

Strathbrock Parish Church

Bible Reading list for 29 January to 19 March 2023

Lectio Divina (Latin for "Divine Reading") is a contemplative way of reading scripture that invites an individual or group to draw closer to God. Unlike traditional bible study, which is about knowing, knowing the text, its meaning and what "one is supposed to know," Lectio Divina is more about listening, engaging the heart and the imagination. It invites to ask questions such as, "What is the text saying to me?" or "What does the text say about who God is and how God is moving in my life and in the world?" Lectio Divina is unhurried. We read the passage slowly; chew on it, as they say, listen for the small details that we might otherwise overlook. We listen; pay attention. The ultimate goal of Lectio Divina is to open a space in our lives for reflection, spiritual conversation and to deepen our relationship with God.

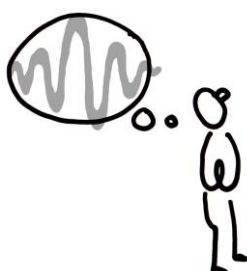
How are we doing it?

Step 1 – Read



Read the text a few times – take your time. If possible, use a few different translations. Learn to *listen* while you read. You don't simply read for information. You read and listen with your *heart* – because you want to hear and meet God. Identify a verse, a phrase, or a word that catches your eye, or captures your attention.

Step 2 – Meditate



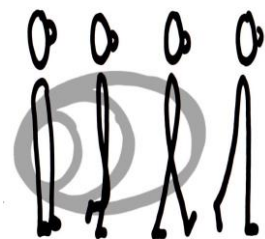
Think a bit further on the word or phrase that is speaking to you: what do you hear? What emotions are evoked in you? What is God saying to you? Meditation pulls our own life into the world of the text. The text begins to *read* our own lives. The Bible (God!) becomes the subject of the activity and our lives become the object.

Step 3 – Pray



When the text starts speaking to you, it is a spontaneous reaction to want to speak to God about it. Pray about what you heard God saying to you, what God is challenging you with, what God promises you, or what God asks of you in the text.

Step 4 – Receive and Live



Apply what you've read to your life. Believe that what God asks of you through the text, he will help you do through the Holy Spirit at work in your heart and mind. 'Receive' it in the faith, like that faith Mary had where in Luke 1:38 she said, 'May your word to me be fulfilled.' Praying here means 'receiving' and saying, 'thank you'.

Bible Texts for Epiphany and Lent

Epiphany Feast celebrates the arrival of Jesus and the visit of the Magi – which signifies the missional reach of Jesus' arrival. The Sundays following are celebrating the arrival of Jesus, his baptism and reading about his first miracles. Other readings include the beginning of Jesus' ministry on earth, and this period stretches to Ash Wednesday, and the beginning of Lent. The last Sunday in the time after Epiphany is known as 'Transfiguration Sunday'.

Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent, occurring six and a half weeks before Easter. It is a reminder of human mortality and the need for reconciliation with God and marks the beginning of the penitential Lenten season. On Ash Wednesday, churches hold special services, at which worshippers are marked with ash. Typically, the ash is made from burning special crosses made from palm wood, which were used in church services on the previous year's Palm Sunday. It is sometimes mixed with special oil and applied to people's foreheads or hands. This is a symbol of death and remembering that we need God's grace.

Lent is a period of 40 days during which Christians remember the events leading up to and including the death of Jesus Christ, whose life and teachings are the foundation of Christianity. It is a time of reflection and of asking for forgiveness, and when Christians prepare to celebrate Jesus's resurrection at the feast of Easter, which comes at the very end of Lent. Some people choose to fast from certain foods, or activities during Lent as a sign of sacrifice and to test their self-discipline. This is to represent Jesus Christ's sacrifice when he went into the desert to pray and fast for the 40 days before later dying on the cross.

WEEK	SEASON	TEXT	WORSHIP
23 Jan – 29 Jan	Epiphany 4	Matthew 5:1-12	29 January
30 Jan – 5 Feb	Epiphany 5	Matthew 5:13-20	5 February
6 Feb – 12 Feb	Epiphany 6	Matthew 5:21-37	12 February
13 Feb – 19 Feb	Epiphany 7	Matthew 17:1-9	19 February
*Transfiguration Sunday – 19 Feb – Exodus 24:12-18; Psalm 2 or Psalm 99; 2 Peter 1:16-21			
*Ash Wednesday – 22 Feb – Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58:1-12			
20 Feb – 26 Feb	Lent 1	Romans 5:12-19	26 February
27 Feb – 5 March	Lent 2	Romans 4:1-5, 13-17	5 March
6 – 12 March	Lent 3	Romans 5:1-11	12 March
13 – 19 March	Lent 4	Ephesians 5:8-14	19 March