

Come to know Jesus more deeply with *lectio divina*

In the reading of Sacred Scripture, especially in the readings of the Mass, we come to know God and His plan for our salvation. We must always remember that Sacred Scripture is inspired, and when we read Scripture, it is truly God's Word speaking to us.

In the tradition of the Church, there is an excellent and reliable method for us to read these sacred books called *lectio divina*. It is an ancient form of praying in Scripture, that literally means "sacred reading". The second Vatican Council emphasized that this should be done by all the faithful. "Let them remember that prayer should accompany the reading of Sacred Scripture, so that God and man may talk together" (Dei Verbum, 25).

To begin, choose a passage of the gospels, for example I usually choose that day's reading for Mass. I call upon the Holy Spirit, asking God to speak to me through the sacred scriptures. *Lectio divina* then involves four simple stages of prayer, each summarized by a Latin word.

1. **Lectio, the actual "reading" of the text.** The opposite of speed-reading! Do not hurry. Do not skip words. This may seem obvious, but it is easy to skim through passages, saying 'I read it before' or 'I know the story'. This is dangerous, because when we approach Scripture, we can never force our own meanings on the text, 'what I think it says'. Perhaps read the passage out loud. Read the scriptures as if for the first time, with a certain newness and curiosity, savoring the words. This practice will allow us new insights and a deeper appreciation of the true meaning of the text.

2. **Meditatio, meditation on the passage.** For example, if I read a chapter of a Gospel, I will pick out a main passage or thought that struck me - this is part of our listening. Pick a main section, no more than ten verses, and reread them very slowly. Sometimes I will even pick out just one key verse. Repeat them. Think and reflect on them. Some may imagine the scene, notice the details and feelings. Listen to the dialogue, hear the questions and answers, make connections to one's life.

3. **Oratio, prayer, our conversation with God.** Connect the words of Scripture to Christ who is present. Open to Christ speaking to you in this passage. Sometimes, we need to be silent, listen, and let God's word speak to us; then we will be open to the true meaning of the text, and come to a deeper understanding of God's Word. Is there a challenge, a call, an invitation in this passage? How do I need to respond? How am I to live my life?

4. **Contemplatio, contemplation** is the point of **the experience of union with God**. One moves beyond words and images to God himself. The sacred words are meant to lead us to him. Jesus Christ is the mystery at the heart of the words of Scripture. They point the way to him and inviting all to join him in the communion of faith and love. Contemplation is not relaxation, but rather expectation, being alert to God's presence, made ready for His approach by the previous three steps.

St. Mary & St. Joseph Catholic Churches



1625 Adams Street, Ashland NE 68003
Saturday Vigil Mass: 5:00 PM
Sunday Mass: 8:30 AM

7 Oak Street, Greenwood
Sunday Mass: 10:30 AM

Pastor: Father Gary Coulter
Rectorry & Fax: 944-3554, CCD/Hall: 944-7509
Cell: 202-3782, stmaryashland@alltel.net

Welcome to new parishioners,
please call the rectorry to register
or for information on any of our parish
activities and organizations.

Confessions a half hour before Masses
Saturday 4:00-4:50 PM St. Mary
Sunday 8:00-8:20 AM St. Mary
10:00-10:20 AM St. Joseph
Any time by calling the rectorry.

CCD & Youth Group each Wed. 7:00 PM

Mass Schedule for this week				
Sat.	Dec. 13	5:00 PM	Ashland	+ Jerry Schwaller
Sun.	Dec. 14	8:30 AM	Ashland	Carl Hartman
		10:30 AM	Greenwood	For the People
Mon.	Dec. 15	9:00 AM	Ashland	Beatrice Prell
Tues.	Dec. 16	9:00 AM	Ashland	+ Gerhard Groenjes
Wed.	Dec. 17	9:15 AM	Care Center	+ Sally Sohl
Thurs.	Dec. 18	9:00 AM	Ashland	Karl John Hartman
		6:30 PM	Greenwood	
Fri.	Dec. 19	9:00 AM	Ashland	+ Marilyn Survil
Sat.	Dec. 20	9:00 AM	Ashland	Deceased Priests
		5:00 PM	Ashland	+ Ben Buckingham
Sun.	Dec. 21	8:30 AM	Ashland	For the People
		10:30 AM	Greenwood	+ Ed Sobetski

Christmas Mass Schedule

Dec. 24 - 5:00 PM Ashland

12 Midnight Ashland

Dec. 25 - 8:30 AM Ashland

10:30 AM Greenwood

BARN DOOR

Restaurant & Lounge

Eat In - Carry Out

7 Days a week!

440 East Elm

Ceresco NE

402-665-2500

Catholic Owners

Homes Acreages Farms Lots Land Commercial

Buyers and Sellers, I can help you with all of your real estate needs.

Jan Nicola, REALTOR

jan@onestrongteam.com

402-720-5413

December 14, 2008

Ministries for Next Weekend

Sat. Dec. 20 - 5:00 PM
Servers: Kasuske, Isaacson
Acolyte: Craig Pease
Lector: Mary Logsdon
Sun. Dec. 21 - 8:30 AM
Servers: Campbell, McGinley, Stander
Acolyte: Dave Romans
Lector: Donna Nicholson
Sun. Dec. 21 - 10:30 AM
Lector: Jeannine VanLaningham
Offertory: Jamrog

Our Return to the Lord, Dec. 6-7		
	St. Mary	St. Joseph
Adult:	\$ 1,644.00	\$ 730.00
Plate:	\$ 27.00	\$ 22.00
Children:	\$ 3.00	\$ 1.00
Hymnals:	\$ 245.00	
Cloisted Sisters:	\$ 45.00	
Flowers:	\$ 25.00	

Readings and Celebrations this week:

December
15 Mon Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a / Mt 21:23-27
16 Tue Zep 3:1-2, 9-13 / Mt 21:28-32
17 Wed Gn 49:2, 8-10 / Mt 1:1-17
18 Thu Jer 23:5-8 / Mt 1:18-25
19 Fri Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a / Lk 1:5-25
20 Sat Is 7:10-14 / Lk 1:26-38
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 / Rom 16:25-27 /
Lk 1:26-38

Third Sunday of Advent

Stewardship Thought

3rd Sunday of Advent

St. Paul offers a timely stewardship message: Pray always, live a life of gratitude and seek holiness.
During this week of Advent, spend some time in prayer reflecting on what it means to be grateful, compassionate and unselfish. Discover opportunities to say, “Thank you.” Go out of your way to do something for someone else.

Congratulations

Marriage Anniversaries this week
Chris & Candice Ray
Birthdays this week
Tasha Schuelke
Jenny Cich
Jordyn VanLaningham
Shelby Lyons
Debi McNealy
Kay Wigle
Candice Ray
Joanna Torpy
Maddie Washburn

Calendar for This Week

Sun. Dec. 14, 6:00 PM **Christmas Caroling**
Wed. Dec. 17, 9:15 AM **Mass** at Care Center
7:00 PM **CCD** and **Youth Group**
Thurs. Dec. 18, 2:00 PM **Food Baskets** at VFW
Sun. Dec. 21, 2:00 PM **Penance Service**
Plan Ahead: An advent **Penance Service** will be held at St. Mary, Ashland with multiple priests available to hear confessions next Sun. Dec. 21, 2:00 PM. At Greenwood there will be extra time for confessions after each Sunday Mass.

Parish Announcements

Join us for **Christmas Caroling** to the Care Center and parishioner homes this Sun. Dec. 14, 6:00-7:30 PM. Meet at St. Mary. Service opportunity.
The Ashland Ministerial Association needs Volunteers needed to help the assemble **Christmas Food Baskets** this Thurs. Dec. 18, 2:00 PM at the Ashland VFW.
Christmas Flower memorials are being accepted. Extra envelopes are in the back of Church. Give a donation for our Christmas decorations in memory or in honor of a loved one. Names will be published in the bulletin.
Can you join in singing carols for the Christmas **Midnight Mass**? Practice each Sunday in Dec. at 9:30 AM after Mass.
The Knights of Columbus have religious themed **Christmas Cards** for sale in the back of St. Mary. Keep Christ in Christmas.
Thank you for the generous year-end gifts. Please be sure to remember your parishes this Christmas. Donations need to be received by Dec. 31 to count for the 2008 tax year.
Community Announcements
The Celebration Singers (Wahoo Community Choir) will present a **Cantada** on Sun. Dec. 14, 1:30 and 7:00 PM, Bethlehem Lutheran Church.
Katie Kresak, member of Swedeburg Covenant Church, is raising funds to go on a mission trip to Africa (Helping Hands www.hhiminc.org) in Feb. Donations can be made to St Mary or contact Katie at 521-0588.
Diocesan Announcements
A Holy Family Mass in honor of the **Holy Innocents** will be Sun. Dec. 28, 2:30 PM at the Bl John XXIII Chapel, 37th & Sheridan Blvd, Lincoln. Those who have lost an infant child are invited to attend. To have your child's name remembered call 488-2040.

A **Sung Latin Mass** (ordinary form) is held each month at the Newman Center in Lincoln on Sundays at 3:00 PM. Upcoming dates: Dec. 14, Jan. 25, Feb. 8, Mar. 8 and Apr. 26.
Catholic Coffee House adult formation Sun. Dec. 14, 6:30-8:00 PM at the Bl John XXIII Center, 3700 Sheridan Blvd, Lincoln. Sebastian Cannazzo will speak on "St. Paul the Author" with Q&A and dessert. Free, no registration.
Deepen you spirituality and draw closer to God on a **Cursillo Weekend Retreat**. From Thurs. evening to Sun, retreats consist of talks given by priests and laity, and celebration of the sacraments. Upcoming weekends are Jan. 8-11 for men, and Jan. 15-18 for women, both in Lincoln. For more info, contact Mark Pribyl, Cursillo Lay Director for the Lincoln Diocese at 641-7199 or mpribyl@diodecom.net, or your pastor.
You Can Help Your Marriage - Feel alone? Frustrated or angry? Do you argue? Stopped talking? **Retrouvaille** (pronounced retro-vi) has helped tens of thousands of couples through difficult times in their marriage. For confidential info about or to register for a weekend on Feb. 20-22, 2009, call 1-888-317-5654 or see www.HelpOurMarriage.org.
High School Retreats that focus on having a relationship with God and meeting new people. TEC for juniors and seniors will be at Wahoo Feb. 14-16, QUEST for freshman and sophomores will be at Wahoo Apr. 4-5. Contact the parish or call 488-2040. See info about other youth events at the Diocesan Youth Ministry blog: lincolnyouthministry.blogspot.com
Is there in abortion in you or your family's past? Do you suffer loss, despair or guilt from an abortion experience? **Project Rachel** can heal the wounds of abortion, call 1-800-964-3787. Don't suffer any more, hopeafteraborion.com.
Please Pray for our Seminarians
Pray this week for Stephen Graeve from St. Peter, Lincoln, NE. In College 1 at St. Gregory.