

PRAYER COMPANION

ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS SYNOD PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE SERIES

~ 4 ~

FEAR NOT ~ "You are precious in my eyes, / and honored, and I love you"

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 Isaiah 43:1-7

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

God speaks to the heart of the exiled people ... and to me.

I sense the Lord with me, speaking these words to me. I read them slowly, tasting them, allowing their meaning to enter into my soul ... I stay with the words that most speak to me, without hurry ...

"Thus says the Lord, he who created you ... he who formed you ..." With the people of Israel, I again become aware of God at the origin of my being, of my belonging to his people. I sense the mystery of an eternal love that surrounds my whole being, my beginning, my life ...

"Fear not": the word so often repeated by Jesus. I speak to the Lord of the fears in my heart: of my inadequacy, my failure, my slowness to respond ... Again and again I hear his word: "Fear not."

"For I have redeemed you." I am your protector, I am at your side, I am with you; you are not alone. My power and my love accompany you ... I hear the Lord speak his words to me ...

"I have called you by name, you are mine." I think now of my own name. I hear the Lord pronounce my name, giving me my identity, giving me life, making me his own, telling me that I am not alone ... In the silent depth of my heart, I hear the Lord pronounce my name ... again, again ... I respond ...

"When you pass through the waters I will be with you; / and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; / when you walk through fire, you shall not be burned": the symbol of the most dangerous situations, situations which threaten life itself ... and these will be powerless to harm me. I will keep you unharmed even in the most difficult situations in life ... A new trust dawns in my heart ...

"Because you are precious in my eyes, / and honored, and I love you." Three words. With deep attention I ponder each: you are *precious* in my eyes; you are *honored* in my eyes; I *love* you. I dare to hear the Lord say these words to his people Israel ... and to me ...

Now my heart replies to the Lord who speaks his love to 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

Psalm 46:10

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