



# *Lectio Divina*

## Holistic Meditation Program

### What is the *Lectio Divina*?

Within Western traditions, several meditative tools were developed throughout the centuries. Based upon the original meditation of the ancient Greek philosophers called *Anagōgē*, the *Lectio Divina* consists in a combination of different spiritual exercises in a single one, divided into four stages. Still today, European monasticism practices and preserves the *Lectio* as main meditative technique.

### The Method

Starting with an inspirational reading, the meditator delves into the first stage, which is properly called *Lectio* (Reading). Traditionally the passage is read four times and different meanings and aspects are grasped in every reading. The reading needs to be performed calmly and in depth, pausing at every word for greater understanding and memorization.

The second stage is called *Meditatio* (Meditation). The meditator ponders the reading and uses it as a meditative tool. Either repeating the reading or mentally depicting it, the meditation goes on as far as the meditator wants, until the meaning of the reading has enabled one to transcend the present moment.

The third stage is when the meditator voices his expected intentions from the current meditation. At this stage, called *Oratio* (Prayer), the meditator engages in an affirmation exercise through the presentation of his life intentions. The *Oratio* can be vocal or mental, even though it is normally offered in silence.

The fourth and final stage is the climatic moment of the *Contemplatio* (Contemplation). The meditator enters in a peaceful state in which he tries to not have any thought. Once ended, the meditator will slowly return to the present moment through the awakening of his senses.

### The Program

The Holistic Meditation Program has been modeled after the *Lectio Divina* practice handed down from master to apprentice in European abbeys. Being an oral tradition, there are very few resources on how to meditate using this technique—even though it is the most important and oldest meditation technique in the West.

The program has a duration of 8 weeks with a 90-minute weekly class. It is offered for groups of maximum 8 people, but is also available in private one-on-one sessions. Prices are given on request.

Each session of the program aims to consolidate every stage of the practice of the *Lectio Divina*, and to monitor the students' progress. The technique closely follows the structure that is still used today in Western monasticism. However, the practice has been adapted to a pluralistic, non-denominational setting. The original Christian and Greek form is available on request.

Follow-up and consultation sessions are also offered, as well as guided *Lectio Divina* meditation sessions.

### About Dr. Boaz

Dr. Boaz Vilallonga, Ph.D. is a research scholar at the Department of Classics of Columbia University. He obtained his doctorate in history of religion from the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris, France. Dr. Boaz studies the relationship between ancient religion and modernity. Besides his scholarly work, Dr. Boaz runs a spiritual coaching practice in New York City, where he helps people with the spiritual journey. Proficient in ten languages, Dr. Boaz has had himself an intense journey, including Catholicism—a denomination in which he was ordained clergy. Throughout his experiences, Dr. Boaz has mastered ancient religious theory and practice. It shapes the way he understands religion and spirituality for 21<sup>st</sup>-century humankind. Among other meditation techniques, Dr. Boaz has practiced the *Lectio Divina* meditation for 10 years. He learnt this technique with monastic masters in Benedictine and Cistercian abbeys in Spain, France, Italy and Germany.