**LECTIO DIVINA PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE**

Lectio Divina, literally meaning “divine reading”, is an ancient practice of praying the scriptures. During Lectio Divina, we listen to the text of the bible with “the ear of the heart”, as if we are in a conversation with God, and God is suggesting the topics for discussion. It is about listening for the inspiration and movement of God in the words and images that seem to leap out and speak to us in the here and now of our lives. It is a means of going to the level of the heart and finding God there.

**Choose a short passage of scripture** that you wish to pray. Be open to the lead of the Spirit in choosing the text.

**Place yourself in a comfortable position** and allow yourself to become still and silent. To begin, open with a short prayer, asking God to guide your prayer time.

**STEP ONE: READ** Slowly and thoughtfully, read the scripture passage the first time. Listen with the “ear of the heart”. What word or phrase captures your attention and grabs your heart? Linger with it whenever this happens. Let it settle deeply in your heart. Simply return to the repetition of the phrase, sentence or one word, savouring it in your heart.

**STEP TWO: REFLECT** Slowly and prayerfully, read the passage again. Why might these words have jumped out at you? What is God saying to you in this passage? Offering you? Asking you? What feelings are arising in you?

**STEP THREE: RESPOND** Slowly and prayerfully read the passage again. Respond to God in your heart. Speak to God of your feelings and insights. Offer them to God. Ask for help, guidance, insight and direction and speak naturally to God.

**STEP FOUR: REST** Sit quietly in God’s presence, asking, “What are you saying to me” Rest in God’s love, and listen.

**As you end of your prayer period**, you might close with an Our Father or another short prayer. It might be helpful to jot down in a journal what arose during this time. What did you speak to God and what did God offer you?