

## Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina simply means holy/sacred reading. It offers an opportunity for people to listen and hear a passage from scripture in a more reflective, deep and meaningful way.

We have included Lectio Divina in the Parish GIFT programme based on the Sunday Gospel of the following week. Some of our children don't regularly go to Sunday Mass so at Parish GIFT they will at least hear and get a chance to reflect on the Sunday Gospel.

Some children find Mass difficult, long or boring because they don't understand fully what is happening at Mass. Hearing and reflecting on the Gospel in advance will give them a connection to the Mass. Our hope is that they will pay closer attention on Sunday, as they will have already heard the passage from scripture, had it explained in a child friendly manner and reflected on it.

We have chosen to use the term Lectio Divina as it is the language of the Church and although it might not seem child-friendly the pronunciation is not difficult and many children and volunteers are using the term without difficulty.

It is important to explain the term Lectio Divina and the process to children and volunteers in simple terms so that they are clear about what it is and how it works. The more you use the term, the more easily and quickly it will be accepted and used by them.

This is a very simple and gentle introduction to a different way to pray. It is obviously important to calm the children and volunteers down before beginning this session. If the Gospel passage is too long or too difficult replace it with one of the readings from Sunday's Mass.

Readings for daily and Sunday Mass used throughout Ireland can be found at [www.catholicireland.net](http://www.catholicireland.net) and the Readings & Gospel for the following Sunday can be found at [www.catholicireland.net/readings/?feature=sunday](http://www.catholicireland.net/readings/?feature=sunday)

## Setting up Lectio Divina

- Pick an area to run the Lectio Divina Session that is away from distractions.
- Set up a focal point such as a candle, crucifix or small display for all the group to see and focus upon.
- Have the group sitting in a position that they will be comfortable and not distracted.
- Lighting a candle can be a simple way of showing the young people prayer time has started.
- "We will now begin by blessing ourselves, In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen."

## Parish GIFT 1

- Now that you have moved from primary to post-primary school, we are going to introduce you to a new way of listening to and understanding passages from the bible. This is called Lectio Divina which simply means – sacred reading.
- Each week we are going to take a look at the Gospel of the following Sunday using Lectio Divina.
- This week's Gospel story is about . . .(give a very short introduction/explanation).
- So, as we begin can I ask you to close your eyes, I will have my eyes opened during this part of the session.
- Read the Gospel aloud slowly and clearly.
- After a short pause, introduce the second reading of the Gospel.
- As I slowly read the Gospel passage a second time can you listen carefully to the words and see if a word or phrase strikes you or sticks in your mind.
- Read the Gospel slowly and clearly.
- Ask if anyone would like to share their word or phrase – without explanation

## Parish GIFT 2 & 3 (possible additional steps depending on your group and their receptiveness)

- I am going to read the Gospel passage a third time
- I want you to hold on to the word/phrase that you have chosen as you listen.
- Read the Gospel again slowly and clearly.
- I want you to think about why that word/phrase stood out to you?
- What does this word/phrase mean to you in your life right now?
- Invite people to share anything they want to say about their word/phrase.