

“On the last day, the great day of the festival, Jesus stood and cried out; ‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me! Let anyone who believes in me come and drink! As the scripture says, From his heart shall flow streams of living water’. He was speaking of the Spirit which those who believed in him were to receive”. ~John 7:37-39 Jerusalem Bible

A number of folks in our congregation have been pursuing an ancient form of praying scripture called Lectio Divina. It has been a way of deepening our prayer lives in community that most have found very helpful. We gather for a meal, then quietly and prayerfully read a short passage of scripture numerous times, often from different translations, with several minutes of quiet reflection between each “praying” of the passage. After the final reading and silence, we discuss how this word from God has penetrated our conscious minds and spirits.

A book I have found very useful around this practice is Too Deep for Words Rediscovering Lectio Divina, by Thelma Hall, Paulist Press

In discussing this passage, Hall shares an image from Thomas Merton of “the spring and the stream”. Merton suggests that the living water which is ours through the Holy Spirit provides a refreshing spring of contemplation to renew the believer but then must flow out of the believer in a stream of actions that can refresh others. Christ’s living water, the gift of God’s Holy Spirit, cannot be hoarded or it becomes stagnant. To flow freely, there must be a constant source, bubbling up from within to which we return again and again.

Lectio Divina has been primarily used by individuals throughout the centuries as a means of preparing one’s heart for contemplative prayer. Whether alone or with others

I recommend the practice. “Come and drink!”

Under God’s Mercy,

Howie