

Lectio Divina

The Word of the Lord endures forever.
- 1 Peter 1:25

Lectio Divina

lectio: Latin noun – reading

there is an encounter between

(i) a reader and (ii) a written text.

divina: Latin adjective – divine, sacred/holy,
inspired by God

so there is more to the encounter between the
reader and the written text:

(iii) the more is God.

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Any written text? Or written text that is inspired by God?

All scripture is inspired by God (Gk: theopneustos) and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

- 2Tim 3:16-17, NRSV

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What is the connection
between the reader,
the written text and God?

God



Sacred Scriptures



reader

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God



Sacred Scriptures



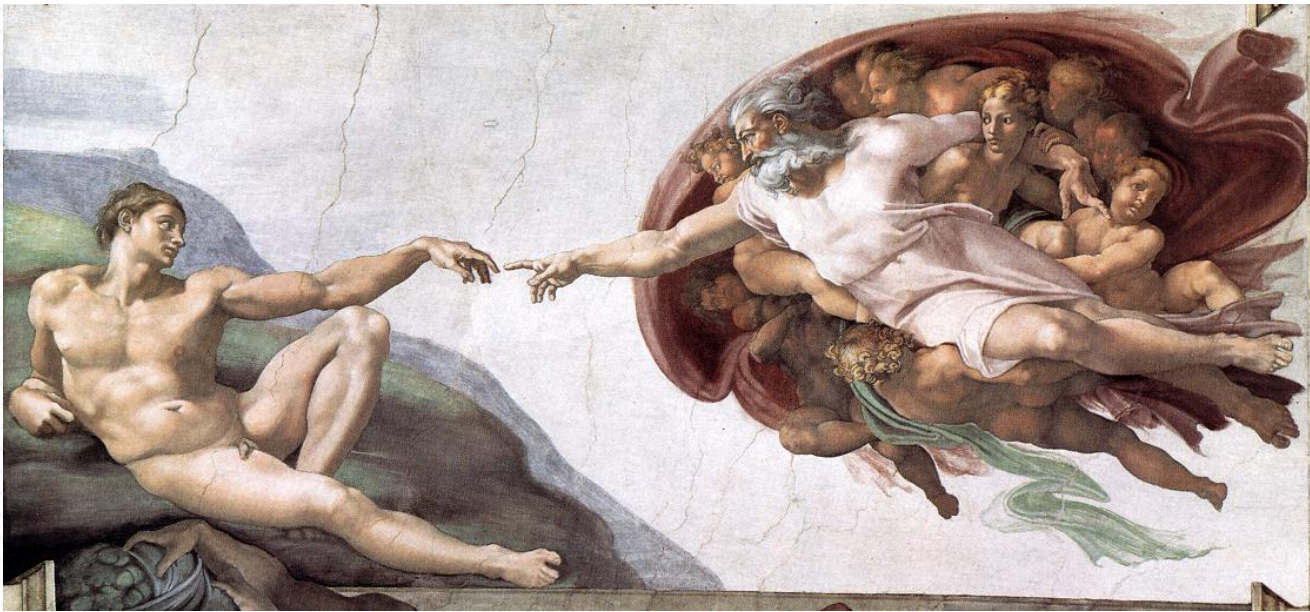
reader

In what context?

Prayer!

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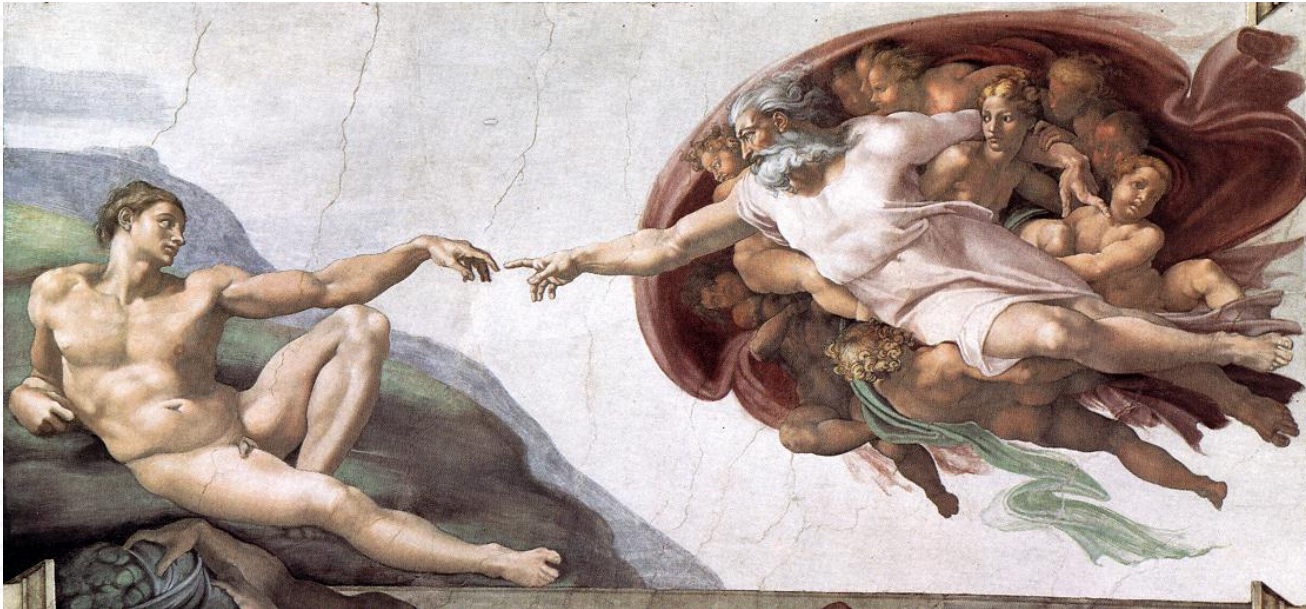
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Why pray?

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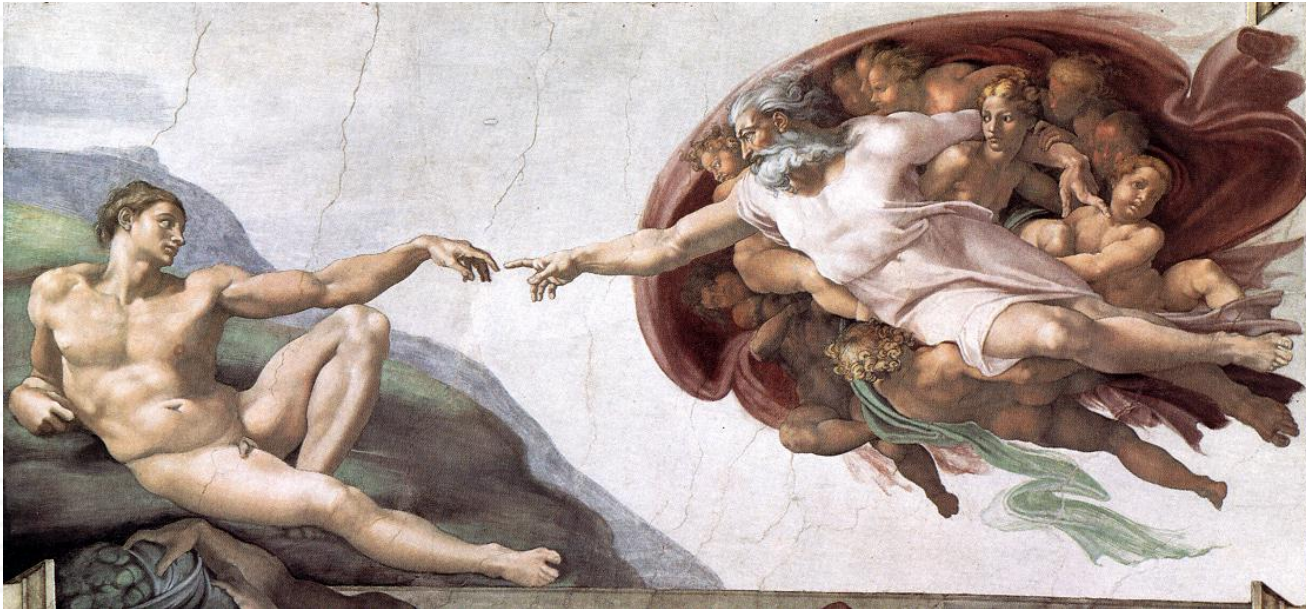


Why communicate?

- Gen 1:1-3, In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth... **and God said,**...

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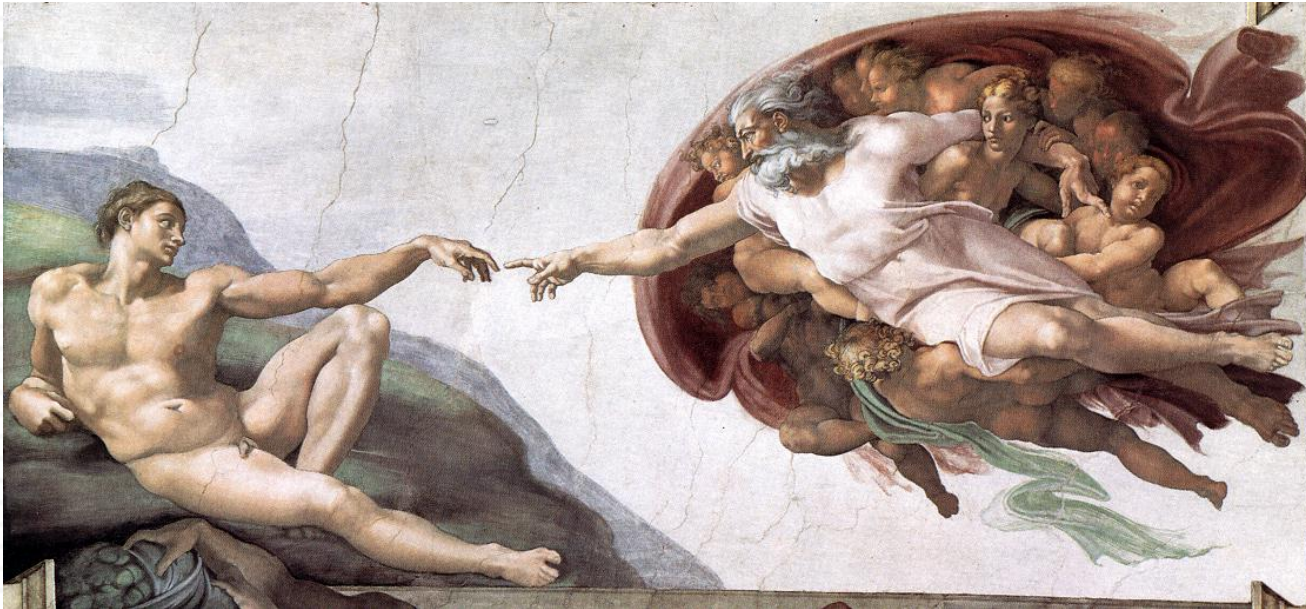


Why communicate?

- Gen 1:26, Then God said, "Let us make man **in our image, according to our likeness...**"

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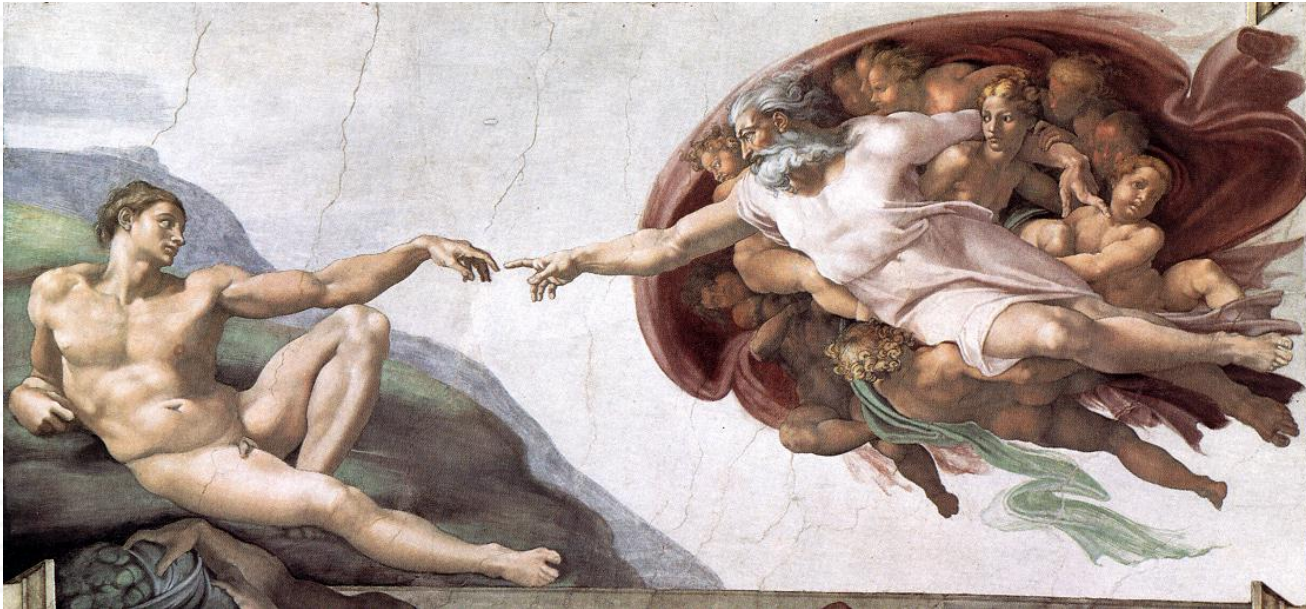


Why communicate?

- Gen 1:26, God blessed them, **and God said to them**, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it..."

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Why communicate?

- John 1:1, In the beginning was **the Word**, and the Word was **with God** and **the Word was God**.

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M. Casey: The Four Moments of Lectio Divina

Sense	Faculty	Function	Prayer
1. Literal	Intellect	Understand the written text	Lectio
2. Christological (allegorical)	Memory	Contextualize the text in Christ	Meditatio
3. Behavioral (tropological)	Conscience	Live the Christian meaning	Oratio
4. Mystical (anagogical)	Spirit	Share the mind of God	Contemplatio

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Catechism of the Catholic Church, 118.

The letter speaks of deeds, allegory to faith,
the moral how to act, anagogy our destiny.

Augustine of Dacia (13th century),
Littera gesta docet, quid credas allegoria,
moralis quid agas, quo tendas anagogia.

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Luke 1:26-38, NAB

The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. "Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God." Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

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Literal Sense

The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. "Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God." Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

- What word/phrase of the sacred text speaks to me – any of the characters, the actions, the place, etc.?

Allegorical/Christological Sense

The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. "Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God." Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

- How does this word/phrase or character/place remind me of Jesus Christ in the way that he has lived his life?

Behavioral/Tropological Sense

The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. "Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God." Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

- [How am I, as a Christian, being challenged by the text, and/or by the life of Jesus Christ?](#)

Anagogical/Mystical Sense

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- [What have I learned about God? How am I invited to see reality as seen through the eyes of God?](#)

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“But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like.”

James 1:22-24, NRSV

To read the Bible is to encounter Jesus
is to live like Jesus is to find oneself being animated by God.

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“I would like, in particular, to recall and recommend the ancient tradition of *lectio divina*: the diligent reading of Sacred Scripture accompanied by prayer brings about that intimate dialogue in which the person reading hears God who is speaking, and in praying, responds to him with trusting openness of heart (cf. *Dei Verbum*, 25). If it is effectively promoted, this practice will bring to the Church - I am convinced of it - a new spiritual springtime.”

Pope Benedict XVI, September 2005

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Pope Francis, October 4, 2013

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