

PRAYER COMPANION

ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS SYNOD PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE SERIES

~ 12 ~

THE SAMARITAN WOMAN ~ "If you knew the gift of 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 John 4:1-42

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.¹

I am there by the well ... I see the dry countryside surrounding the well, the earthen road ... I feel the heat of the midday hours ...

I see Jesus seated by the well, alone, his weariness revealed in his face as he rests ... I become aware that he is waiting for me, that he has a "gift of God" that he longs to give me today ...

I see the woman approach. I see – perhaps I share – her weariness, her burden of repeated failure: five husbands, over and over the same pattern of failure. I feel her sense of helplessness, of burden, of inability to change ... With my own sense of helplessness, of inability to grow as I so desire, I stand there, with her, in her place, before Jesus ...

He speaks: "Give me a drink." She does not flee from the conversation that opens so simply ... and her life begins to change.

"If you knew the gift of God ..." I ask Jesus to help me know the gift that he is offering me even now, as I pray. I ask for eyes that are spiritually open to see *this gift* ... and to embrace it in my life.

I watch, I am in her place, as Jesus, gently, and with great respect for the burdens of her heart, unfolds for her the meaning of her own life, and leads her to grasp the gift he wishes to give her: "living water," a new freshness in the power of the Spirit.

Desire for this newness wells up in her, in me: "Give me this water, that I may not thirst ..."

Now she becomes a witness to Jesus: "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did." She has found a Heart before which she need keep *nothing* hidden, before which openness does not wound, but heals ...

"Many ... from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony." I ask the Lord that his healing touch in my life make of me too a witness, a channel of his light for others ...

I read this passage slowly, I live this passage ...

I ask for this grace in this time of prayer:

Converse with God²

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

Psalm 46:10

¹Gallagher, T., 2008. *An Ignatian Introduction to Prayer: Scriptural Reflections According to The Spiritual Exercises*. New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company. ²This 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).