

# PRAYER COMPANION

ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS SYNOD PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE SERIES

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A CRY OF UTTER SINCERITY ~ "Create in me a clean heart, O God."

I prepare my heart for prayer

As I begin, I take a moment to become aware of the Lord present to me,  
looking upon me with love, desiring to speak to my heart.

Prayerfully, I read Psalm 51:1-19

After prayerfully reading, I ask for a grace I desire in this time of prayer.

Using my reasoning:

- Think about what is happening in the scene; what are the action words?
- Who are the people in the scene? What is the place? What things are described?
- What words catch my attention? What does this mean to me?

Using my imagination:

- Imagining myself in the scene – am I an observer or participant? To whom am I drawn?
- Using all of my senses - what do I see? What do I hear? What do I feel, smell or taste?

Reflect on what God is saying to my heart:

- As I reflect, I use my spiritual senses to acknowledge what is transpiring in my heart - my thoughts, feelings and desires. (Acknowledge means to see, to notice, to become aware of, to name.) This is important to do, as my thoughts, feelings and desires shape my actions.
- I look for the truth the Lord is communicating to me. I ask Jesus to give me his mind and his thoughts to see with the eyes of his heart what he wants to reveal to me today. How is Jesus calling me to apply this truth to my life?

## Guided Reflection

Quoted from "An Ignatian Introduction to Prayer," by Father Timothy M Gallagher, O.M.V.<sup>1</sup>

Now I turn to the Lord with a heartfelt plea. Like David (see the title to Psalm 51), I live this moment when my spiritual eyes suddenly see with clarity. Like David, I make no more excuses, I no longer try not to see ...

And from the most sincere depth of my heart, like him, I turn to the Lord seeking healing, daring to hope for a new and purified heart, to be set free from my obstacles to love ... to be given a new experience of the joy of healing.

I take up the words of this prayer, Psalm 51. I say them slowly to the Lord, pausing where my heart feels the need, repeating these words with sincerity, with hope, with trust in the love of the One with whom I speak ...

"Have mercy on me, O God, / according to your merciful love." "Have mercy on me" ... the mercy that heals, that restores to value ... that expresses unshakeable love ...

My heart feels this steadfast, this faithful love for me as I pray ...

"Wash me thoroughly ..." I dare, like David to ask even this ...

"For I know my transgressions ..." I ask the Lord to give me this self-knowledge, the first precious step toward healing ...

"Behold, you desire truth in the inward being ..." This is the truth I seek: truth in the heart, this truth that you desire, that you love ...

"Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." "Make me hear joy and gladness ..." I ask this blessed washing, I desire this joy and gladness ...

"Create in me a clean heart, O God." I feel the beauty of this "clean heart ..." I long for this heart ... With simple trust, I ask of the Lord this gift ...

"O Lord, open my lips, / and my mouth shall show forth your praise ..." A song of praise for new freedom from my obstacles to love ...

"The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; / a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise." I turn to the Lord, who comes not for the righteous but for sinners (Mk 2:17) ... I feel the enfolding embrace of his cleansing love ...

I ask for this grace in this time of prayer:

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## Converse with God<sup>2</sup>

### Acknowledge:

- What are the thoughts arising in my heart? I think ...

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- What are the feelings arising in my heart? I feel ...

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- What are the desires arising in my heart? I desire ...

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**Relate:** I honestly relate these to God; I talk to him about them, trusting he is present and listening to me, his beloved child.

### Receive:

- I listen to what the Lord wants to say to my heart, knowing his love is gratuitous and unconditional. I receive his love and consolation. I trust he longs to console me, to encourage me, to strengthen me, to heal me, to forgive me ...
- I allow him to lead me; perhaps returning to the scripture ...

### Respond:

- I conclude my prayer time speaking to Jesus, God the Father, and/or the Holy Spirit as I would speak to a friend. I may also invoke the intercession of Mary and the Saints. (St. Ignatius calls this a colloquy.)
  - Praise him - give glory to God for who he is; for being all good and loving; for being my Lord and savior ...
  - Thank him - for our time together; for his word to me; for the gifts he has given me today ...
  - Ask him - for his help, grace, strength, wisdom, deeper faith ...

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- Based on what God is saying to my heart, I resolve to act in the following concrete way to love God and love neighbor (which could be something small). Today I will ...

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**Rest in the Lord: Be still and know that I am God**

**Psalms 46:10**

<sup>1</sup>Gallagher, T., 2008. An Ignatian Introduction to Prayer: Scriptural Reflections According to The Spiritual Exercises. New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company. <sup>2</sup>This way to converse with God in prayer often called ARRR is taught by The Institute for Priestly Formation out of Omaha Nebraska. For more information see Father Traynor, Scott (2013) *The Parish as a School of Prayer* and Dwyer, Karen and Lawrence (2011) *WRAP Yourself in Scripture* (IPF Publications).