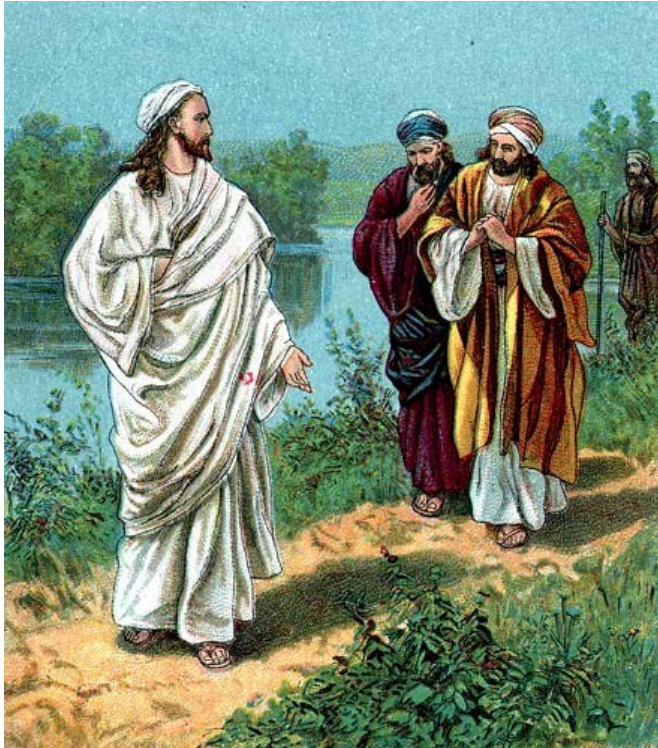


Imaginative Contemplation – Come and see



Introduction

The most frequent way of praying that Saint Ignatius uses is that of imagining ourselves in a Gospel scene. We imagine ourselves as a character in the story. We take part in the story, seeing Jesus and all the other people, being aware of what's going on and how we are feeling. The purpose of praying with the imagination is to allow Christ in the Scripture to speak to us. To bring the Gospel stories to life for us. We are not trying to recreate history. It doesn't matter if your imagination takes the story off in a different direction to the Scripture. It doesn't matter if the story takes place in 1st century Palestine or where we live now in the 21st century. What is important is what God wants to say to us through this passage.

Let us sit and relax so that together we can contemplate the Gospel using our imagination.

Prayer

We acknowledge we are in the presence of God so let us say together:

Direct O Lord and guide and influence all that is happening in my mind and heart during this time of prayer: all my moods and feelings, my memories and imaginings; my hopes and desires; may all be directed and influenced to your greater glory, praise and service and to my growth in your Spirit.
Amen

Let the Spirit enter our hearts and enlighten our minds so that we too have the eyes to see Jesus as he passes by and the courage to accept his invitation to "Come and see".

Reading John 1:35-42

As John stood there again with two of his disciples, Jesus passed by, and John stared hard at him and said, 'Look, there is the Lamb of God'. Hearing this, the two disciples followed Jesus. Jesus turned round, saw them following and said, 'What do you want?' They answered, 'Rabbi,' - which means Teacher - 'where do you live?' 'Come and see' he replied; so they went and saw where he lived, and stayed with him the rest of that day. It was about the tenth hour.

One of these two who became followers of Jesus after hearing what John had said was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter. Early next morning, Andrew met his brother and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah' - which means the Christ - and he took Simon to Jesus. Jesus looked hard at him and said, 'You are Simon son of John; you are to be called Cephas' - meaning Rock.

Contemplation

Having left the Celebration of Christmastide, we enter into Ordinary time. However, it is by no means "Ordinary". because we will hear in the Sunday Gospels the mystery of Christ himself. In Gospel Readings in Ordinary times, His life and preaching unfold. Today's Gospel, the second Sunday in Ordinary time, we see Jesus encountering his first disciples. Let us enter into the scene and follow Jesus to see where he lives.

- Who are you in the passage? John the Baptist? Andrew? The other disciple? A passer-by? Someone or something not specifically mentioned in the passage?
- As you stand with John, where are you and what are you discussing?

- Did you notice Jesus passing by as you were talking to John? Did Jesus look your way? Did you wonder why John stared at him? When John said “Look, there is the Lamb of God” how did he know the true identity of Jesus, as the Messiah?
- What is it about Jesus that makes you want to follow him? Have you already heard from John about the Lamb?
- When Jesus turns round and asks you ‘What do you want?’ What is it that you want? What is it that you are looking for in Jesus and what is it that you are aiming in life?
- Why do you reply “Where do you live?” Is it because you don't know what else to say? Does your question mean something more spiritual? More to do with abiding? Do you have a deep desire to be with Jesus and abide in him?
- When Jesus says “Come and see”, why do you accept his invitation? Is it because you want to know if this is indeed the Lamb of God, the Messiah that John has been preparing a path for? If so, are you ready to start on a new journey with Jesus? To share your life with him? Is it because your eyes and ears are open to the call of Jesus?
- You follow Jesus to his home. What is it like? Is Mary there? Is she surprised that her Son has brought home some friends? Does she welcome you and give you something to eat and drink?
- What is Jesus like? Is the Lamb of God what you expected? What do you expect from the Messiah?
- Are you enjoying his company? What do you talk about? What is it about the conversation that fills your heart with joy, with expectation? What is it about what Jesus is saying to you that makes you want to stay and hear more? That makes you want to follow him? Are you filled with hope? With excitement?
- What is it about Jesus that makes you want to go and share your experience of knowing, loving and serving Jesus with others? What does Simon say when you tell him you have found the Messiah?
- Do you go back and tell John that you have indeed found the one you have been waiting for? What does John say when you tell him you want to become Jesus’ disciple? Are you relieved when John tells you that he knows his own call, recognises Jesus as the Messiah and that he is happy to let the Spirit let you move away to follow Jesus.

As we spend 10 minutes in quiet contemplation speak to Jesus about your experience. Talk to him about who he is for you, about your expectations and desires and about his invitation to “Come and See”.

Sharing

Let us now share what we thought, felt etc. only if you are comfortable to do so.

End Prayer Suscipe of St. Ignatius of Loyola

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty,
my memory, my understanding,
and my entire will,

All I have and call my own.

You have given all to me.

To you, Lord, I return it.

Everything is yours; do with it what you will.

Give me only your love and your grace,
that is enough for me.

Scripture texts: from the Jerusalem Bible 1966 by Dartington Longman & Todd Ltd
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