Listening

As one encounters the living word of God, listening with the "ear of your heart" (Rule of St. Benedict Prol. 1) is as essential as listening to the literal voice. The means being instructed, informed, or inspired by the Word of God as well as being formed into a truly obedient person of faith. Listening is done in service to these types of logical questions: What does this text say? Who wrote it? Who is the voice speaking? Who are the biblical characters? Is this historical or literary? To whom is the story directed? Where is the geography it describes? What exactly is the story?

Meditating

Here we meditate on the symbolic voice of the text with our intuitive and aesthetical sense. To meditate on the Word means to let the Word descend from our logical mind into our intuitive heart, ruminating on the Scripture text itself. Meditating "engages thought, imagination, emotion, and desire . . . to deepen our convictions of faith, prompt the conversion of our heart, and strengthen our will to follow Christ." Let the Scripture passage become a prism, looking at it from different perspectives and from your personal life story. Meditating on the Scripture assists the reader in responding to the question, "What does it mean?" The *Psallite* music may also open your intuitive senses so that you can receive the symbolic meaning.

Seeing

Moving from a glance to fixing one's gaze on the illuminated Word takes us into a deeper sense of the symbolic voice and allows one to get to the hidden meaning or the inner ways of knowing intuitively. Notice how the illumination, for instance, portrays Jesus or how different images create a sense of paradox or evoke particular emotions. Note where gold leaf is used or contemporary symbols inserted. The

LISTENING

Listen for God's word or a passage that touches the heart.

MEDITATING

Ruminate on the word. Allow the word or passage to dwell within you. Allow this pondering to invite you into dialogue with God and then, in the spirit of Pentecost, share the word with the group.

SEEING

Return to God's word for the purpose of "hearing and seeing" Christ in the text.

Fix your gaze on the illumination. Ask God to open the eyes of your heart and enable you to see what God wants you to see. Be open to images, thoughts, impressions, and feelings that come into your awareness.

interplay of calligraphy and illuminations goes deep upon "deep beyond decoration or enhancement." It draws you into a sacred gaze. As your gaze deepens, begin to notice a beauty shaped by God's dream for the world. Slowly begin to see the greatness of God's revelation in the illuminated Word and in our lives.

Praying

PRAYING

Pray to God, allowing for the transformation of your being and feelings. Give to God what you have found in your heart.

As we respond to the question, "What does this text mean to me?" we humbly repent, remove obstacles to our relationships, and pray deeply from the heart and soul. In the abiding presence of Christ, listen for the soft gentle voice of the Holy Spirit directing your choices. Lift up your heart and mind to God. With this personal response, we walk in the privileged place of intimacy with the Lord, like our ancestors

did. It is not until this dimension is activated that *lectio divina* becomes prayer: it becomes a living, conscious, active way of knowing God. We lift up our hearts and minds "to" God.¹⁰

Contemplating

CONTEMPLATING

Notice the transforming presence of God within you. Surrender all that is stirring, even if only briefly, and rest in God's embrace. In contemplation the single goal is to be present to God. We are fixed on the Lord. There is nothing to be done, for it is a pure gift from God. In this movement, experience the mystical encounter with God where the mystical voice is received by the spiritual senses. The contemplative voice is different from ordinary sound, sight, and feelings of daily life. Contemplative prayer is described as "silent love." It

suffuses human reason and passion with wisdom and love. In contemplation, one restores Christ's beauty to the soul.

Becoming Christ-like

BECOMING CHRIST-LIKE

Return to God's word. Allow it to transform you. Notice how your faith is being deepened and your way of life motivated. As *lectio divina* becomes a full and active part of daily life, truth emerges from the text, and there is the invitation to live out this truth. People begin to recognize their unique way of becoming Christ-like. Each person has a story open