

Pastoral Care for *lectio divina* groups

Sacred, Safe, Secure

It is important for group leaders to remember that everyone who participates in *lectio divina* is “precious in the eyes of the Lord”.

In addition to preparing a safe meeting environment (see [Individual meetings](#), [Locations](#) and [Holy Space](#)) care must be taken to ensure that all participants are valued and enabled to feel safe and secure within the group.

This can be achieved in various ways, of which *Pastoral Care* and setting suitable [Rules and Boundaries for Group Meetings](#), are discussed below.

Pastoral Care

[This section develops what is said about praying for group members in [Organising Group meetings, prayer](#).]

Group leaders should be aware of the extent and limitation of their role in caring for group members. Some pointers to Do’s and Don’ts are offered below, each attempting to draw out a key principle of group leadership, and all based on the teaching “Love the Lord your God ... and love your neighbour as yourself.”

Do’s	Don’ts
Pray regularly for all group members	Try to become a spiritual director or confessor to group members [unless suitably qualified!]
Pay attention to the needs of group members	Try to solve everyone else’s problems
Stay in touch with those who are absent for extended periods	Allow yourself to become too deeply involved in one person’s “problems” to the detriment of other members of the group
Visit the sick ... (as circumstances permit)	Make yourself ill worrying about other members of the group
Care for yourself and share your burdens with another leader (as appropriate)	Go it alone, especially without God

In larger groups, where two or more people are taking a leadership role, or in areas where there may be two or three related *lectio divina* groups meeting, leaders may find it helpful to meet from time to time to talk about how their groups are progressing, and to share (within the rules of confidentiality) any important news from their groups.

Rules and Boundaries for Group Meetings

All group meetings for prayer, including *lectio divina*, require some rules and boundaries within which all participants can share and grow. Some of the key rules are:

- Whatever is said in prayer is confidential.
- All persons know that there is no discussion, criticism or questioning of individual responses that come during *lectio divina*.
- Appropriate space is given within the group for private conversations / comments about what is said.