

## Week 1: Lectio Divina (Divine Reading)

The four Lectio Divina “moments” flow in and out of each other according to the inspiration of the Spirit. We will read the passage three times in three different voices. Following each reading will be a minute or so of silence to reflect on the questions below. You may want to jot down a brief note in your journal about what God is saying to you.

- 1<sup>st</sup> reading - What word or phrase stirs my heart?
- 2<sup>nd</sup> reading - What is the word or phrase saying to me?
- 3<sup>rd</sup> reading - How is God inviting me to pray, to grow and change?

READING – Romans 12:1-2 (CEB)

<sup>1</sup> So, brothers and sisters, because of God’s mercies, I encourage you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice that is holy and pleasing to God. This is your appropriate priestly service. <sup>2</sup> Don’t be conformed to the patterns of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your minds so that you can figure out what God’s will is—what is good and pleasing and mature.

REST in God beyond thoughts. Take a moment to be still and breathe deeply in God’s presence with you.

RESOLVE: As you emerge from this place of personal encounter with God to life in the company of others, resolve to carry this word with you and to live it out in the context of daily life and activity.

## *Week 1: What is Spiritual Formation - Reflections*

1. What comes to mind when you think of Christian Discipleship?
2. In your own life, have you experienced discipleship as relatively static, or more as a “journey that unfolds through an increasingly faithful response to God”?
3. Which part of Mulholland’s fourfold definition of Spiritual formation most resonates with you and why?
  - a. A process
  - b. Of being formed
  - c. In the image of Christ
  - d. For the sake of others
4. What else would you add to this definition? What does Spiritual Formation mean to you?
5. What else stood out to you from the prologue and introduction to part 1?

## *Next Steps*

What is one specific way I will respond to God’s invitation for me this week?

## *For Next Week*

1. Read Chapter 1: The Process
2. Begin writing or drawing your own spiritual history. See pp. 29-30.
3. Consider the “Pray All Ways” handout on the following pages. Try experimenting with at least one new form of prayer this week. You may want to journal about your experience.

## Pray All Ways<sup>1</sup>

Although you may occasionally engage in almost all these practices, place a check beside those items which represent your regular pattern. Also highlight or circle those which you may like to try and begin experimenting with them in your regular prayer life.

- read prayers from a book, or from the Psalms, or recite prayers you have memorized
- write your prayers
- follow an outline or pattern in your prayer time
- talk to God, spontaneously, in your own words
- express your feelings to God
- intercede by entering empathetically into the feelings of others and bearing these feelings to God in prayer
- intercede by talking to God about other's needs
- intercede silently by visualizing the other person in Christ's presence
- intercede for others while looking at their photographs
- intercede for others with the use of a "prayer list"
- spend time just "feeling" the presence of God
- spend time quietly thinking about God
- listen in silence for what God wants to say
- pray a phrase or verse from scripture in order to focus your attention and rest in God's presence
- imagine Christ present with you, or visualize yourself as present with Him in some gospel scene, and let that lead into conversational prayer with Christ
- read a passage of scripture and try to allow God to show you how it relates to or applies to your life
- read from a devotional source which raises your thoughts to God and helps you think about His attributes and qualities and stimulate your worship

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<sup>1</sup> from Dr. Reginald Johnson, *Asbury Theological Seminary*,  
Note: This is only a sampling of various forms of prayer. You may discover many more.

- pray over your day's schedule, offering persons & situations to God in anticipatory prayer, and to seek God's help in ordering your priorities
- read a selection from a devotional source which relates stories about how real people have experienced God in their circumstances, using it as a "faith lift"
- "daydream" or follow a stream of consciousness in God's presence allowing it to take you "wherever" as you open yourself to God--all the way from confession of sins, asking for help, or receiving creative ideas
- think about something in a focused way, in God's presence, perhaps with pen in hand
- use symbols in your place of prayer (for example, a lit candle, open Bible, picture, cross, or worship center of some sort)
- sing, play a musical instrument or listen to music during your time of prayer
- keep a spiritual journal or prayer diary
- set aside time during prayer in order to reflect deliberately over your day, in order to see how God has been (or may have wanted to be) at work
- set aside time for self-examination into your attitudes, actions or thoughts which are hindering your relationship with God
- "practice the presence of God" during the day by frequent interior conversations with God
- find that there are frequent moments through the day when your thoughts turn to God and you are conscious of God's presence in you
- organize your schedule so that there are fixed times throughout the day when you remind yourself to lift your heart to God in prayer
- "pray with your body" by using posture (kneeling, lying prostrate, etc.)
- use actions (dancing or movement), or gestures (palms opened, arms lifted, etc.), as a means of prayerful expression to God
- sometimes use voluntary denial of an otherwise normal function (eating, watching TV, sweets, etc.) for the sake of spiritual focus and prayer
- walk/jog/play in order to place yourself in the "path" of God who lifts your spirit through the beauty of creation
- listen to audio readings of scripture selections, as you drive, work, or rest
- read/sing from the hymnal or other worship songs in order to drink in the message which comes through the poetic imagery as a means of being with God