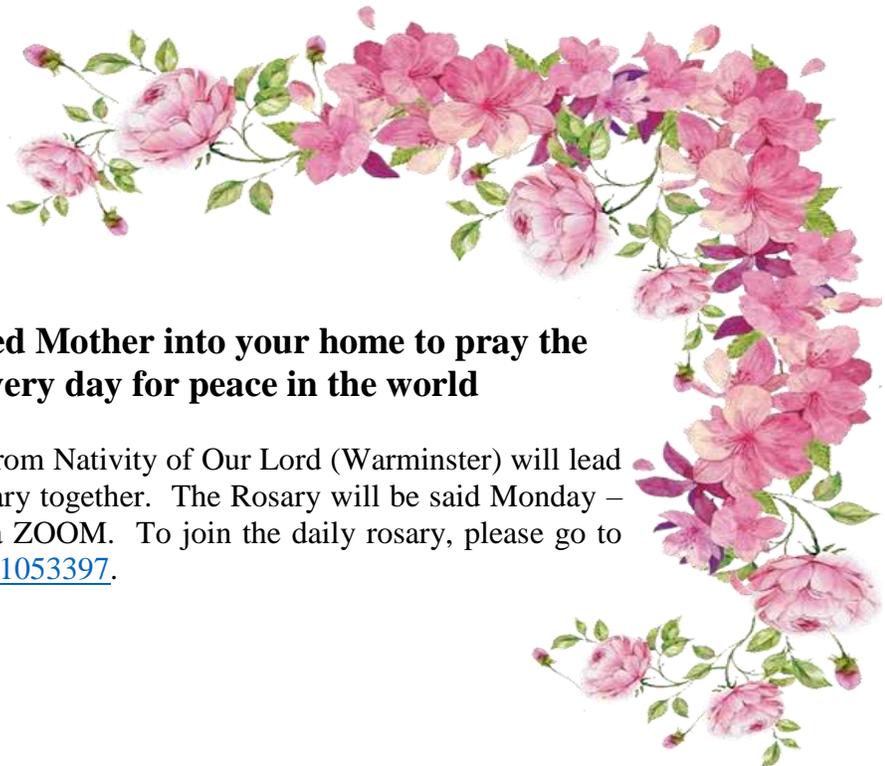
### **Gospel: [MT 14:13-21](#)**

When Jesus heard of the death of John the Baptist, he withdrew in a boat to a deserted place by himself. The crowds heard of this and followed him on foot from their towns. When he disembarked and saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, and he cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples approached him and said, “This is a deserted place and it is already late; dismiss the crowds so that they can go to the villages and buy food for themselves.” Jesus said to them, “There is no need for them to go away; give them some food yourselves.” But they said to him, “Five loaves and two fish are all we have here.” Then he said, “Bring them here to me,” and he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing, broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds. They all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up the fragments left over—twelve wicker baskets full. Those who ate were about five thousand men, not counting women and children.



# Prayer Intentions

We will have a basket for you to place your Prayer Intentions in. For all of your concerns for your loved ones, sick relatives and friends, those searching for employment, school concerns, our country, etc. Our concerns are endless. Fill out a Prayer Request and place in the basket or mail to the Rectory and we will place them in the basket for you.



**Invite the Blessed Mother into your home to pray the rosary every day for peace in the world**

The Legion of Mary from Nativity of Our Lord (Warminster) will lead us in praying the Rosary together. The Rosary will be said Monday – Friday at 4:00 PM via ZOOM. To join the daily rosary, please go to <https://zoom.us/j/93381053397>.

