# Listening to the Word of God to be Minor Sisters



# LECTIO DIVINA 2025

#### LISTENING TO THE WORD OF GOD TO BE MINOR SISTERS PILGRIMS OF HOPE AND RECONCILIATION

"Your word is a lamp for my steps, Lord, light on my path" Accept the offerings of my lips, teach me your judgments (Cfr Ps 119,105.108).

Dearest sisters,

verses 105 and 108 of Psalm 119 are the confident longing that we secretly carry in our hearts and that we constantly address in chorus to the Lord in the liturgy. It is the yearning of those who make the pilgrimage of life on the furrows of faith in God, the merciful Father.

The time of the Church puts us in tune with the time of God by calling us to make a pilgrimage of hope and reconciliation to be truly Minor Sisters as a prophetic sign for humanity today.

The Word of God illuminates the path of faith that we want to follow in this Jubilee Year, following the steps of Jesus Christ, redeemer of the world, and inspires our expressions of praise and judgment that rise to Him like fragrant incense.

The practice of Lectio Divina this year will put us "listening to the Word of God to be Minor Sisters, pilgrims of hope and reconciliation".

Each track is characterized by:

- a biblical passage, which illuminates our steps;
- a proactive commitment taken from the Document of the XXI General Chapter which guides us on our journey with the Congregation and
- a verse from the Canticle of Brother Sun taken from the poetic expressions of Saint Francis.

Dearest sisters, may the Jubilee year be for each of us an effective opportunity to renew hope in the action of the Holy Spirit: the Word of God listened to, prayed for, celebrated and lived constantly helps us always to find the sure reasons for it!

Fraternally

The Sisters of the General Council

Rome, 08 September 2024 Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary



1. The Creation

#### From the book of Genesis (Gen 1, 26-31)

Then God said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the cattle, and over all the wild animals and all the creatures that crawl on the ground." God created man in his image; in the divine image He created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them, saying: "Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth."

God also said: "See, I give you every seed-bearing plant all over the earth and every tree that has seed-bearing fruit on it to be your food; and to all the animals of the land, all the birds of the air, and all the living creatures that crawl on the ground, I give all the green plants for food." And so it happened. God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good. Evening came, and morning followed - the sixth day.

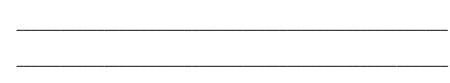
#### The Word of God

Being minors opens us to a being by choice always in relationship with God, with all people, with creation.

## (Doc. XXI Cap. Gen., p. 21, A1)

#### Praise

Most High, all-powerful, good Lord, Yours are the praises, the glory, and the honor, and all blessing, To You alone, Most High, do they belong, and no human is worthy to mention Your name.







2. The Covenant with God

#### From the book of Genesis (Gen 9, 8-17)

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, "As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations.

I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh, and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."

## The Word of God

## Commitment

Live and transmit the love and care for creation; educate ourselves in the defense and protection of its richness.

# (Doc. XXI Cap. Gen., p. 24, 2a)

# Praise

Praised be You, my Lord, with all Your creatures.





3. The mercy of the Father

## From the Gospel according to St. Luke (Lk 15, 11-32)

Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the wealth that will belong to me.' So he divided his assets between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant region, and there he squandered his wealth in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that region, and he began to be in need.

So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that region, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, and no one gave him anything.

But when he came to his senses he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I

will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands." ' So he set off and went to his father.

But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son. But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate, for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

"Now his elder son was in the field, and as he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf because he has got him back safe and sound.' Then he became angry and refused to go in.

His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command, yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your assets with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.' "

#### The Word of the Lord

Let us form ourselves as people, reconciled open to universal brotherhood, committed of building an environment of justice and peace.

## (Doc. XXI Cap. Gen., p. 24, 1d)

## Praise

Praised be You, my Lord, through those who give pardon for Your love, and bear infirmity and tribulation. Blessed are those who endure in peace for by You, Most High, shall they be crowned.





4. The Conversion

#### From the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 9, 1-18)

Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" He asked, "Who are you, Lord?"

The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." The men who were traveling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus.

For three days he was without sight and neither ate nor drank. Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." He answered, "Here I am, Lord."

The Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight."

But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem, and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name."

But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name."

So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

The Word of God

Let us recognize our continuous need for an interior journey, for spiritual growth, for the encounter with the Lord to bring His Word to the ends of the earth.

# (Doc. XXI Cap. Gen., p. 21, A.1a)

## Praise

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire, through whom You light the night, and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.







5. With the same feelings of Christ

#### From the letter of St. Paul to the Philippians (Phi 2,5-11)

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, assuming human likeness. And being found in appearance as a human, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross. Therefore God exalted him even more highly and gave him the name that is above every other name, so that at the name given to Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

#### The Word of God

Minority is the place of encounter, of communion, of gratitude and reconciliation.

(Doc. XXI Cap. Gen., p. 21, A)

#### Praise

Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility.





6. Universal brotherhood

#### From the Gospel according to St. Mathew (Mt 23, 8-12)

But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brothers and sisters. And call no one your father on earth, for you have one Father, the one in heaven. Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Messiah. The greatest among you will be your servant. All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.

The word of the Lord

Let us spread the sense of universal fraternity and of mutual respect which is fundamental for the coexistence of people and peoples.

## (Doc. XXI Cap. Gen., p. 24, 2b)

## Praise

Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with colored flowers and herbs.





The testimony of Love

#### From the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 4, 32-37)

7.

Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need. There was a Levite from Cyprus, Joseph, to whom the apostles gave the name Barnabas (which means "son of encouragement"). He sold a field that belonged to him, then brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

#### The Word of God

Let us commit ourselves to live fully in the new reality where we are sent. (Doc . XXI Cap. Gen., p. 22, 2b) *Praise* 

Praised be You, my Lord, through those who give pardon for Your love, and bear infirmity and tribulation.





8. The spirit of communion

## From the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2, 42-47)

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

The Word of God

Let us build bridges to favour listening, understanding, encouragement for every creature, offering paths of collaboration and ecumenism, fraternity and friendship, without preferences for anyone.

## (Doc. XXI Cap. Gen., p. 23, 1a)

#### Praise

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars, in heaven You formed them clear and precious and beautiful.





9. The missionary sending

#### From the Gospel according to St. Mark (Mk 6, 7-13)

Then he went about among the villages teaching. He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff: no bread, no bag, no money in their belts, but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. He said to them, "Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them." So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. They cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

#### The Word of the Lord

Be pilgrims, available to go where Divine Providence calls us and commit to live fully in the new reality where we are sent. (Doc. XXI Cap. Gen., p. 22, 2b)

#### Praise

Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will, for the second death shall do them no harm.





10. The will of the Father

#### From the Gospel according to St. Luke (Lk 22, 39-46)

He came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. When he reached the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not come into the time of trial." Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me, yet not my will but yours be done." Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength. In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground. When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief, and he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial."

The Word of the Lord

Let us nourish our mission with prayer, sacrifice and the acceptance of having to depend on 'everyone and everything.

## (Doc. XXI Cap. Gen., p. 22, 2a)

## Praise

Praised be You, my Lord, with all Your creatures, especially Sir Brother Sun, Who is the day and through whom You give us light. And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor; and bears a likeness of You, Most High One.





11. Mutual service

#### From the Gospel according to St. John (Jn 13, 3-15)

Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from supper, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had reclined again, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.

## The Word of the Lord

## Commitment

Let us watch over, be prudent in our relationships with everyone, to adopt an "ob-audience" (listening) style, humbly putting ourselves at the service of one another, respecting the sacredness of the other;

(Doc. XXI Cap. Gen., p. 24, 1.b)

## Praise

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water, who is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.





*Listening to the Word* **12.** *The transfiguration* 

From the Gospel according to St. Mathew (Mt 17, 1-9)

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became bright as light. Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. Then Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will set up three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!" When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Get up and do not be afraid." And when they raised their eyes, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone. As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, "Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

#### The Word of the Lord

let us learn to be silent, to stop in order to contemplate, appreciate and welcome the beauty and the goodness that is in the universe and in all beings.

## (Doc. XXI Cap. Gen., p. 22, 3a)

#### Praise

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind, and through the air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather, through whom You give sustenance to Your creatures.



## Prayers of invocation before the Lectio Divina

1. Our God, Father of light, you sent your Son, Word made flesh, into the world to show yourself to us men. Send your Holy Spirit upon us now, so that we can encounter Jesus Christ in this



word that comes from You, so that we know him more deeply and, knowing him, we love him more intensely, thus arriving at the bliss of the Kingdom. Amen.

2. Lord Jesus, send us your Spirit so that we can read your Word free from prejudice, so that we can meditate on your announcement in its integrity and not selectively, so that we can pray to grow in communion with you, with our brothers and sisters, so that we can, in the end, act, contemplating the reality that we live every day with your same feelings and your same mercy. You who live with the Father and give us Love, amen.

**3.** you wanted, O Father, that at the announcement of the angel the immaculate Virgin conceived your eternal Word,

and enveloped in the light of the Holy Spirit became the temple of the new alliance: let us humbly adhere to your will, as the Virgin entrusted herself to your Word. By our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who is God, and lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, forever and ever.

**4.** Almighty, eternal, just and merciful God grant us miserable people to do, by the strength of your love, what we know you want, and to always want what you like, so that, interiorly purified, interiorly enlightened and lit by the fire of the Holy Spirit, we can follow in the footsteps of your beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and, with the help of your grace alone, reach you, O Most High, who in the perfect Trinity and simple Unity live and reign glorious, almighty God for ever and ever . Amen.

5. Lord Jesus Christ, today your light shines in us, a source of life and joy! Give us your Spirit of love and truth, so that we can discover and interpret in the light of the Word the signs of your divine life present in our world and welcome them in faith to always live in the joy of your presence next to us. Amen

**6.** Father, Christ your Son is already praying for us, but You also allow our hearts to open to You in deep, intense, true,

luminous prayer, within the lines of this Word of yours, which for us is life.

Send us the Consoler, the Spirit of truth, so that he not only dwells with us, but enters within us and is in us forever. He is the fire of love that unites you with Jesus; let us too, through your Word, be able to enter into this love and live by it. It touches our spirit, our mind and our whole being, so that we can welcome the commandments, hidden in these few verses, observe them, that is, live them fully and in truth, before you and before our brothers. Amen

7. Come, Holy Spirit, fill our minds with your light to understand the true meaning of your Word. Come, Holy Spirit, light the fire of your love in our hearts to inflame our faith.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill us with your strength to strengthen what is weak in us in our service to God. Amen

8. Spirit of truth, sent to us by Jesus to guide us to the whole truth, open our minds to the understanding of the Scriptures. You who, by descending on Mary of Nazareth, made her good land where the Word of God was able to germinate, purify our hearts from everything that resists the Word. Let us learn like her to listen with a good and perfect

heart to the Word that God addresses to us in life and in Scripture, to safeguard it and produce fruit with our perseverance. Amen

**9.** O God who has poured out the gifts of your Spirit to believers of all times, increase in us, with the power of the Spirit, the willingness to welcome here and now, in this lectio divina, the seed of your word, so that it bears fruit in the testimony of the Gospel and in works of justice and peace, to reveal to the waiting world the blessed hope of your kingdom.

## **10. COME SPIRIT WITH YOUR GIFTS**

Come Spirit of Wisdom, let us taste the sweetness of God's word, the tenderness of his love, the infinite peace that comes to us from responding to his vocation, to the call that he has written in our hearts.

Come Spirit of the Intellect, give us the ability to look at our life to discover Your presence in it, which is love that calls us to love.

Come Spirit of Science, enable us to know and follow Christ

on the path of life that is revealed and proposed to us by You day after day.

Come Spirit of Fortitude, strengthen our faith, make our heart docile and gentle in listening to the Father's will. Come Spirit of Counsel, suggest what is best to ask the Lord and ensure that we behave in a manner worthy of the vocation we have received.

Come Spirit of Mercy, create in us a consciousness of children infinitely loved by the Father, made in the image of the Son Jesus, filled with the joy of the Spirit.

Come Spirit of Fear, give us true trust in the Father and make us attentive to the signs that he places on our path.

## 11. Jubilee Prayer

Father in heaven, may the faith you have given us in your son Jesus Christ, our brother, and the flame of charity poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, reawaken in us the blessed hope for the advent of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us into industrious cultivators of the evangelical seeds that leaven humanity and the cosmos, in the confident expectation of the new heavens and the new earth, when the powers of Evil have been defeated, your glory will be manifested forever.

May the grace of the Jubilee revive in us Pilgrims of Hope, the longing for heavenly goods and pour the joy and peace of our Redeemer upon the whole world. To you God blessed forever be praise and glory forever.

Amen

### PRAYERS TO CONCLUDE THE LECTIO DIVINA

## 1. Prayer of praise

Almighty, most holy, most high and supreme God, all good, supreme good, all good, who alone are good, let us give you all praise, all glory, all grace, all honour, all blessing and all goods. Fiat! Fiat! Amen.



#### 2. God, Father of all wounded humanity

God, Father of all wounded humanity, Lord of full Life, let our choices be according to your justice. Help us to always live on the side of the poor, without closing the door to their cry for help, without moving on, indifferent to their wounds.

Give us, Lord, a heart open to your Word, let us recognize that we ourselves are POOR before You, because in every moment of joy or tiredness, of interior poverty or full faith, we will know that You are still and always on our side!

#### 3. We want to come after you

We want to come after you, Jesus. We want to continue to follow you, step by step, on the path of the Cross, carrying

every brother in our hearts as friends. We want to be faithful friends for you but you, Lord Jesus, do not allow us to let ourselves be gripped by fear and tiredness. Infuse us with the ardor of your Spirit to adhere to You and with You give life by virtue of that greater love that embraces every creature. Amen.

## 4. Mary, Mother of hope

Mary, Mother of hope, we trust in You. With You we intend to follow Christ, Redeemer of man: let tiredness not weigh us down nor fatigue slow us down, difficulties do not extinguish courage nor sadness the joy of the heart.

You Mary, Mother of the Redeemer, continue to show yourself as Mother for all, watch over our path and help your children, so that they find, in Christ, the way back to the common Father! Amen.

## John Paul II

## 5. Sow the Gospel

O God, in Jesus you show us the directions of love. Make us capable of listening more than speaking; to learn more than to teach.

Help me sow the Gospel without ever laying a hand on anyone. Help me to listen to you in the joys of lovers, in the pain of lonely and abandoned people, in the desire for redemption of the marginalized, in the struggles of the excluded, in the prayers of simple hearts, in the tears of defeated people and in the dreams of peace and justice. Amen

## 6. Prayer of the missionary

Lord Jesus: you call me by name and send me to work on this earth. Make me a universal brother, with a heart open to the whole world. Make me capable of transmitting the Good News of your Kingdom.

Let me be open to the calls of others and close to their problems. Grant me your peace, show me the ways of peace, so that I can announce it, desire it and always achieve it. Keep me united with You, Lord of the Mission.

## 7. Announcers

Lord Jesus! Here we are ready to leave to once again announce your Gospel to the world, in which your arcane but loving providence has placed us to live! Lord, pray, as you promised, to the Father so that through you he may send us the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth and fortitude, the Spirit of consolation, which makes our testimony open, good and effective. Be with us, Lord, to make us all one in You and suitable, by your virtue, to transmit your peace and your salvation to the world.

Paul VI

## 8. Mary, Madonna of the Road

Mary, Madonna of the Road, you walked on the mountains of Judea, carrying Jesus and his joy;

you walked from Nazareth to Bethlehem where your child, our Lord, was born; you walked the paths of exile to save the Son of the Most High; you walked the path of Calvary to become our Mother. Continue to walk alongside the missionaries of your Son who on the roads of the world want, like you, Ark of the Covenant, to bring Jesus, his gospel, his salvation to all people.

## Guido M. Conforti

## 9. Absorbeat prayer

May the power of your love, O Lord, fiery and sweet as honey, wean my heart from all that is under heaven, so that I may die for love of your love, you who were so good as to die for love of my love."