

PRAYER COMPANION

ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS SYNOD PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE SERIES

~ 16 ~

WALKING ON WATER ~ "Lord, if it is you, bid me to come to you on the water."

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 14:22-33

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 there, on the other side of the lake. The five thousand have been fed. Now evening has fallen. I hear Jesus send the disciples across the lake in the boat. I see them go ... With great goodness, Jesus also sends the five thousand home.

He is alone under the night sky. I watch, I accompany him reverently, as he goes up into the hills. And there, I see him pray ... I sense his deep joy in the Father's love, the thrill of mutual love between Father and Son which draws him into prayer, as the quiet hours of the night pass ... I watch in silence ... and my own heart speaks to the Lord ...

The disciples struggle in the boat. The wind and the waves beat against them. I, too, know that struggle against obstacles which make my own progress so difficult ... I am there, I see their tired faces, hear their disheartened words. My heart too has spoken such words ...

Jesus does not leave them, does not leave me, alone. He comes to them, walking on the water. And they do *not* recognize him. "They were terrified ... And they cried out for fear."

He speaks to them, to me: "Take heart, it is I; have no fear." I hear him say these words to me ... I listen to these words again and again ... I respond ...

I see the courage in Peter: "Lord, if it is you, bid me to come to you on the water." I ask this same courage of the Lord, to come to him when I sense his call ... to not hold back ...

"Come." I hear the Lord say this word to me ... I see Peter leave the boat, and begin to walk on water, his gaze fixed on Jesus ... And I watch as Peter becomes aware of the wind, of the human insecurity of his position. I sense his courage fail, his fear rise ...

He begins to sink ... and cries out, "Lord, save me." I, too, have cried out in fear ...

Immediately Jesus responds. Two hands clasp: the hand, outstretched in fear, of Peter as he sinks, and the divine hand which holds him up, and saves him, saves me ...

"O man of little faith, why did you doubt?" Why do I doubt? I ask Jesus for a simple faith, a great faith ...

Jesus and Peter join the others in the boat. The wind ceases. Peace returns. Their hearts lift in adoration. With them, I too say: "Truly you are the Son of God." My heart speaks to him ...

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).