

Listening

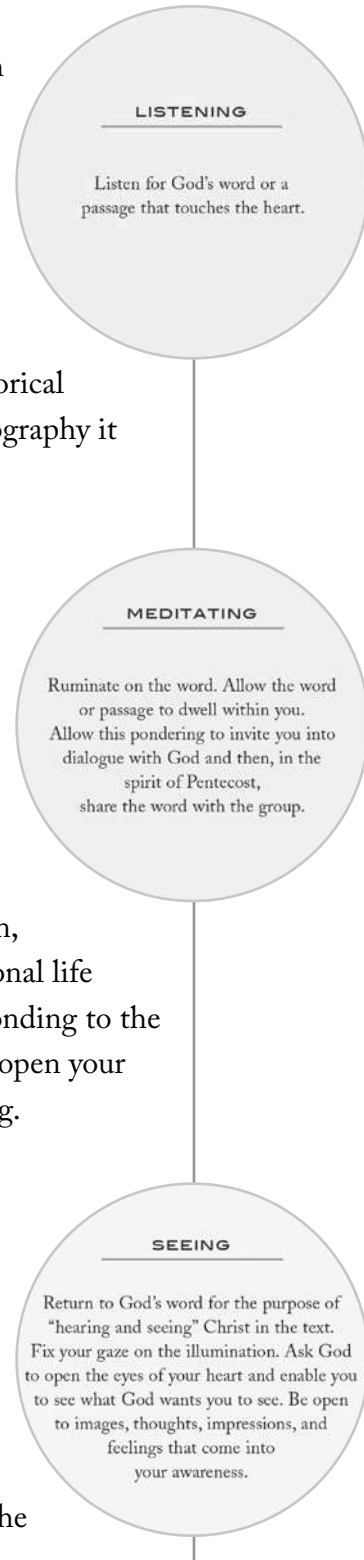
As one encounters the living word of God, listening with the “ear of your heart” (Rule of St. Benedict Prol. 1) is as essential as listening to the literal voice.⁷ It means being instructed, informed, or inspired by the Word of God as well as being formed into a truly obedient person of faith. Listening 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

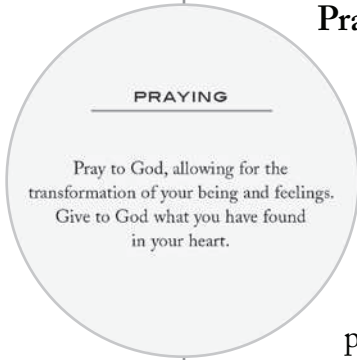
Here we meditate on the symbolic voice of the text with our intuitive and aesthetical sense. To meditate on the Word means to let the Word descend from our logical mind into our intuitive heart, ruminating on the Scripture text itself. Meditating “engages thought, imagination, emotion, and desire . . . to deepen our convictions of faith, prompt the conversion of our heart, and strengthen our will to follow Christ.”⁸ 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

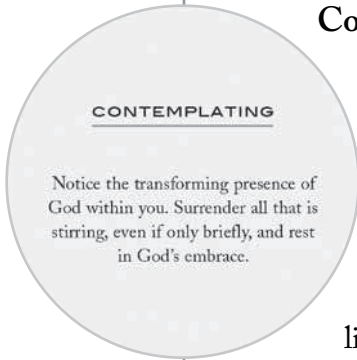


interplay of calligraphy and illuminations goes deep upon “deep beyond decoration or enhancement.”⁹ It draws you into a sacred gaze. As your gaze deepens, begin to notice a beauty shaped by God’s dream for the world. Slowly begin to see the greatness of God’s revelation in the illuminated Word and in our lives.



Praying

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

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.”¹¹ It suffuses human reason and passion with wisdom and love. In contemplation, one restores Christ’s beauty to the soul.



Becoming Christ-like

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