

August 23, 2023



Center for Spiritual Development

Daily Reflections

Image by Christine Sponchia

THE LIVING WORD

By Sr. Jane DeLisle, CSJ

Today's Gospel Acclamation

"The word of God is living and effective, able to discern the reflections and thoughts of the heart."

HEBREWS 4:12

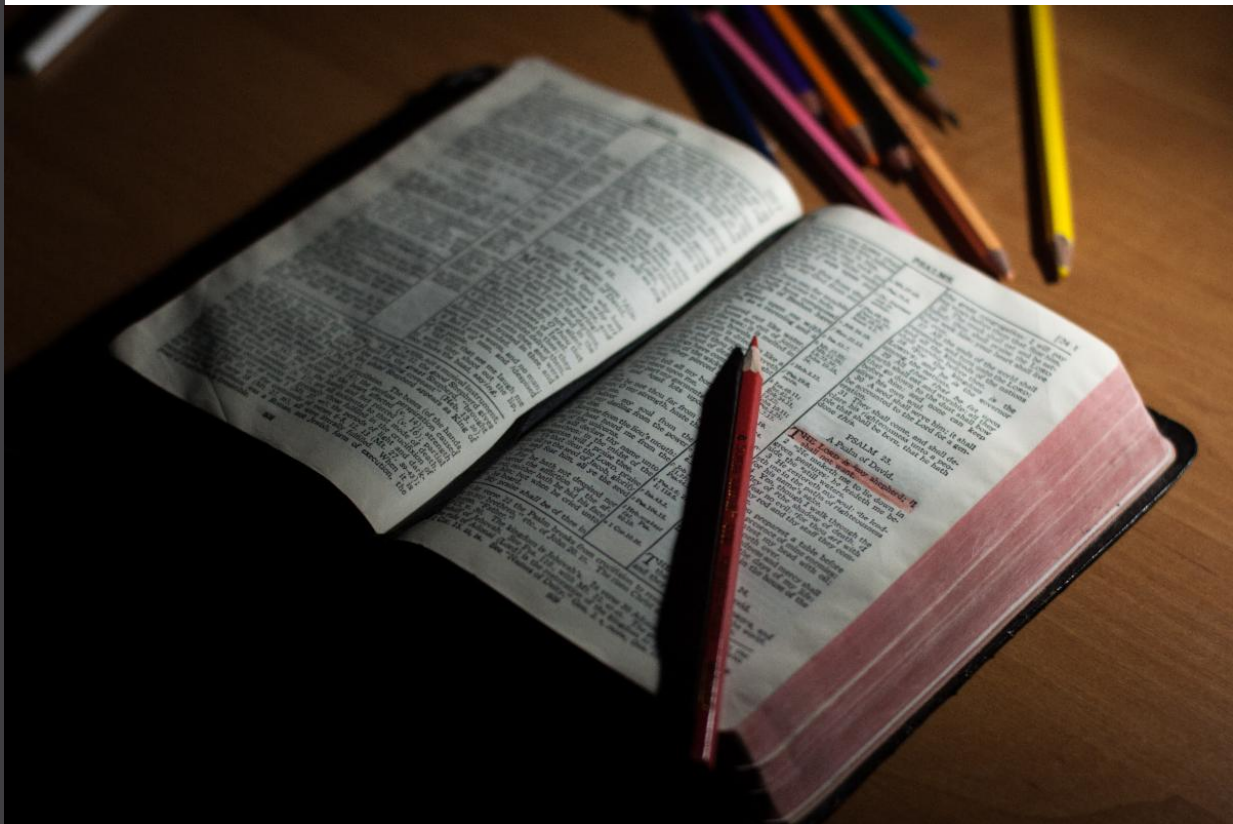
Reflection

Given a lifetime of seeking to be a prayerful person and recognize God's abiding presence in my life, I realize the truth of Hebrews 4:12: the word of God is alive and active. It took me years to learn how to engage the word of God and allow it to teach me. Over the years I have learned and practiced many prayer styles. While the variety of prayer practices is a sure gift, the living word of God, when fully embraced, fosters a spirit of humility and deepens a sense of belonging. I am not in this life alone, but in relationship with God who is interested in me, loves me, and companions me.

Here I offer an ancient prayer style, **Lectio Divina**, to open oneself to the Word of God and as a means to discern inner motivations and reflections of one's heart. Literally "Divine Reading," this is one way to engage the Word and allow it to flow through your life.

A summary of how to reflect on Scripture using the Lectio Divina style of prayer:

- Ask yourself: What word(s) capture my attention?
 - Ask yourself: What is the Lord saying to me?
 - Ask yourself: What do I desire to say to the Lord?
 - When you are finished, rest silently in God's presence.
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A pencil rests on the page of an open Bible
Photo by John-Mark Smith

Reflection Continued

In more descriptive language:

1. Reading:

Gently read the Scripture, slowly savoring and repeating the parts of the text that speak to your heart. Listen to the Word "with the ear of your heart," and be willing to linger on portions of the text that seem to speak to you in a special way.

2. Meditation:

Reflect upon the ideas and insights culled from the reading. Lovingly and slowly repeat the text you have internalized. Allow the interior “mulling over” to help the text “yield its savor.” Allow the text to interact with your memories, your hopes, your concerns.

3. Prayer:

Let the Word you have taken into yourself be a real word of blessing and a means of offering to the Lord your deepest hopes and concerns. Let the gentle repetition of the Word lead you into a dialogue with God. Dialogue with the Lord and respond personally to what He has said.

4. Contemplation:

As you feel called to do so, simply rest silently in the presence of the Lord. Be willing to let go of the text which has led you into God’s presence. Enjoy the sweetness of silent communion with God, who stands behind the Scripture.

For Pondering

Engage with this verse through Lectio Divina:

“The word of God is living and effective, able to discern the reflections and thoughts of the heart.”

HEBREWS 4:12

For Prayer

Pray in your own words, talking to God as you would a close friend.

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