

How to run a lectio divina group: introduction

RB 30:1 *Every age and level of understanding should receive appropriate treatment.*

RB 64:8-9 *Let the Abbot recognise that his goal must be profit for the monks, not pre-eminence for himself. He ought therefore, to be learned in divine law, so that he has a treasury of knowledge from which he can bring out what is new and what is old.*

However much we do to achieve a standardisation and ease of use of this pack for group leaders and to provide scripts for different levels of understanding, the key to all leading of groups for *lectio divina* is to know the needs of the individuals, recognise their level of experience and understanding and pitch the explanations and texts at the sort of level which will be profitable for the group.

The only way to ensure that one is able to do this is to have a regular practice of *lectio divina* whilst maintaining a strong sense of love for the group. This will give the leader the confidence to adapt the prayers, to keep the introductions always fresh and different but always useful, to stretch the capacities of the group and to take the decisions necessary, always drawing upon their own sources of knowledge and experience.

Ultimately it is for the group leader to so arrange everything that the strong have something to yearn for and the weak nothing to run from. (RB 64:19).

It is important not to get too wound up in how to structure things and what words to say, but the few straightforward scripts in this section may help a group to get started and move forward. All the structures and scripts suggested in this pack bear three hallmarks which are essential to *lectio divina*:

1. Invocation of the Holy Spirit and belief that it is the Holy Spirit which is principally at work in *Lectio Divina*.
2. Periods of Silence
3. Responses in the first person singular ("I...")

With these considerations now let us look at some possible scripts. These will probably be most useful for groups that meet once a month or less regularly, because in these cases the group constantly needs to be reminded of what *lectio divina* is about and the script will not easily become stale.