

Prayer Experience - Visio Divina

Introduction

Visio Divina is translated as “divine seeing”. It is related to the prayer form Lectio Divina (divine reading), but instead of Scripture, this form of prayer uses visual elements to help set your mind on prayer. It allows God to speak into your heart through the image.

The Practice

1. Find an Image for Prayer

You can use any type of image for Visio Divina. You might use images found in your church – a religious painting, a stained-glass window, or an icon.

2. Prepare Your Heart for Prayer

Before you begin, choose your image and have it visible – either be near it in person or have the image pulled up on your phone or computer.

You may want to begin your time in prayer with a scripture reading. If you’re using a religious image, use the scripture related to that image. You could use a Scripture from the day’s lectionary reading or just a favourite you want to pray.

Close your eyes, breathe, clear your mind, and ask God to enter this time of prayer with you. Ask God to speak to you through this image.

3. Allow the Image to Speak to Your Heart

Open your eyes and look at the image you’ve selected. Let your eyes pause and focus on the part of the image they’re first drawn to.

Gaze upon just that part of the image for a minute or two. Then close your eyes, still seeing that part of the image in your mind.

4. Reflect on the Entire Image

Open your eyes and now look upon the whole image. Gaze upon all the image, allowing it to draw forth a word, an emotion, or an image in your heart.

What do you hear God whispering into your heart? What thoughts or questions is this image raising? What emotions do you feel?

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5. Pray Through the Image

Open your eyes. While looking upon the image, respond to God. Pray through the words, images, emotions, questions, and thoughts that are now on your heart.

Continue to look upon the image as you pray. Then, close and rest your eyes briefly.

6. Rest and Reflect in God

As you conclude your time of prayer, open your eyes and gaze again upon the image. Rest in God's presence as you reflect upon this prayer experience.

Consider how you'll take this into your life. You may choose to journal about your experience.

