

RECOMMENDED READING

My top three recommendations for *visio divina* are the books by Juliet Benner, Henry Nouwen, and Dr. Peacock.

AUTHOR	BOOK	CONTENT
Kenneth E. Bailey	<i>The Good Shepherd-A Thousand Year Journey from Psalm 23 to the New Testament</i>	Exploration of the literary theme of the Good Shepherd
Sister Wendy Beckett	<i>Sister Wendy's 1000 Masterpieces</i> or any of her many other books.	Overview of art she likes and why
Jeremy Begbie	<i>Redeeming the Transcendence in the Arts: Bearing Witness to the Triune God</i> or any of his many other books.	Visual arts and theology
Juliet Benner*	<i>Contemplative Vision: A Guide to Christian Art and Prayer</i>	The visual arts and prayer
Adele Ahlberg Calhoun	<i>Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transform Us</i>	Spiritual formation practices
John Drury	<i>Painting the Word: Christian Pictures and their Meanings</i>	A look at religious paintings by an Anglican Priest.
Makoto Fujimura	<i>Culture Care</i>	Reconnecting with Beauty for our Common Life
Robin Jensen	<i>The Substance of Things Seen: Art, Faith, and Christian Community. Understanding Early Christian Art</i> or anything by Robin Jensen.	Historically and theologically informed on the arts and the church
Henry Nouwen*	<i>Return of the Prodigal Son</i>	Nouwen's encounter with a Rembrandt painting
Dr. Barbara Peacock*	<i>Soul Care in African American Practice</i>	Excellent for further reading on visio divina and soul care generally
Dan Siedell	<i>God in the Gallery</i> or <i>Who's Afraid of Modern Art?</i>	A Christian Embrace of Modern Art

WEBSITES/ARTICLES/TALKS

Motivated by a Christian view of life, ArtWay seeks to open the world of the visual arts.	Alabaster Bible : Integrates visual imagery and thoughtful design into different texts of the Bible.
CIVA: Christians in the Visual Arts	Thoughts on Thomas Kinkade
Theology, Imagination, and the Arts	The Visual Commentary on Scripture
Emily Victoria Jones	The Power of Patience

Visio Divina is *Holy seeing* it is a way to pray with the eyes.

Read through a short passage of scripture or choose a verse, then be still. Settle into a posture to listen to God’s voice and receive the peace of His presence with you.

Meditate. Ponder the words, then gaze, look, observe, ask questions, and ask God to help you see what he wants you to see or what he wants you to notice. What stirs within you?

Pray. Pray through the text or what you notice in the image. Ask God for his help.

Contemplate. We live the text. A contemplative spiritual exercise is meant to lead us to gospel action in the world and deeper connection with God.

Reflections Questions for Visio

Asking questions is important. Jesus asked lots of questions! 187 are recorded in the gospels.

- Record your first impressions: What caught your eye? What captures your attention?
- What else do you notice?
- Reflect on the structure: color, lines, shadows, values, intensity.
- Is there action or movement?
- Who is pictured? Who is not?
- What is the mood of the painting? How does this image make you feel?
- What time of the day is it? Is it morning, winter, summer? Does this matter?
- What stirs within you? What do I notice about God?
- What do I learn about his character, his promises, his will, etc.?
- What is God revealing about my own heart and life?
- How does this challenge me?
- Does this draw you close to God or away from God?
- Do you sense an invitation from God?
- How might I pray through these reflections?
- Can you think of other questions?