

## **Visio Divina: A way of praying with images**

**Visio Divina**—divine seeing—is a way of praying using an image. *Visio Divina* often uses an icon, but any image, picture, or piece of art can be used, including stained glass windows or sculptures or photographs.

Here's one way to practice *Visio Divina*...

All you need is an image placed where you can see it. Center yourself. Close your eyes and breathe in and out slowly several times. Invite the Holy Spirit to breathe in you. Ask God to still your heart and your mind and to speak something real and true to you through the image.

When you are ready, open your eyes and allow them to be drawn to whatever first captures your attention. Let your gaze remain there for a minute or so. Then close your eyes, still seeing that part of the image in your mind and heart and imagination.

What do you feel God whispering to you? What word, emotion, question, or metaphor is suggested by the image?

Open your eyes and continue to gaze and reflect as long as you need to. And while looking at the image, respond to God in prayer in whatever way seems right to you. Perhaps a word of thanksgiving, perhaps a cry for help or mercy, perhaps an intention that has formed in you...as you end your prayer time, ask God to help you to take the images, emotions, questions, metaphors, intentions or insights that have been revealed into your day and your week.