

PRAYER COMPANION

ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS SYNOD PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE SERIES

~ 18 ~

FROM DEATH TO NEW LIFE ~ "See how he loved him!"

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 11:1-44

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

A brother and two sisters ... and a love: "Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus."

An illness ... and a love: "Lord, he whom you love is ill."

I am there as the message of these sisters whom Jesus loves reaches him and his disciples ... And for two days he stays there ... "This illness is not unto death; it is for the glory of God." My heart begins to speak with the Lord of my own weaknesses, my own fragilities: this illness is not unto death, but for the glory of God. I ask him for new understanding ...

"Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world ..." I sense the Lord's call to "walk in the day" he has given me, this day, this year, this stage in my life.

The disciples fail to understand ... Jesus speaks to them plainly: "For your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe."

Jesus and Martha. "Lord, if you had been here ..." My heart too knows this prayer: "Lord, if you had been here ..."

She continues: "And even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you ..." Her faith strengthens mine. Yes, Lord, even now *I know* that your power can work in me, can change me ...

"I am the resurrection ... Do you believe this?" I hear Martha's answer of faith ... I give my own answer to Jesus ...

Jesus and Mary. She hears that Jesus is present and calling her ... She rises quickly, she goes to him. I go with her. I too rise quickly to meet the Lord who calls me today ...

With great reverence, I am present as these two hearts reveal themselves: "Lord, if you had been here ..." Her tears fall ... "He was deeply moved in spirit ... Jesus wept." I gaze at length upon Mary, upon Jesus, in this moment. I ask Jesus to show me what his heart experiences ...

"Take away the stone." The Lord who sets captives free ... who sets me free. I ask him to free me from obstacles to new spiritual life ...

"Lazarus, come out." "Unbind him, and let him go." With the two sisters, I marvel at the transformation of death into life, at the word of Jesus. I ask him to transform me ...

I ask for this grace in this time of prayer:

Converse with God²

Acknowledge:

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

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

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

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 ...

- 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 ...

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

Psalms 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).