

Why Meditate?

Meditation engages thought, imagination, emotion, and desire. This mobilization of faculties is necessary in order to **deepen our convictions of faith, prompt the conversion of our heart, and strengthen our will to follow Christ.** Christian prayer tries above all to meditate on the mysteries of Christ, as in *lectio divina* or the rosary. This form of prayerful reflection is of great value, but Christian prayer should go further: to the **knowledge of the love of the Lord Jesus, to union with Him.** (CCC 2708)



Sources for Meditation

There are many wonderful sources of good content for meditation. Everything from Sacred Scripture to our favorite song can be an opportunity for God to speak to us. We can even use our own life experiences when we meditate. The Catechism lists several sources of worthy meditation and this is not an exhaustive list.

- ◇ Sacred Scripture, especially the Gospels
- ◇ Spiritual books
- ◇ Holy Icons or religious images
- ◇ Liturgical texts of the day or season
- ◇ Writings of the spiritual fathers
- ◇ Creation itself
- ◇ God's work in history

(Cf CCC 2705)

Scripture for Meditating on Your Vocation

Gen 2:15-25	Luke 1:26-38
Gen 12:1-4	Luke 4:1-13
Ex 3:1-6, 9-12	Luke 5:1-11
Deut 4:32-40	Luke 6:12-15
Ruth 4:9-17	Luke 9:57-62
1 Samuel 3:1-10	Luke 10:38-42
1 King 10:1-13	Luke 12:22-34
1 King 19:11-13	John 1:35-39
Tobit 8:4-8	John 2:1-11
Psalm 63	John 10:11-16
Psalm 139	John 12:24-26
Prov 3:5-7	John 17:6-23
Prov 31:10-31	John 21:15-17
Song 3:3-5	Acts 2: 42-27
Isaiah 6:6-8	Acts 6:1-7
Isaiah 51:1-16	Rom 8:26-31
Jeremiah 1:4-9	1 Cor 13:12-26
Jonah 2:2-10	2 Cor 12:5-10
Matt 1:18-25	Gal 5:13-17
Matt 9:35-38	Eph 4:1-7, 11-13
Matt 19:4-12	Phil 1:9-11
Mark 4:35-41	Col 1:24-29
Mark 8:34-38	1 Tim 4:12-16
Mark 10:17-27	Heb 5:1-10
Mark 10:46-52	Heb 13:1-9
Mark 12:28-34	1Peter 4:7-11
Mark 15:22-41	1Peter 5:1-4
Luke 1:5-20	1 John 4:8-21

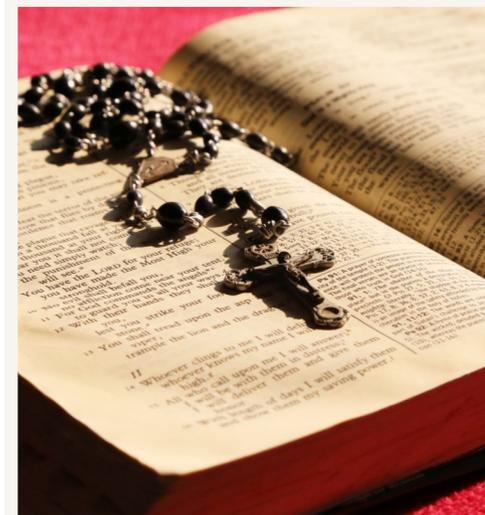
Office of Vocations
Diocese of Arlington
200 North Glebe Road, Suite 901
Arlington, VA 22203
(703) 841-2514
vocations@arlingtondiocese.org



DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON

Office of Vocations

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

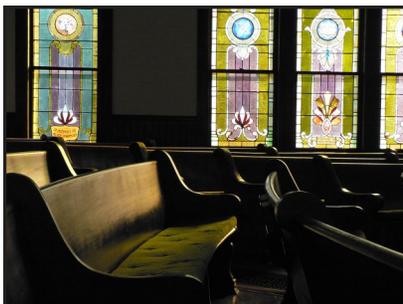


“How do we get to know someone? We meet them, talk, listen, and spend time together. Meditation is how we get to know God. It is a mental conversation between two friends coming closer and, as times goes on, becoming more and more intimate.”

Fr. Thomas Dubay, *Prayer Primer*

How to Meditate?

1. Choose a **quiet place** and **suitable time**.
2. Put yourself in **the presence of God**. Focus on what you are about to do and give Jesus permission to meet with you during this time.
3. **Talk to Jesus like you would talk to a friend**. Don't worry about saying the right words. Just be genuine, expressing what you really feel.
4. **Pick good content**. Read a passage of scripture, writing of a saint, or small portion of the day's liturgy (see back page for more ideas).
5. **Ponder and respond**. Prayerfully reflect on the passage, think about how it applies to your life. Talk this over with Jesus.
6. **Make a resolution**. Determine to do something very specific (starting right NOW) about what you have been pondering. With Jesus' grace and power, we must let our prayer change us.

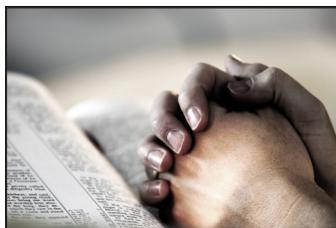


St. Jerome said, "Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ." Sacred Scripture is an excellent source of endless content for meditation. There are two popular methods for praying with scripture, *Lectio Divina* and **Ignatian Meditation**.

Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina, a Latin term meaning "Divine Reading," is a way of "reading" scripture that helps us to set aside our own thoughts and agenda, allowing the Lord to speak to us through his Divine Word.

- **Read** a short selection from the Bible. You may need to read it more than once. When a word or phrase strikes you, stop and dwell on that text, repeating it over and over.



- **Meditate**, which means to ruminate or chew the word, to extract the meaning of the text. Keep listening to the words being repeated, letting them suggest their own images and reflections. Through meditation you should seek wisdom, the ability to see from God's perspective.
- **Prayer**, or "Oration," is the response of your heart to the word of God. Prayer can be many things: a petition for you or others, an affective conversation or sentiments of love, a resolution to grow in virtue, sorrow for sin, an appreciation of an insight from God, or even just a silent resting with the Lord.
- **Contemplation** is where you stop working and just let God take over. Instead of you praying to God, allow the Spirit to pray in your soul. God quenches your soul's thirst. The love of God is no longer abstract, but becomes something concrete. You know you are being loved. Contemplation is a pure gift from God, not something we can control.

Ignatian Meditation

St. Ignatius of Loyola invites us to accompany Jesus through His life by imagining scenes from the Gospels. The goal of this exercise is to make the scripture passage a lived experience by using our imagination and senses.

- **Read the passage**, paying special attention to the characters and the concrete details: What does this place look, feel, smell, and sound like? Who is there? What action unfolds? What words are spoken? You may wish to reread the text several times to absorb all the details.
- **Place yourself in the scene**. Use your senses to make the story come alive; imagine that you are there. What do you see, hear, taste, smell and feel? Place yourself as one of the characters or an eyewitness in the scene. Allow the story to unfold in your imagination without changing any of the main details from the Bible passage.
- **Pay careful attention to all your reactions**, all that you are feeling and thinking, while imagining the scripture passage. Let the story come alive and become a lived experience that engages your memories, thoughts and emotions.
- **Respond** to this experience in prayerful conversation with Jesus. Talk with him about all that you have perceived. Ask Him what all this means to Him.

The Scriptures are the "living Word" of God. Those who pray with this method have very real encounters with Jesus, and find that in the experience, God touches them and enlightens them. They are comforted, healed, and challenged by the living Christ when they meet Him through the doorway of imagination.