

PRAYER COMPANION

ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS SYNOD PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE SERIES

~ 15 ~

SPEND YOUR LIFE FOR THE GOSPEL ~ "When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them ..."

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 Matthew 9:35-10:16

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 with Jesus and his disciples as he travels the earthen roads and the villages of Galilee ... I see the crowds flocking to him. I am there as he reaches out to them, teaches them, and heals great numbers of them ... I live with him the days of his apostolic mission of mercy ...

I look upon his face as he raises his eyes to the crowds, as he senses the burden, the hurt, the confusion, the loneliness of this people. They are "like sheep with a shepherd": no one sees their need, no one heals, no one seems even to notice ... This is my world today as well ...

I see the deep compassion which stirs in his heart, which moves him to spend his life for them ... I ask him for the gift of that same compassion in my heart ...

"Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." *Pray therefore* ... I hear him say these words to me, asking me to dedicate my life, my prayer, for the many today who are "like sheep with a shepherd ..."

I watch him call each one of the twelve, by name, to be part of his saving mission ... I hear him call my name now ... How do I respond?

"He gave them authority over unclean spirits ... and to heal every disease ..." I sense the power in him over evil and over all human hurt. I ask him now to share that power with me, that my life too may serve to overcome evil, that I too may be a presence of healing ... that I may be his *apostle* in this world ...

I look upon each one of these twelve: Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip ... I learn about Jesus, and about whom he chooses ... I thank him that he has chosen me ... I ask him to renew in me the desire to bring him to this world ...

I see him send them out on mission ... Two by two, they go out, uncertain, fearful, filled with desire, with trust in his power ... I go out with them ... to spend my life for the Gospel in the calling God has given me.

Now I listen to his words: Go ... preach ... heal ... live simply ... I ask him to explain these words to me ... to show me, in the light of his call to proclaim him to others, how I am living today, this year, now ... I ask him to help me live these words ...

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).