



# VISIO DIVINA

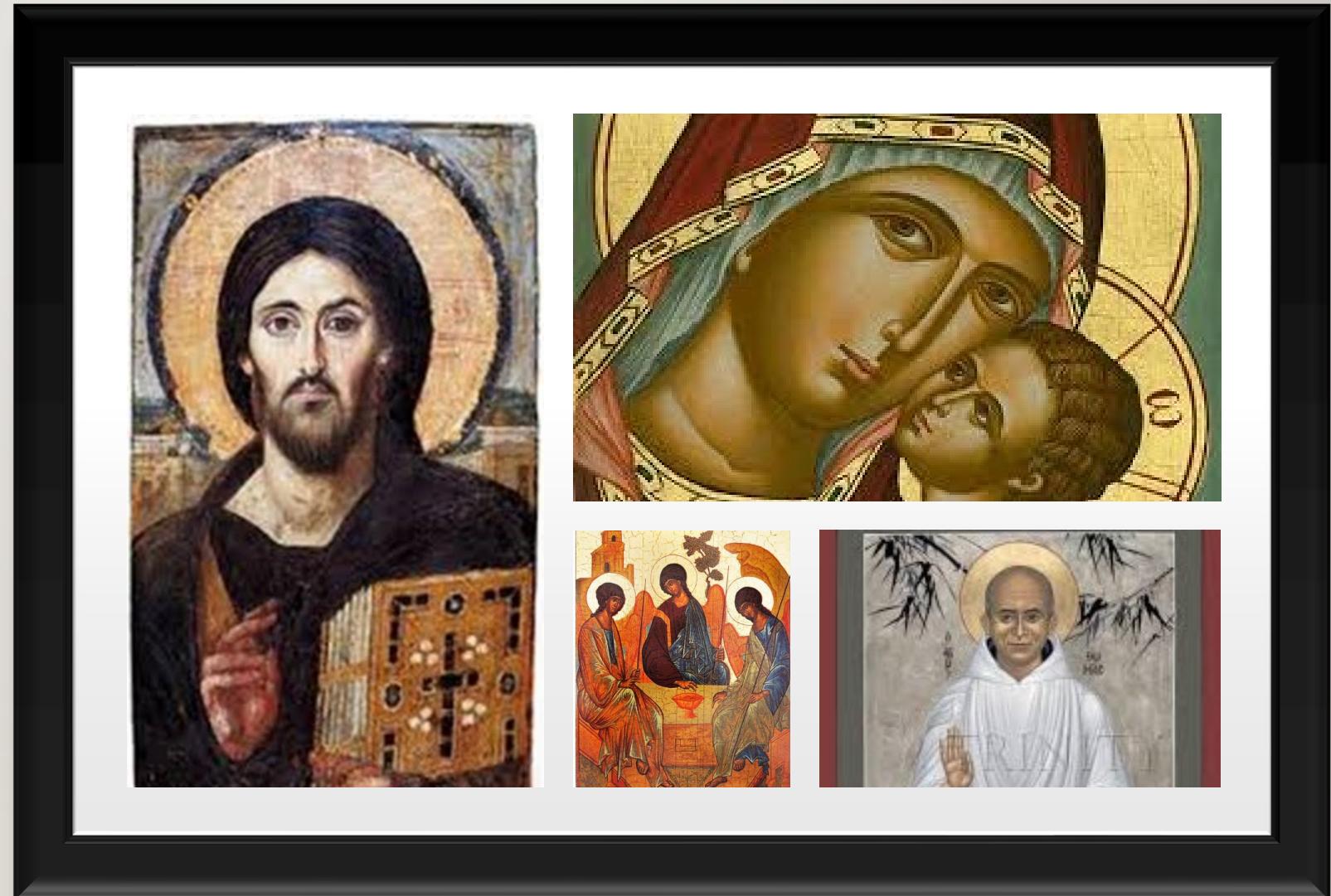
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“DIVINE SEEING”

# OVERVIEW

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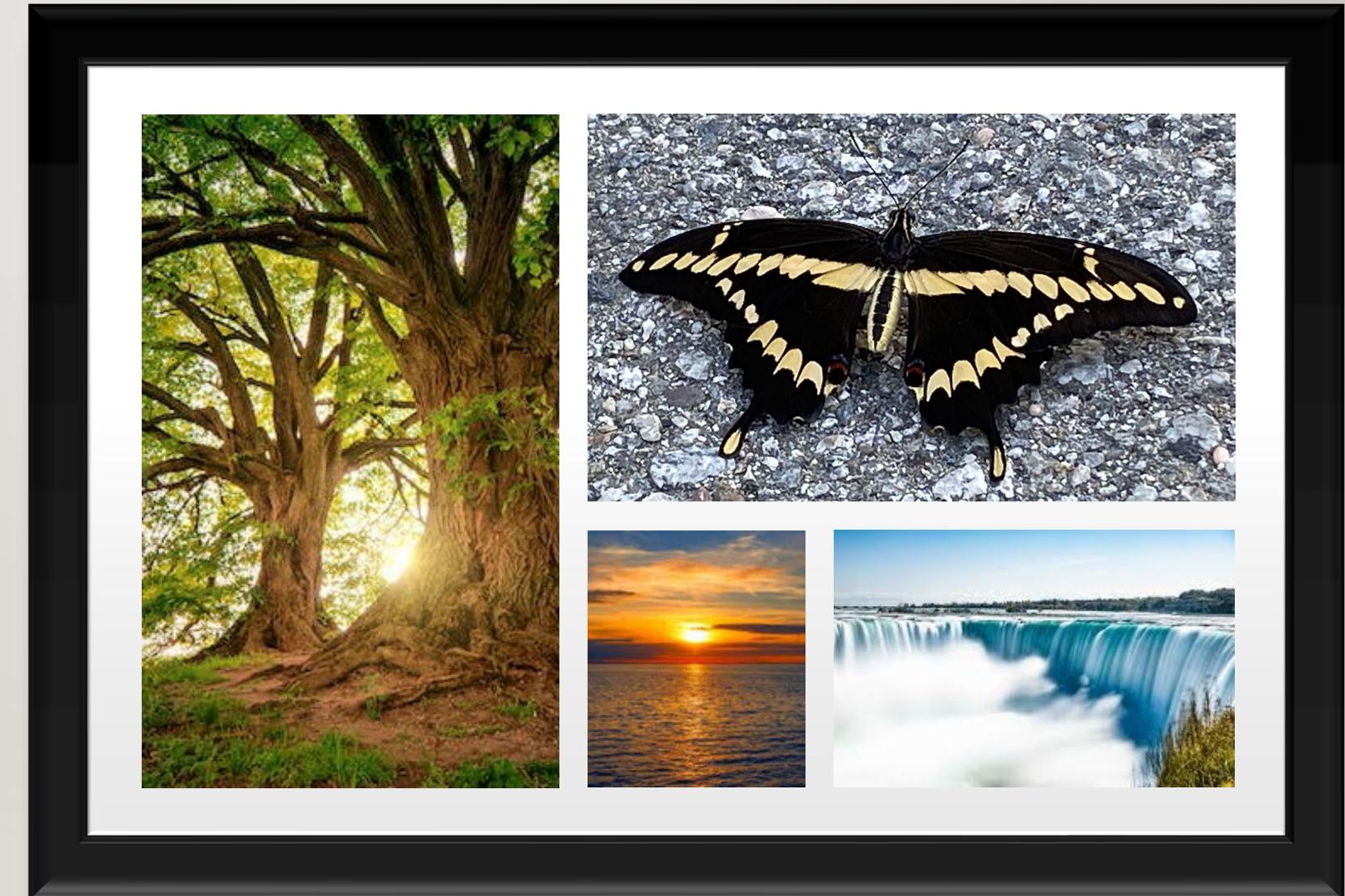
- The Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches have a long tradition of the use of icons.
- Gazing at an icon of Christ, Mary, the Trinity, or one of the saints puts us in contact with the One who gazes back to us.



# IMAGES

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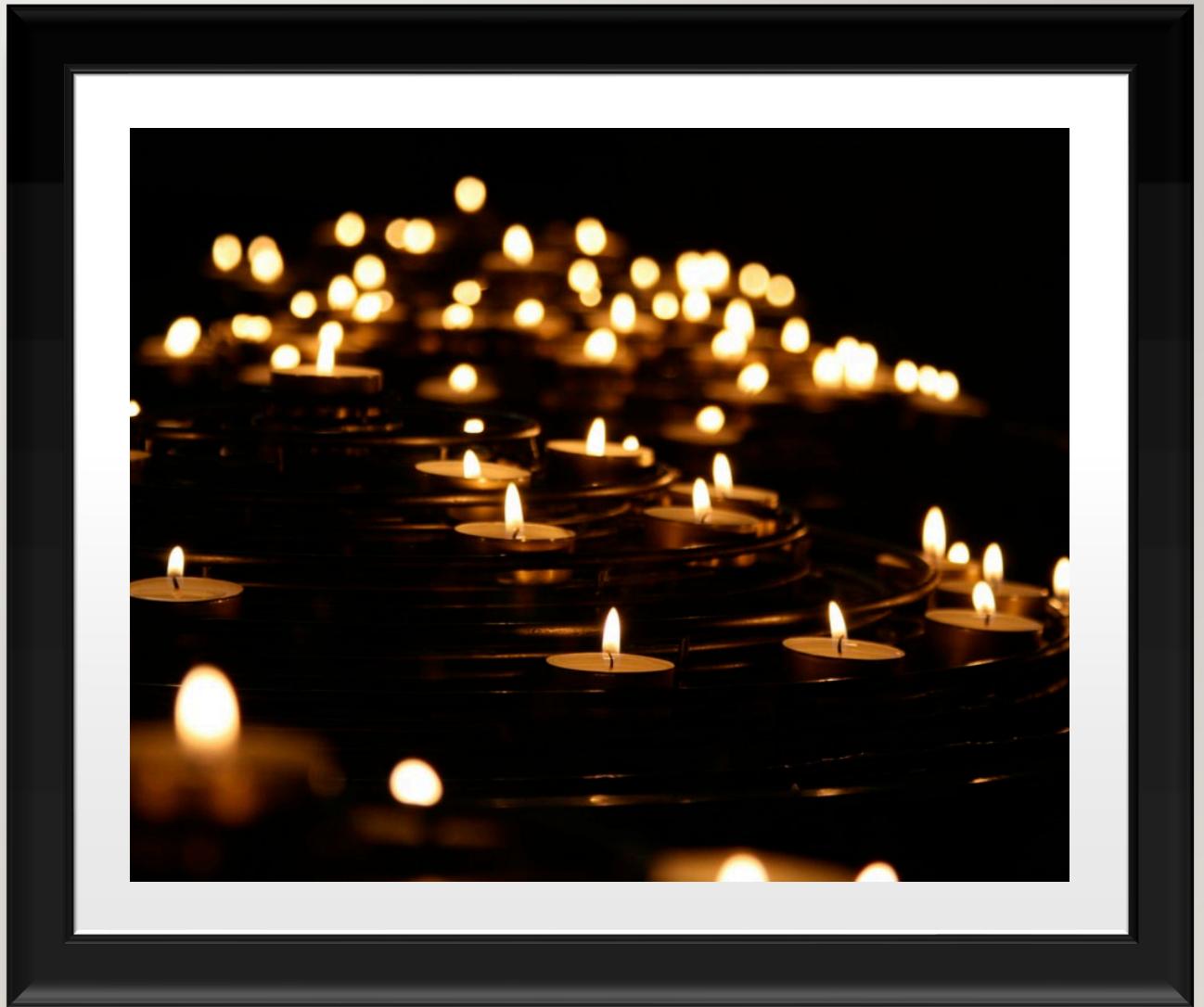
- Visio Divina prayer is very much like Lectio Divina using an image as the focus for meditation.
- The practice of Visio Divina or Holy Gazing can extend beyond the world of icons to pieces of fine art or the natural world.
- Everything in creation is an image of the invisible God.



# THE PRACTICE

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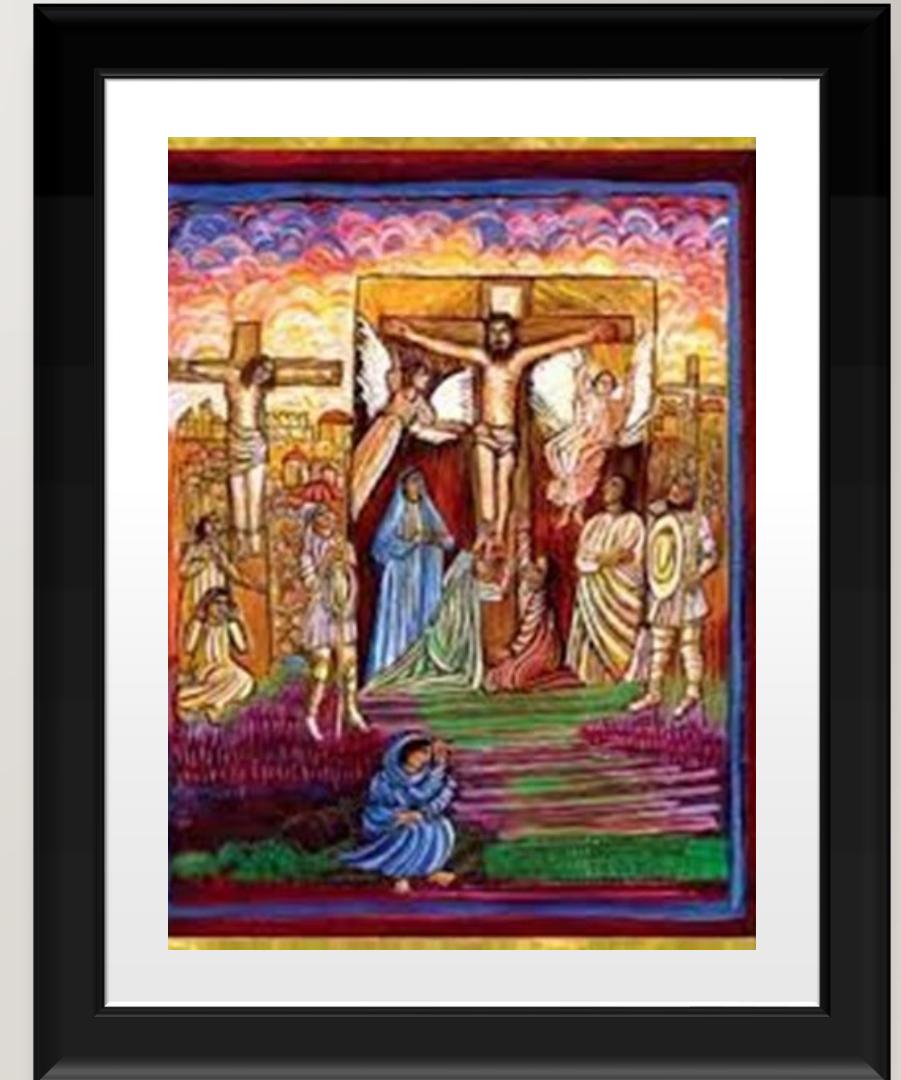
- This evening's session will begin with a short verse from Scripture to help set the tone for this prayer.
- An image will be provided on the screen to direct our focus.
- You will be led into meditation, reflection and awareness of God's presence in your prayer.



# VISIO DIVINA

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Tonight, we will begin by going over the steps for Visio Divina.



# VISIO DIVINA PRACTICE

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## **Step 1**

Identify the art that will be the subject of your reflection. Then pick a comfortable place where you will not be disturbed or distracted. Relax. Closing your eyes and focusing on your breath can be a helpful way to center yourself in the divine.

## **Step 2**

Gaze at the entire picture. Notice the shapes, the colors, and the lighting. Notice the detail of both the foreground and background. Once you have visually canvased the artwork, note what has drawn your attention. Just like in Lectio Divina, it is God that is luring you to a treasure meant just for you.

## Step 3

**Meditate on the part of the picture that has drawn your attention.**

- How is God speaking to you?
- Why do you think God drew your attention to this particular part?
- Is a message conveyed that pertains to your life today?
- Do you sense an invitation? Do you hear a call?
- Is a memory aroused?

**Allow these thoughts to descend to your heart.**

- What emotion is evoked?
- What word describes your inner stirring as you embrace this feeling?

**Allow God's communication to touch you deep within where the Spirit dwells.**

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## Step 4

God has been speaking to you as you meditated on this artwork. It's now time for you to respond to the divine. Allow your words to be born in the recesses of your soul. What is your response? What is your prayer? Articulate any yearnings or desires that arise. Give voice to the emotion that is whirling within.

## Step 5

Words are never sufficient to express our deepest selves. Turn to silence to simply rest in communion with our Creator – the One who kissed your soul before placing it in your body – the One who loves you beyond measure. Savor the stillness. Be soothed by Love.

LET US BEGIN...FIND A RELAXED POSITION...TAKE A  
BREATH...SIT IN QUIET...

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## **EPHESIANS 5:8-14**

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**Brothers and sisters:**

**You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.**

**Live as children of light, for light produces every kind of goodness and righteousness and truth. Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.**

**Take no part in the fruitless works of darkness; rather expose them, for it is shameful even to mention the things done by them in secret; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light.**

**Therefore, it says:**

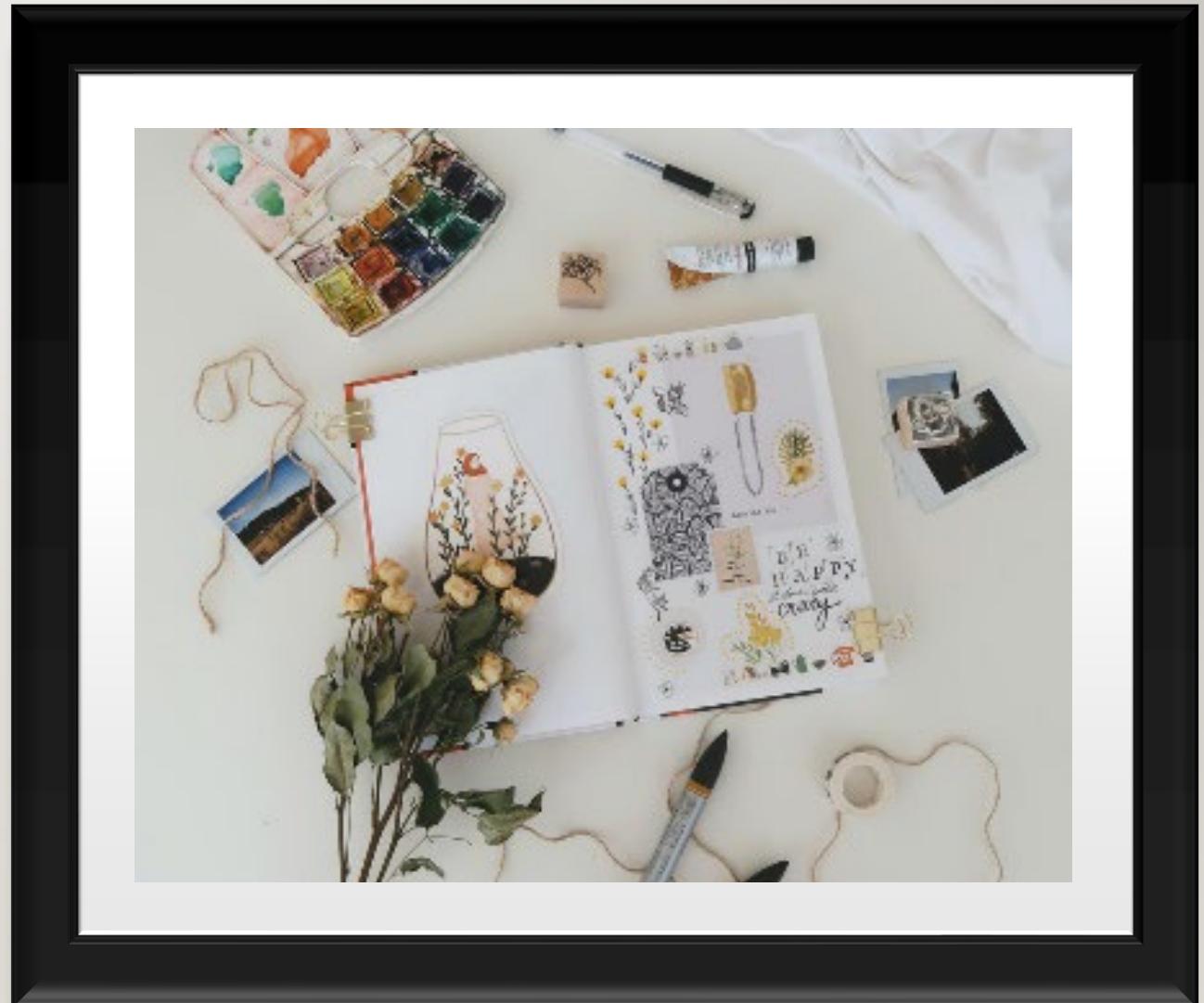
**"Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light."**



# CONCLUSION

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- As you ponder on this prayer experience, rest in God's presence.
- Consider how you are going to incorporate this into your life.
- You may choose to write about your experience in a journal.
- Holy Spirit Retreat Center is hosting an evening Visio Divina on Friday, March 24, 7-8pm. All are welcome.



# RESOURCES

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## PRACTICE

- *The Precious Blood Renewal Center: <https://www.pbrenewalcenter.org>*
- *Thoughts Prayers and Art: [thoughtsprayersandart.com](http://thoughtsprayersandart.com)*

## SCRIPTURE

- <https://bible.usccb.org>

## ART

- *John August Swanson*