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OUR READING PROJECTS

On Advent and Lent and on Biblical books or parts of books can be found on our homepage: www.lectiodivina.de

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Lectio Divina website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'ONLINE BIBEL', 'BIBELWERK E. V.', 'SHOP', and 'WARENKORB'. Below this is a search bar with the text 'Suchen' and a magnifying glass icon. A secondary navigation bar contains links: 'Über Lectio Divina', 'Aktuelles Leseprojekt', 'Vorschau', 'Alle Ausgaben', 'Mitmachen', and 'Team'. The main content area features three project cards. The first card, titled 'Die Lesungen der Osternacht' with the subtitle 'Wasser - Licht - Leben', has a background image of waves. The second card, titled 'Das Buch Jona lesen' with the subtitle 'Was für ein Gott?', has a background image of a sunset over water and includes the text: 'Dieses Leseprojekt für die Fastenzeit führt in sieben Abenden durch das ganze Buch Jona.' The third card, titled 'Sonderheft zur Jubiläumstagung' with the subtitle 'Dem Wort auf der Spur', has a background image of a building. At the bottom of the page, the text 'Die Bibel lesen mit Herz und Verstand' is displayed.

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Das Lectio-Divina-Projekt des Bibelwerks

LECTIO DIVINA

READING THE BIBLE WITH HEART AND MIND

English Version

What does the term “Lectio Divina” mean?

Lectio Divina is an ancient and at the same time rediscovered form of reading the Bible. In the old church and in medieval monasticism much attention was paid to it. The steps (reading – thinking – praying – being there in silence before God – living differently) are repeated several times and practiced again and again. The aim of this exercise is to discover and read the Bible in such a way that it becomes the living source of the encounter with God. The readers come into contact with the text of the Holy Scriptures and are on their way with the Word. The Bible thus becomes a friend with whom one has conversations regularly, whom you ask for advice, who sometimes amazes you.

The following basic ideas play an important role in our Lectio Divina reading project:

1. Reading and perceiving the text

If you want to enter into a conversation with the Biblical text, it is necessary to read it thoroughly, to study its characteristics, and not to rashly read over it or to read something into it. Therefore we take a lot of time for reading. The text is read once or twice. Sufficient silence follows in each case. During the subsequent echo reading, the participants repeat words, phrases or sentences that they have noticed.

2. Reading keys

At the heart of this method are the two reading keys in the “Encounter” step. The first reading key “I read the text” helps to discover the text, its characteristics, choice of words, drama, groups of people, etc. in detail. This study with distance and an eye for detail prevents one from rashly reading something into the text.

With the second reading key “The text reads me” the readers themselves come into play. They ask where the text triggers resonance in them and what touches them.

The reading keys are answered by everyone for himself. After the first and second key there exists the possibility for exchange in groups. Each participant may contribute his or her observations, there is no need for comments and discussions.

3. Silence

The silence enables the readers to experience the intensive contact with the text and in it with God. Therefore, the steps should be completed calmly. Also we advise in the final stages of Lectio Divina a longer contemplative phase.

4. Exchange

The encounter with God is experienced as well in exchange with others – in common singing, praying, respectful conversation about the observations of others.

Lectio divina. Bible reading with heart and mind The Model of the Catholic Biblical Association in Germany

The Process in the Group

I. Collect

- ▶ The group gathers in a suitable room around a centre with Bible and candle. Through singing and ritual (the Bible is passed from hand to hand) and a prayer for the Spirit of God they create a atmosphere of concentration and spirit.
- ▶ The text is read aloud.
- ▶ A moment of silence is held.
- ▶ In the echo reading the members are invited to repeat and to pay attention to all the words/verses that they notice.

II. Encounter

- ▶ Everyone tries to perceive the text and its characteristics (structure, images, drama) as precisely as possible. The first reading key serves this purpose: I am reading the text.
- ▶ Exchange
- ▶ All relate the text to life: What does the text tell me? What does it say in my life? The second reading key serves this purpose: The text ist reading me.
- ▶ Exchange

III. Going on

- ▶ In free prayer (loud or quiet) all answer to the text: What do I want to say to God now? Then there is time for contemplation and silence (5–10 minutes).
- ▶ In the end everyone is invited to consider: Which Word do I want to take with me into everyday life? This can be noted on the reading sheet under “To take with you into everyday life”.
- ▶ Concluding with prayer and song.

The Process of Reading alone

I. Collect

- ▶ I look for a suitable room or place to read, light a candle, carefully open the Bible and try to collect myself in this action.
- ▶ I pray for the opening of my senses by the Spirit of God.
- ▶ I read the text slowly and attentively.
- ▶ I take a moment of silence and listen to what have read.

II. Encounter

- ▶ I try to perceive the text and its characteristics (structure, images, drama) as precisely as possible. The first reading key serves this purpose: I read the text. What other passages of the Bible come to my mind?
- ▶ I relate the text to life: What does the text tell me? What does it say in everyday life? The second reading key serves this purpose: The text reads me.

III. Going on

- ▶ I conclude the reading with a prayer or psalm and dwell in the silence and presence of God. Then I go into the day attentively.
- ▶ Maybe I'll take a Bible verse with me to memorize it.