

## Mark's Getting Started Guide

Thank you for your willingness to help your students dig deeper into the Word of God through the ancient practice of *Lectio divina*. *Lectio divina* (pronounced lex-ee-oh dih-vee-nuh) is a Latin phrase that means *sacred reading*. It is the ancient Christian practice of communicating with God through the reading and study of Scripture.

The idea behind *lectio divina* is to look at a Bible passage in such a way that Bible study becomes less about study and more about listening. The approach is designed to focus our attention on what God is saying to us through the Word. Through the process of *lectio divina* we not only read to understand with our minds, but we read to hear with our hearts and obey. It is a way of listening to God through His Word.

To prepare to do this study:

- **Order copies of the book.** Make sure you get enough for each member of the group. This study will work best if each student has his or her own book and is able to work through the individual times throughout the week. Then they will be prepared for the group discussions.
- **Set up a reading schedule.** Distribute this to each member of the group, so they know what they are expected to have read for that week's discussion.
- **Bathe the experience in prayer.** Before you and your students actually start the study, be sure to lift the time you will spend together in prayer. Pray for each of your students specifically, asking God to help them be open to what He wants to say to each one.
- **Do the study yourself each week.** The best way to be prepared to facilitate your students' discussion is to have actually done the lesson.
- **Be flexible.** If your students have a lot of questions and/or insight on a particular week, or you feel the Holy Spirit is telling you that you and your students need to spend another week on a particular chapter, do it.
- **Continue praying.** Chances are prayer requests, needs, and issues will come to light as you and your students work through this study. Continue to take all of these things to God.

The book *Mark: Lectio Divina for Youth* is, in itself, designed to be a leader's guide. In order to prepare for your group times, make sure you read the "Group Study" section found on pages 6-7 in the "About the Lectio Divina Bible Studies" section. This section walks you through three different ways you could conduct your group times: 1) as a review using the group discussion questions found at the end of each study; 2) as a group *lectio* experience where you walk through the passage in a form similar to *lectio divina*; or 3) as a large group study where you do the individual studies together and then discuss the group questions.

NOTE: If you have more than 8-10 students, you may want to consider breaking up into smaller groups and finding additional facilitators as this study will work best in a small group format.