

Visio Divina

Each of us are wired in different ways. Some of us respond better to the written word, some to the spoken word, some to music, some to art, some even to movement. Through this exploration of prayer, we can connect to God in each of these ways. Though we may have a preferred sense through which to pray, the richest prayer life will come through experiencing God through all your senses (by Kathryn Shirey).

Here's how to best use Visio Divina:

1) Prepare: Choose a piece of art or something to view in nature. Find a quiet place where you can be free of distractions. Close your eyes, breathe, clear your mind, asking God to enter into your time of prayer. Welcome Jesus into your midst, asking the Holy Spirit to speak to you through your meditation on the image you are exploring.

2) Mediatio (meditate): Open your eyes and scan the entire image you're exploring. Let your eyes be led. Focus on the part of the image that catches your eye and name it. Sit with the picture for a moment. Close your eyes, once again, imagining that piece of the image in your mind.

3) Oratio (pray): Open your eyes and look again at the piece of the image that caught your attention. Pray, asking God to bring forth a word, a thought, an image, or an emotion that might be associated with what you are seeing. Close and rest your eyes.

4) Contemplatio (contemplation): Open your eyes and gaze, one final time, at the whole image. Pause. Breathe. Go slow. What is God speaking to you today through this image? How will you respond to Him? Spend some time processing these things with Jesus. Pray a prayer of closure, asking the Holy Spirit to indwell and empower you as you go through your day. In closing, you might want to journal a few notes about your Visio Divina experience today.