



Too Deep for Words: Rediscovering Lectio Divina

Thelma Hall

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Retrieves from obscurity the lost art of contemplative prayer as practiced for sixteen centuries in monastic tradition, and provides 500 thematically arranged scripture texts as rich resources for this intimate prayer.

Too Deep for Words: Rediscovering Lectio Divina Details

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Author : Thelma Hall

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Eli Mostrales says

It's a five-star book ... [mere words cannot describe the simplicity with which it succeeds in... describing our walk with the Lord Jesus Christ ... & recommending a "methodless method" to continue & enjoy our communion with God]

John Stygles says

This is a good "Primer" for someone just beginning their time with Lectio Divina.

Benjamin Vineyard says

The gift of this book is the collection of Scripture texts for prayer. The second half of the book is this list and I've devoured it, sharing it with others.

The front material, Hall's thoughts on prayer, Scripture, and the discerned Christian walk, are well written and accessible. More than accessible, delightful and energizing. It's a happy thing to come across an author I've never heard of and to resonate deeply with their words. This is what's happening for me.

Finally, I keep seeing something. Books like this one, books I resonate with, are often referencing Thomas Merton. God has used that man's words to create something within many others. I see it. I feel it. I keep reading about it.

Annabelle says

A quick read, but I wanted a little more discussion about the practice itself. I like the scripture selections though.

Mary Beene says

This is a good beginners book, with much to commend it. It defines language around contemplation and meditation and sets out a process. I found it to be a little too prescriptive for my taste, which might just have to with the age of the book. There was much talk of every person's experience being different, but then many "this is how you should" do or approach something, which didn't always sit well with me.

Adam says

Thelma Hall's short book (her discussion of lectio consisting of only 56 pages) is a excellent introduction to lectio divina. She does a great job of putting this practice into the greater context of contemplation and an ever deepening relationship with God. She is very cognizant of Thomas Merton's writings and much of her discussion takes into account his reflections on the true self vis-a-vis the false self. One of the many strengths of this short work is her discussion on the transition to and experience of Contemplatio. This is probably the most least understood component of lectio divina and I found her discussion of it incredibly helpful. The rest of her book (52 pages) consists of 500 Scripture texts organized under 50 different themes that are especially appropriate for the practice of lectio divina. This is a worthy addition to anyone's library.

Julie Mihevc says

Excellent, how-to of Lectio Divina.

Mark says

Great answer to what I have been seeking. The first half of the book is a straightforward explanation of lectio divina in its parts. The second half is a generous selection of verses to apply the disciplines from the first half. Thelma Hall has done an excellent job making the ancient practices accessible to a contemporary audience. Thanks.

Brian says

Basically: determine what it says, determine what it meant, determine what it means, determine what you're going to do about it

John Poston says

Sad that I gave this one away because I want to read it again! This book seriously deepened my prayer life.

Aryeh says

Probably the most simple/straightforward and most excellent book regarding Lectio Divina currently in print. Although the majority of the text of course relates to Gospel and other Christian texts, I (a Jew and a Rabbinical student) found it a useful methodology book for 1) chaplaincy--as a way to bring this way of learning/praying/understanding to patients and 2) for personal use. I've used the method for years but have

had a hard time explaining it, and this book is useful on that front. Recommended.

Lisa says

Love this for reference. If you love to do lectio divina, this book gives you Bible passages by topic.

D says

A wonderful call to contemplation, distinct from meditation. Interesting quote from St. John of the Cross' paraphrasing of St. Luke's Gospel (11:9) with the 4 steps of Lectio:

(“So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.)

- 1) Seek in READING
- 2) and you will find in MEDITATION;
- 3) knock in PRAYER
- 4) and it will be opened to you in CONTEMPLATION.

I like how the author recounts the 4 levels of Lectio Devina, described by Dom Marmion (a Benedictine monk of an earlier era):

(Marmion (April 1, 1858 – January 30, 1923) was an Irish monk, and the third abbot of Maredsous Abbey in Belgium. Beatified by Pope John Paul II, Marmion was one of the most popular and influential Catholic writers of the 20th century. His books are considered spiritual classics.)

We read (Lectio)
under the eye of God (Meditatio)
until the heart is touched (Oratio)
and leaps to flame. (Contemplatio)

Becky says

Some really great stuff in the book, I just don't think certain topics were well explained.

Jobie says

This is was a pretty fair primer for Lectio Divina. It was a quick read, well thought out, and informative. For primer and may get a little complex for a casual reader. It wasn't the most thorough treatment of Latino Divina. It becomes a little esoteric when it could be a little more pragmatic. Some might argue this point however when you're talking about any spiritual practice I think clear concise direction is in order. For the most part she gave that direction. There were a few times when she could giving given a little bit more

direction but allowed it to remain mystical. Yes Lecti Divina is an mystical spiritual practice. However, for those who aren't familiar with the practice need a little bit more detailed guidance before they can venture on their own and discover the practice. The mystery comes with much practice.

Bottom line: one great book, not the best treatment I've read. If you're only going to buy one book on Lexia Divina don't get this one. But if you buy more than one, this one's a great addition and supplement.
