

PRAYER - IMAGINATIVE CONTEMPLATION

Sometimes known as Ignatian Contemplation and suggested by St Ignatius Loyola as a method to use to pray with Gospel stories.

This is a way of entering into the Scriptures, particularly the Gospels. Use a story from scripture that allows you be part of the action.

As in dreams, you might find interesting and unexpected things come up.



- Choose a passage and familiarise yourself with the story.
- You are in the presence of God, acknowledge this. Offer yourself, your time and your imagination to God.
- Ask God for what you need today, what you desire. This could be to for a greater understanding of Jesus, in words such as: Jesus, may I know you clearly, love you more dearly and follow you more nearly. On the other hand it could be something quite different such as 'grant me more patience' or 'help me to let you more fully into my life'.
- Set the scene from your scripture passage. Take your time, see all that is around, hear, feel, taste, smell. What is the setting of the story in your imagination? Become a character in the story. Who are you? It may be a central character or someone on the sidelines.
- Let the scene unfold naturally. You may imagine it in the present day, or 2000 years ago. You may find it includes people you know. The story might depart from the gospel scene and take on a life of its own. That's fine, trust God, everything human is appropriate material for prayer. Let the scene unfold naturally - what feels right.
- When the story has ended you may want to talk in your own words to Jesus or another of the characters.
- End the prayer with a formal prayer like the 'Our Father'.

When you have finished, look back over the prayer.

See how you reacted and felt.

Is this saying anything about you, the way you see others or God.

Did anything surprise you?

Is there anything that needs healing?

Is there anything you need to pray about in future?

Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

¹ Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ² The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, ⁴ got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. ⁵ Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. ⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?' ⁷ Jesus answered, 'You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.' ⁸ Peter said to him, 'You will never wash my feet.' Jesus answered, 'Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.' ⁹ Simon Peter said to him, 'Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!' ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, 'One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.' ¹¹ For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, 'Not all of you are clean.'

¹² After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you?' ¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I have set you an example that you also should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. ¹⁷ If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. ¹⁸ I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But it is to fulfil the scripture, "The one who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me." ¹⁹ I tell you this now, before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am he. ²⁰ Very truly, I tell you, whoever receives one whom I send receives me; and whoever receives me receives him who sent me.'