

Using the TV Show *The Chosen* to Pray with the Bible

by Amy J. Cattapan

www.ajcattapan.com

If you are looking for a new way to pray with the Bible, you might want to try pairing your Bible with some scripture-related media. One method I've found very helpful, especially while leading retreats, is to pair Lectio Divina with the TV show [*The Chosen*](#).

Lectio Divina is an ancient form of prayer that dates back to early monastic times when many could not read. A scripture passage was repeated several times for meditation and prayer. Traditionally, Lectio Divina has four parts: *lectio* (reading), *meditatio* (meditation), *contemplatio* (contemplation), and *oratio* (prayer).

The Chosen, in case you have yet to hear of it, is the first multi-season TV show to be made about Jesus and his disciples. It is also the highest crowd-funded media project of all time. Several familiar Gospel stories from the beginning of Jesus's ministry are depicted within the first few seasons, and the show is free to view via *The Chosen* app. Many of the key scenes are also available via the show's [YouTube channel](#), which can be very handy for inserting into Google slides when presenting before a class.

Using a variation on Lectio Divina, teachers can incorporate short video clips from the show into lessons designed to help students dig deeper into scripture. Below is an example of how you might use it, followed by worksheets you may print out and use with students or Bible study groups.

Step 1 – *Lectio* (reading)

Begin by reading Mark 1:40-45. Read it slowly and deliberately. Then spend a few minutes jotting down your initial impressions of the scene.

Step 2 – *Meditatio* (meditation)

Read the scene again. This time pretend you are a movie director, and it is your job to dramatize the healing of the leper. As you read, meditate on how you are going to film this scene. What might you tell the actor playing Jesus? How should the actor playing the leper portray his part? Are there other characters standing nearby? Who are they and what are their reactions? Jot down your responses.

Step 3 – *Contemplatio* (contemplation)

Watch how [this scene](#) is portrayed in *The Chosen* (Episode 6). Contemplate the decisions made by director Dallas Jenkins and the actors who portray Jesus, the leper, and the disciples. Write down your reactions.

Step 4 – *Oratio* (prayer)

Did their performances change the way you feel about this Gospel story? Write down a prayer to God in which you share with him how this story makes you feel about Jesus.

Other scenes to use in this manner:

1. [The Miracle of the Fish](#) (Luke 5:1-11)
2. [The Wedding Feast at Cana](#) (John 2:1-11)
3. [Jesus Heals the Paralytic](#) (Mark 2:1-12)
4. [Jesus Heals Simon's Mother-in-Law](#) (Matthew 8:14-15)

Name:

Lectio Divina and “The Healing of a Leper” (Mark 1:40-45)

Using a four-step approach based on an ancient prayer practice called *Lectio Divina*, we’re going to dig deep into a Gospel story you may already know, but in the process, you may just discover something new about this familiar tale.

Step 1 - *Lectio* (reading)

Read Mark 1:40-45 slowly and deliberately. Then spend a few minutes jotting down your initial impressions of the scene.

Step 2 - *Meditatio* (meditation)

Read the scene again. This time pretend you are a movie director, and it is your job to dramatize the healing of the leper. As you read, meditate on how you are going to film this scene. What might you tell the actor playing Jesus his emotions should be like? How should the actor playing the leper portray his part? Are there other characters standing nearby? Who are they and what are their reactions to this miraculous scene? Jot down your ideas here.

Step 3 - *Contemplatio* (contemplation)

Watch how this scene is portrayed in the TV show [The Chosen](#) (Click to watch). Contemplate the decisions made by director Dallas Jenkins and the actors who portray Jesus, the leper, and the disciples. Write down your reactions here.

Step 4 - *Oratio* (prayer)

Did their performances change the way you feel about this Gospel story? In this fourth section, write down a prayer to God in which you share with him how this story makes you feel about Jesus.

Name:

Lectio Divina and “The Miracle of the Fish” (Luke 5:12-16)

Using a four-step approach based on an ancient prayer practice called *Lectio Divina*, we’re going to dig deep into a Gospel story you may already know, but in the process, you may just discover something new about this familiar tale.

Step 1 - *Lectio* (reading)

Read Luke 5:12-16 slowly and deliberately. Then spend a few minutes jotting down your initial impressions of the scene.

Step 2 - *Meditatio* (meditation)

Read the scene again. This time pretend you are a movie director, and it is your job to dramatize the miracle of the fish. As you read, meditate on how you are going to film this scene. What might you tell the actor playing Jesus his emotions should be like? How should the actor playing Simon portray his part? Are there other characters standing nearby? Who are they and what are their reactions to this miraculous scene? Jot down your ideas here.

Step 3 - *Contemplatio* (contemplation)

Watch how this scene is portrayed in the TV show [The Chosen](#) (Click to watch). Contemplate the decisions made by director Dallas Jenkins and the actors who portray Jesus, Simon, and the others. Write down your reactions here.

Step 4 - *Oratio* (prayer)

Did their performances change the way you feel about this Gospel story? In this fourth section, write down a prayer to God in which you share with him how this story makes you feel about Jesus or Simon Peter.

Name:

Lectio Divina and “The Wedding Feast at Cana” (John 2:1-11)

Using a four-step approach based on an ancient prayer practice called *Lectio Divina*, we’re going to dig deep into a Gospel story you may already know, but in the process, you may just discover something new about this familiar tale.

Step 1 - *Lectio* (reading)

Read John 2:1-11 slowly and deliberately. Then spend a few minutes jotting down your initial impressions of the scene.

Step 2 - *Meditatio* (meditation)

Read the scene again. This time pretend you are a movie director, and it is your job to dramatize the wedding feast at Cana. As you read, meditate on how you are going to film this scene. What instruction might you give the actor playing Jesus? What about the other people at the wedding? Who are the other guests and what are their reactions to this miraculous scene? Jot down your ideas here.

Step 3 - *Contemplatio* (contemplation)

Watch how this scene is portrayed in the TV show [The Chosen](#) (Click to watch). Contemplate the decisions made by director Dallas Jenkins and the actors who portray Jesus, the winemakers, and the wedding guests. Write down your reactions here.

Step 4 - *Oratio* (prayer)

Did their performances change the way you feel about this Gospel story? In this fourth section, write down a prayer to God in which you share with him how this story makes you feel about Jesus.

Name:

Lectio Divina and “Jesus Heals the Paralytic” (Mark 2:1-12)

Using a four-step approach based on an ancient prayer practice called *Lectio Divina*, we’re going to dig deep into a Gospel story you may already know, but in the process, you may just discover something new about this familiar tale.

Step 1 - *Lectio* (reading)

Read Mark 2:1-12 slowly and deliberately. Then spend a few minutes jotting down your initial impressions of the scene.

Step 2 - *Meditatio* (meditation)

Read the scene again. This time pretend you are a movie director, and it is your job to dramatize the healing of the paralytic. As you read, meditate on how you are going to film this scene. What instructions might you give the actor playing Jesus? How should the actor playing the paralytic portray his part? What about the paralytic’s friends? How do you imagine they will react to this miracle? Jot down your ideas here.

Step 3 - *Contemplatio* (contemplation)

Watch how this scene is portrayed in the TV show [The Chosen](#) (Click to watch). Contemplate the decisions made by director Dallas Jenkins and the actors who portray Jesus, the paralytic, and the others present. Write down your reactions here.

Step 4 - *Oratio* (prayer)

Did their performances change the way you feel about this Gospel story? In this fourth section, write down a prayer to God in which you share with him how this story makes you feel about Jesus.

Name:

Lectio Divina and “Jesus Heals Simon’s Mother-in-Law” (Matthew 8:14-15)

Using a four-step approach based on an ancient prayer practice called *Lectio Divina*, we’re going to dig deep into a Gospel story you may already know, but in the process, you may just discover something new about this familiar tale.

Step 1 - *Lectio* (reading)

Read Matthew 8:14-15 slowly and deliberately. It’s a very short passage! Then spend a few minutes jotting down your initial impressions of this brief scene.

Step 2 - *Meditatio* (meditation)

Read the scene again. This time pretend you are a movie director, and it is your job to dramatize the healing of Simon’s mother-in-law. As you read, meditate on how you are going to film this scene. This is such a brief passage that there is not much to go on here. Try to flesh out the scene in your mind. Will Simon’s wife be present? How will she respond to the healing? How will Simon’s mother-in-law respond to the healing? Jot down your ideas here.

Step 3 - *Contemplatio* (contemplation)

Watch how this scene is portrayed in the TV show [The Chosen](#) (Click to watch). Contemplate the decisions made by director Dallas Jenkins and the actors who portray Jesus, Simon, Simon's wife, and Simon's mother-in-law. Write down your reactions here.

Step 4 - *Oratio* (prayer)

Did their performances change the way you feel about this Gospel story? In this fourth section, write down a prayer to God in which you share with him how this story makes you feel about Jesus, Simon, or Simon's wife.