

Christine Valter's Paintner: Earth as the Original Monastery Lectio Divina—Terrestrial Lectio

Preparation—What is the Scripture Passage Saying to You

Take a few moments to breathe deeply.

Settle into your body, into your seats wherever you are seated right now for a meditation.

As you breathe deeply, see if you can drop your awareness out of the mind, out of the place of thinking planning, and analyzing and drop down into your heart center. You might want to place your hand on your heart to feel that connection. The heart is the place the mystics tell us where the Divine spark dwells within each of us, the infinite source of compassion. When we rest into it, it is a place where we simply can be, where we don't have to do anything, or perform.

Take a few nice deep breaths and rest into this cave of the heart. Imagine the Divine embrace holding you in this place. In his Rule Benedict says begin by "Listening with the ear of the heart." In this contemplative practice, we're not trying to listen with the mind or figure things out or get answers. We are trying to live into the questions that rise up for us, into an encounter and an experience.

1. Scripture passage. Read it twice. As you listen, notice if there is a word or phrase that shimmers for you, calls out or invites you to pay closer attention.

Read the scripture passage again.

Notice what word or phrase might be inviting you to pay closer attention and let it gently echo in your heart for a few moments.

Share briefly a word or phrase.

2. Read the scripture passage again.

Now let that word or phrase unfold in your imagination, giving it space so that you can pay attention to any images, feelings, or memories that might be rising up in response. Make some room in you to pay attention to what is being stirred in your heart.

Share briefly an image, or feeling, or memory of what is being stirred in your heart.

3. Read the scripture passage again.

Listen now for any sense of invitation that might be rising up for you, that calls you to an awareness or action. Notice what that might be.

Share briefly an invitation.

4. Rest into the Silence.

Take 3 deep breaths and gently release any words or images or thoughts, just rest into the silence and give yourself a gift of simply being here in the presence of the divine.

quiet

Take a moment for a few deep breaths and let your breath gently transition you back from this inner awareness into the room you are in. It might take a few minutes.

Write down in your journal a word, phrase, image, feeling and/or sense of invitation that came to you.