

# Praying with Holy Scripture

## Lectio Divina Scripture Study



The cover on the Bible Lectio Divina member Lucy Frett (Left) is holding was hand carved by her late husband. Pete Coughlin (Top Center) and Jim Robinson (Bottom Center) are leaders of the two Lectio Divina small groups. Dan Prezell (Right) credits Lectio Divina with increasing his understanding of and respect for scripture.

Reading the Bible is a joyful, prayerful experience according to many of the members of St. Mary's Lectio Divina Scripture Study. Lectio Divina (literally "divine reading") offers a pathway for participants to draw closer to God by prayerfully reflecting on his words. Members of St. Mary's Lectio Divina read, pray, and discuss scripture together to learn about God's Holy Word and contemplate how to apply it to their lives.

Bonnie Bjerning, who initiated St. Mary's Lectio Divina Ministry more than 10 years ago and led one of the first small group sessions, commented, "I love being in Lectio Divina Bible Study. It opens my mind through the Holy Spirit and fills my heart with joy." She added, "Lectio Divina deepens my faith and equips me to go out and bring love, peace, and joy into the world."

Each small group study session typically lasts one hour, beginning and concluding with prayer. Scripture passages are read aloud, and participants listen for a general understanding of the text, to discern what words "jump out" at them, and to allow the Holy Spirit to speak to them. Members then share what moves them, how they sense God speaking to them, and how they may apply the scripture to their lives.

Dan Prezell, a member of one of the small groups, observed, "For many, many years, the Gospel and homily would fly over my head at Mass. That is, until Lectio Divina came into my life. Wow!

What a difference Lectio Divina made in deepening my respect for and understanding of the Gospel."

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-Bonnie Bjerning

Lucy Frett remarked, "I am delighted that we chose the upcoming Sunday Gospels to reflect upon because when I hear Father's homily on Sunday, I often recall what we discussed and am more open and prepared to receive Father's message. This allows the scriptures to come alive for me and my heart is expanded. Lectio Divina prepares me to bring the gospel message to others."

Two Lectio Divina small groups meet weekly at St. Mary of the Annunciation, one on Monday evening at 6:30 p.m. and one on Tuesday afternoon at 2 p.m., both currently conducted via Zoom. These small groups of five to six people are led by Pete Coughlin and Jim Robinson, respectively. The ministry invites new members to join them and discover the joy and benefits of reading and studying scripture together.

To join the Lectio Divina ministry or for more information, call or email the parish office. ☎ 847-223-0010 ✉ [parish@stmota.org](mailto:parish@stmota.org)