

TERRA DIVINA



PREPARATION:

Go to a wild-ish place that seems to be calling you. *Someplace new? Someplace you've been deepening in relationship with? You will know. Trust the idea that comes hopping into your mind.*

When you get there, **find a threshold** (a log? A creek? Off the path?) to cross over from your regular way of seeing, into a more present, more receptive mindset and slower, more attentive way of moving.

Before you cross the threshold, hold your hands to your heart, or your palms together in a deep bow of reverence. Maybe you will close your eyes. Pray in the way that feels native to you. Pray in a way that alters your everyday vision and expectations and make a vow that you will surrender, if even for this short time, your regular ways of rushing words through your brain. Take a deep breath and intend to open to the Power of the Slowing. Invite your imagination to guide you.

When you cross the threshold, **take off your shoes**, if you can. This will help you walk gently and slowly. This will help to remind you that you are not disconnected after all, though you may have feared sometimes that you are. Your tender feet meeting the hot sand and the prickly rocks remind you that you are a creature of this sacred place, vulnerable and small, even as you remember how important your full presence and participation is in the whole story.

1. LECTIO: WANDER

ONCE you cross the threshold, take slow and intentional steps. Notice everything. Praise everything. Remember the Sacred dwells in all things.

Slow your steps so that you notice the new caterpillar crossing for shade, make note of the songbirds calling attention to your presence, warning the others that a potential predator has entered their space. Pray a blessing over them, let them know you come in peace. Remind them you are there to love them.

Wander in this place as if you were reading a passage from the Book of God, the first book of revelation of the Holy, before there were books. Instead of listening to a passage with only your ears, you're listening with your whole body and all your senses. You are reading the language of the breeze and leaves and sunlight. Wander with full presence, and sensuality.

TOUCH. Be aware of the way your body moves, how each step moves you closer and also further away, how the wind touches your cheek and your hair just as she (the wind) caresses the leaves on the trees. May every step be intentional and soft, connecting with the ground solidly before lifting the other foot.

LOOK. Soften your eyes to look upon all the beauty, the composting death alongside and integrated with the livening new growth. Slowly, and with a posture of appreciation and praise, scan the close-up and the far-away

LISTEN. When the chatter of your inner conversation starts to take over and block your ability to listen to the outside voices, just tenderly sweep them aside with a deep breath. Listen closely to the voices and songs near you, in the trees, in the plants, in the water perhaps. The voices of the birds. The movement of the other hidden ones. The gnats singing in your ears. Listen to the sounds close and far away. The human ones too, the airplanes and the children. Just listen. That's all.

BREATHE. intentionally. Deep breaths. Draw your attention to the way you normally breathe without thinking...how shallow or deep? What smells ask for your attention? Does the air have a taste?

2. *MEDITATIO: LISTEN*

Say “yes” to some place or being that has drawn your attention. Go back there or move closer and settle down on the ground before or near them. *Meditatio*, in the ancient monastic prayerful way, is the phase of the prayer where you wonder why you might have been drawn here. Rather than wondering silently with your own thoughts, enter into conversation with this other.

IMAGINE. When you watch the tree or the cloud movement or the little wren bringing a bug back to her nest, listen beneath the sounds for connection, for your own emotions.

MIRROR. Sacred reciprocity is practiced every day. When we feel loved by someone, our hearts soften and we automatically feel love back. When someone is speaking quietly, whispering, we automatically start whispering to mirror them. Do this. Mirror the others’ movements and sounds. Get up and move or dance or chant in a way that mirrors them.

PRAISE. Notice deeply and praise in your own words or heart. Maybe you can write a poem or simply list all of what you appreciate and SEE in them. Be specific. That’s how you like to receive praise, right? Maybe it’s part of the dance or song you’ve begun.

3. *ORATIO: RESPOND*

This is where you allow the resonance to conjure up a response within you. Where you engage fully in the new relationship, with an open heart.

VOICE. As you respond to the Others, share what is coming up for you. If possible, speak your Voice in your own language, or translate it into an embodied movement or song.

MEMORIES. What memories are coming up? Random, perhaps. But, pay attention. Journal them or talk about them out loud.

FEELINGS. What is your body feeling? Is there a longing to do a cartwheel? :) or to curl up in a ball and sob? How can you express these feelings? What emotions are coming up? Where is it located in your body? Acknowledge these. Be curious and allow.

VULNERABILITY. Any real conversation requires that each party remain vulnerable, open to change. As quantum science has shown us, there is no objective observation of any phenomenon or being or process. The act of observation, itself, changes the system. And in turn, the system changes the observer. In nature, there is no observer. There is only participation. And full, embodied, loving participation involves risk. You won’t leave this conversation the same person as when you joined it.

4. *CONTEMPLATIO: RELEASE*

Now...let it all go. Release with a huge breath, lay down the journal, shake off the emotions. Step into the sunshine. Lay down against the tree. Feel the pure gratitude of being alive, of being held, of connection. Deep breaths. “All will be well and all manner of things will be well.” Julian of Norwich. Allow this receptive, contemplative connection to fill you as you sit or lay on the land for at least five minutes

GRATITUDE: Before you go, offer gratitude. A gift of your pure presence for this sacred conversation.

Leave a gift of a bit of your hair or reading from your journal or simply a deep bow of appreciation.

THRESHOLD CROSSING: Cross over again as you re-enter the middle world of your adult responsibilities and recognize how, even a little bit, you are even more yourself than you were before, thanks to this inter-species friendship. Amen.



SEMINARY OF THE WILD