

Iter Nostrum

CASS @lumni Newsletter

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Lectio Divina

Lectio divina is the meditative reading of a text of God's Word, the Scriptures, alone or with others, which leads to prayer and transformation of life. It is a personal encounter with Jesus, who is the "Word of God".

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God... and the Word was made flesh."

We will describe here the steps of how to carry out Lectio divina:

Prayer:

A prayer is said to set the scene, it can be any prayer. An example is Guigo's prayer (Guigo II, the fifth abbot of the Carthusian order):

"Lord Jesus, you who are the Son of the Living God, teach me to listen to what you tell me in the holy Scriptures, and to discover your face there."

Reading: getting to know the text

We focus our attention on the whole text, with the aim to know the text well. We are gathering food for thought.

Meditation: engaging with the text, making it your own

Meditation brings to bear our reason on the text as we look at it in terms of ourselves. In meditation, the divine word and our personal faith come together. There is interaction of the Word and the person.

We learn about the God who loves us and calls us to love in return, and so, we look at our own life in terms of the expectations of God, and see what we need to do to transform our life.

A few questions which may help us in our meditations:

What does the text tell me?

- About the God who speaks to me?
- About how I should respond to that God
- About my faith life?
- About what I need to do to transform my faith life?
- We are humbled in realising that we cannot do it without the help of God. Hence meditation flows naturally into prayer. Meditation moves the will to prayer and strengthens its resolve to transform the life of discipleship.



Lectio Divina (cont'd)

Prayer: *let prayer emerge from your working with the text*

The prayer arises from our reflection on the text, focussing particularly on what we need to do to transform our life. We humbly ask God to give us the grace to do what needs to be done.

Contemplation: *God's response*

Following Guigo, "contemplation" refers to a gift of God that is beyond what we can do by ourselves. It is a gift of God given when, where, and to whom God chooses to give it. If God bestows this gift, it will break into our prayer. Therefore, we should not stop or dwell here, unless God intervenes.

Action: *throughout the day*

Our lectio needs to carry over into our life and affect it in the areas that have arisen in meditation. To achieve this, it can be helpful to select from the text a word or phrase that can be repeated throughout the day, reminding us of the experience of our prayer and helping us especially when the particular issue that arose is present.



Lectio Divina is a way of life, not a method of prayer.

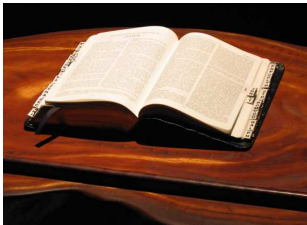
“It is about reading (and listening), reflecting, praying in tune with the Holy Spirit within me, resting in God, responding in the way I live, and continually pondering on the Scriptures. The traditional Latin words for this way of prayer are: *Lectio, Meditatio, Oratio, Contemplatio, Evangelizatio and Ruminatio.* “

An intro to the Benedictine Nuns

A quick introduction to our scheduled visitation to the Jamberoo Abbey of the Benedictine Nuns.

Who else to better describe the Benedictine livelihood but the nuns themselves? Herewith the excerpt from their website:

**“There is one thing I ask of the Lord for this I long,
to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
to savour the sweetness of the Lord,
to behold His temple. Psalm 26**



**Praise the Lord for He is good.
Sing to our God for He is loving.
To Him our praise is due. Psalm 146**

**Let me speak the praise of the Lord.
Let all mankind bless His Holy Name
for ever, for ages unending. Psalm 144**

These few verses from the psalms capture and express so beautifully the spirit of our life. We are Benedictine contemplative nuns but there is always a certain mystery about it all isn't there? So, I would like to use this opportunity to share with you the true meaning of our life.”

“We are called as the psalmist says:

**To live in the house of the Lord
all the days of our lives,
to savour the sweetness of the Lord,
to behold His temple. *Psalm 26***

We are called:

**To praise God in His holy place,
praise Him in His mighty heavens,
praise Him for His powerful deeds,
praise His surpassing greatness. *Psalm 150***

**Everything that lives and that breathes,
give praise to the Lord.”**



Pilgrimage to Benedictine Abbey

Book this in your diary!
Limited spots available, on a first in first serve basis.

Date: Saturday 3rd October to Sunday 4th October

Cost: \$75 per head

Registration: registration@cassalumni.asn.au

Details: Breakfast and lunch is provided. Dinner is basic.

Accommodation: cottages, 1 person per room

Environment: Tranquil mountain surroundings, for meditation and reflection.



Our DARTS experience

Chinese Dragon Boat Festival

by Winnie Ching

On a warm summer day in February, Patrick Chiu and myself dived into the festivities of Chinese New Year and watched the dragon boat races in Darling Harbour with members of DARTS – Disabled Alternative Road Transport Services. DARTS is a non-profit organisation with the objective of improving the welling of disable people . They provide transport for the disabled, allowing them to engage in activities and access to places that would otherwise prove extremely difficult.

A day out to watch the dragon boat races? Great atmosphere, great team spirit – but what's the significance - we watch it every year one may ask. I guess most people / readers would have watched a dragon boat race at some stage in their lives, and a few of us might even have the privilege to even take part in it each year!

Our role as volunteers on the day was simple - to provide companionship and assistance where needed. In fact, as it turned out, it was no different from a Sunday outing with relatives or grandparents...you have a stroll, enjoy an outdoor lunch and more often than not, these elderly people reminisce their life stories!

Nevertheless, a feeling of bliss struck me at the end of the day that is not quite as ordinary as a Sunday outing. It was their signs of excitement and their beaming smiles throughout the day so genuine that can be no mistake for pure joy and content. To many of us, watching dragon boat races is no stranger. Little did I realise the happiness a dragon boat race could bring to these people, and little did I realise the joy I feel by knowing that I have brought a smile on someone's face, and helping the "poor" just like Jesus?



Like Jesus who helped the outcast, we too helped the physically challenged. Although I cannot guarantee they could recall every detail on chinese new year, but I am confident to say that they had a good time from their excitement and votes of appreciation.

Sometimes it makes me think: in our world that is powered by human greed and selfishness, we have been constantly challenged by the temptation to pursue material gains, power and status. Yet, from the smiles of these disabled people, they have reminded me that the "material gains" that we have been focussed on is in fact so temperamental. The path to inner joy lies in sharing and serving others.

So I urge you all to reflect – what have I done today and what could I have done? Take the time out and reach out – it could start with something small like taking the garbage out for your aged neighbour. I can assure you, you will be rekindled to the simplicity of life and happiness.



What is DARTS?

Disabled Alternative Road Travel Service (DARTS) operates in the north east areas of Sydney and arranges a program of recreational, educational and social activities and day trips for adults who have physical disabilities and use wheelchairs and who live in their own homes. Activities include shopping trips, barbecues, theatres, restaurants, picnics, drives, films, art and yoga classes, harbour and river cruises, art galleries, craft shows, trips to visit beaches or parks, shows, lunches at Clubs etc.

Door-to-door transport is provided in accessible mini-buses fitted with hoists. Volunteer helpers assist the members on a one-to-one basis. DARTS is a unique service in Sydney. DARTS enables its members to participate in a wide range of recreational and educational opportunities and integrate within the community improving the quality of life of individuals who are transport disadvantaged and who would otherwise be isolated.

DARTS increases its members' independence and awareness of the changing community. People with moderate to severe physical disabilities are supported so that they can remain in their own homes and not have to move to nursing homes. Family or other primary caregivers are given the opportunity of respite from their role.

DARTS – Sailability Australia

Blue sky, fresh air, a crisp morning at the Spit – the perfect day for our Sailability experience.

Louis, Joanna and myself arrived at the Spit at 10am on this 26 April 2009. DARTS co-organised this event with Sailability Australia. Sailability Australia's key objective is to encourage and facilitate sailing and boating throughout Australia for people with disabilities in social, recreational and competitive activities.

Before this event, I did not know what to expect from this sailing experience. I was surprised and in awe of the passion of the volunteers of the members of Sailability Australia. With the experience of the members of Sailability Australia, Louis, Joanna and myself were spectators to the event and in honesty, assisted little during their sailing experience.



Lunch was at a small little café at the Spit, and it was a good opportunity for us to “be with” all the members, talking to them and knowing a little bit more about them. We also had the opportunity to understand how the bus works and learnt the standard procedures of loading the wheelchairs onto the bus and strapping of the wheelchairs in the bus. The learning experience itself was very meaningful and I felt honoured to have the opportunity to learn and help out for the next event, one I cannot wait to participate in.



I would definitely extend this opportunity to all of you.

There are activities on a weekly basis. Over the last 2 months, the activities which have been organised by DARTS include a trip to Blue Mountains, surfing at the northern beaches, a trip to the Easter Show, NRL game etc. Let us know if you are interested to join us sometime and we will forward the timetable for your information. We will organise your registration to meet with a DARTS representative.



Other updates

New improved website: cassalumni.asn.au

Check out our photo gallery from our last alumni dinner!

Participation in DARTS

Want to join our latest activity in helping those less fortunate than us and share the experiences together? Express your interest and we will organise the registration process. Email Winnie Ching at registration@cassalumni.asn.au