

PRAYER COMPANION

ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS SYNOD PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE SERIES

~ 22 ~

JESUS GIVES HIS LIFE ~ “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.”

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 Luke 23:26-49

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

The cross ... in Jesus’ life ... and in mine. Now I will accompany Jesus in his supreme moment of self-giving. I ask him for the courage to carry my own cross, to be faithful “to the end,” like him.

I join the crowd, pushing through the narrow streets. I see the bustle, the agitation; I hear the clamor, the cries, as we climb toward Golgotha. I see Jesus, scourged, crowned with thorns, condemned, rejected, mocked ... carrying the cross, step by step, along the way ...

I gaze at him, slowly, with great attentiveness of heart ... The image of Jesus carrying his cross penetrates my soul ... “If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me” (Lk 9:23). His way of the cross is mine as well ...

Simon assists him ... What does this moment mean for Jesus? For Simon? The women weep for him. *Even now*, Jesus is not absorbed by his own pain, but continues to be alive to the need of others: “Do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves ...”

He is *crucified*. ... I watch the painful stripping; I see the nailing of his hands and feet, the raising of the cross, I hear his tormented breathing ... I think of the times when I have felt – or now feel – crucified in some way, stripped of what is dear to me, nailed helplessly in situations of pain ... when each day brings its burden, its pain ... And I know that I am not alone ...

“They will look upon him whom they have pierced” (Jn 19:37). I do this now. I look upon the crucified Lord ... and he looks at me. We speak ...

“Father, forgive them ...” His first thought, his first word on the cross. I linger here, I ponder the forgiveness in the heart of Jesus. I ask for this forgiveness, I ask that forgiveness be my first thought as well ...

He is mocked ... but one heart turns to him in faith: “Jesus, remember me ...” I unite my voice, too, with this prayer ... “Today you will be with me ...”

Darkness falls, the curtain in the Temple is torn, Jesus cries out with a loud voice: “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.” He gives up his life ... faithful to the end. He has given all, now, for me. I thank him ... I speak with him of the many “deaths” in my life, the losses, the letting go ...

Now, in silence and stillness of heart, I contemplate the one who loved me so much that he gave his life for 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 ...
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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).