Lectio Divina
Creative Scripture Reflection in Catechesis
With Examples from the Gospels of Advent

Catechesis and Scripture
“Catechesis should assume the thought and perspective of Sacred Scriptures and make frequent direct use of the biblical texts themselves.” (NDC, p. 71)

Catechesis and the Gospels
“The presentation of the Gospels should be done in such a way as to elicit an encounter with Christ.” (The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church, par. 39)

Scripture and Lectio Divina
“The Church desires that in the ministry of the word, Sacred Scripture should have a pre-eminent position. In concrete terms, catechesis should be ‘an authentic introduction to lectio divina.’” (GDC, par. 127)
What Is Lectio Divina?

- “Sacred Reading”
- Lectio, Meditatio, Oratio, Contemplatio, (Actio)
- Personal practice adapted for group settings
- Can be used with any Scripture but used most often with the Gospels

1st Sunday of Advent: Stay Awake! (Mt 24:37-44)

Therefore, stay awake!
For you do not know on which day your Lord will come.
Be sure of this: if the master of the house had known the hour of night when the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and not let his house be broken into. So too, you also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come.

Lectio Method 1: Text Meditation

1. What word or phrase first touched you? (circle + 1)
2. What word or phrase comforts or affirms you? (circle + 😊)
3. What word or phrase challenges you or calls you to change? (circle + !)

2nd Sunday of Advent: John the Baptist (Mt 3:1-12)

John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!”

John wore clothing made of camel’s hair and had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. At that time Jerusalem, all Judea, and the whole region around the Jordan were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins.
Lectio Method 2: Retell the Story

- Pointing to the images provided, tell the story in your own words.
- How would you adapt this method to use with different groups?

3rd Sunday of Advent: Jesus is the One (Mt 11:2-11)

When John the Baptist heard in prison of the works of the Christ, he sent his disciples to Jesus with this question, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?” Jesus said to them in reply, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me.”

Lectio Method 3: Word Meditation

Drawing on the Gospel, create a phrase using the seven letters of “MESSIAH.”

M
E
S
S
I
A
H

4th Sunday of Advent: God Is With Us (Mt 1:18-24)

The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means ‘God is with us.’
Lectio Method 4: Visual Divina

- What touches you in this painting?
- What figures and objects do you see? Why did the artist include them?
- What is God saying to you as you meditate on this painting?

The Dream of St. Joseph, by Luca Giordano

Christmas Midnight Mass: The Birth of Christ (Lk 2:1-14)

Now there were shepherds in that region living in the fields and keeping the night watch over their flock. The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were struck with great fear. The angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord.

Lectio Method 5: Video Divina

More Classroom Lectio Methods

1. Imagination Meditation
   - Choose a person to be in the Gospel story: disciple, Pharisee, person passing by, rich man, accused woman, etc.
   - Stay “in character” and continue the story from your perspective—how do you react to what Jesus says?

2. Gospel Advertising
   - Give all the participants paper and markers.
   - Ask them to draw a poster, bumper sticker, or PowerPoint slide advertising the main message of the Gospel.