

TAKE A MOMENT WITH MARY THROUGH *Visio divina*

Visio divina, a practice of praying through art, is rooted in ancient Christianity and preserved in Eastern Christian iconography and Benedictine prayer. It combines visual artwork with textual context (usually Scripture), reflection prompts, prayer, contemplation and action. The practice can contain up to six movements and is done either as a group or individually.

By adding context and using prompts for reflection, one may make meaning of a piece of art and come to a deeper understanding than they could through a quick glance at a gallery wall. Choose a piece of artwork in the exhibit that intrigues you and follow some or all of the movements below to take a moment with Mary and practice *visio divina*.

Lectio (listening)

Be still in mind and body. Savor the text from John 2:1-12 and notice any word or phrase that captures your attention.

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding. When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” [And] Jesus said to her, “Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come.” His mother said to the servers, “Do whatever he tells you.” Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washings, each holding twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus told them, “Fill the jars with water.” So they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, “Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter.” So they took it. And when the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine, without knowing where it came from (although the servers who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom and said to him, “Everyone serves good wine first, and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one; but you have kept the good wine until now.” Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs in Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him. After this, he and his mother, [his brothers], and his disciples went down to Capernaum and stayed there only a few days.

Visio (gazing)

Gaze at the artwork before you for a few minutes. Notice what captures your attention

Meditatio (reflection)

Reflect on what you have seen and heard. How do you connect with the reading and the artwork? You may consider one of these questions in your reflection:

- Mary recognized a need and encouraged Jesus to begin his public ministry. What needs do you recognize in the world?
- Mary said to the servers, “Do whatever he tells you.” How can you encourage others to use their talents and do the work to which they are called?
- Imagine yourself in Mary’s place. How would it feel to see Jesus grow throughout his life and begin his ministry?
- Mary carried Jesus in her womb. In what ways can you carry God throughout the world?

Oratio (prayer)

When you are ready, speak to God about what you are noticing and thinking about.

Contemplatio (contemplation)

Rest in silence, allowing insight or wisdom to come through by letting your reactions to the artwork and reading wash over you.

Actio (action)

Ask God how he wants you to live out anything that came up during this time of prayer and reflection.