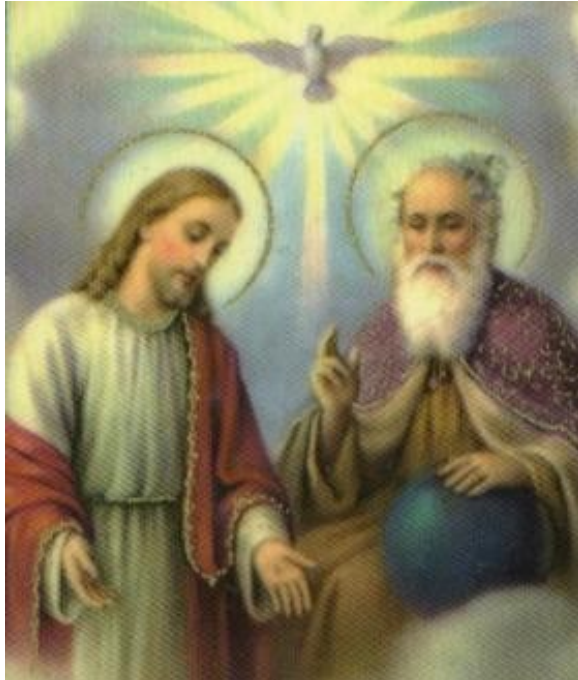


Imaginative Contemplation – Trinity Sunday



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.

Sit and relax by focussing on your breathing for a few minutes so that you can contemplate the Gospel using our imagination.

Prayer

Acknowledge you are in the presence of God by saying the following prayer:

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 minds as we as we are invited to reflect on the mystery of God who has revealed himself to us in the persons of the Father, his Son, Jesus and his Spirit who dwells in us.

Reading Matthew 28:16-20

The eleven disciples set out for Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them. When they saw him they fell down before him, though some hesitated.

Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time."

Contemplation

Today, on this Sunday immediately after Pentecost, we celebrate the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity, Trinity Sunday. The Gospel for this Solemnity is taken from the conclusion of the Gospel of Matthew in which we read about the disciples discovering Jesus' empty tomb, Jesus appearing to Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to give a message to the disciples, and finally in this Scripture Reading, Jesus commissions his disciples. So put yourself in the scene and imagine your shock, disbelief and joy when you see Jesus on the mountainside.

- Who are you in the scene? One of the apostles? A passer-by, maybe a shepherd? Perhaps you are one of the women?

- What time of day is it? What is the weather like? Are you hot with walking? Did you have to walk far to reach the place you are to meet Jesus? What is the mood of you and your companions? What do you notice about what is going on around you?
- Are you walking in silent, lost in your own thoughts? If so, what is going through your mind? Doubt, fear, expectation, hope? If you are talking, what are you talking about? Is it about what you might find when you reach your destination? The credibility of the women's story? Are you afraid, if so why? Do you feel guilty because you deserted Jesus when he needed you most?
- Do you believe the message that Jesus gave to the women for you to meet him on the mountain? After the shock of Jesus' crucifixion and death and the grief you have experienced, do you believe that he could have risen from the dead? After all you did see him die.
- As you are walking to the mountain, do you think of the other events when you were with Jesus that took place on a mountain; the transfiguration; the feeding of the five thousand; the sermon on the mount? Does the message of the women make you think that it could be true since many of the important events in Scripture take place on a mountain?
- What do you do when you see Jesus waiting for you as promised? Can you believe what you see? Do you fall down before him, if so, why? Do you hesitate, if so, why? Do you feel shy, speechless, as though you are seeing a ghost? After all, you know you saw him die.
- How do you feel when Jesus says, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you." Are you still in shock seeing him standing there? Do you think "I can only speak one language so how can I make disciples of all nations"? Do you wonder how and where to start sharing your knowledge of Jesus with all nations? Do you feel overwhelmed with Jesus' mission for you? Do you feel unqualified for this mission? Do you wonder if people will

listen to you – unqualified, uneducated? Are you afraid you will suffer the same fate as Jesus; scorned, laughed at, crucified? Or do you think of all the good that you witnessed during these last three years – the healing of body and mind, the joy people felt when they had been healed or forgiven? Do these thoughts counteract your apprehension?

- When Jesus says, “And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.” how does that make you feel? Does it make you feel empowered? Does it give you confidence to carry out his mission knowing he is alongside you? Do you feel excited? Happy that Jesus’ trusts you to take over where he left off? Happy that you have been chosen to Baptise in the name of the Father, the Son and the Spirit knowing that Jesus is with you?

Feel what is going on inside you as you listen to these words of Jesus. Speak to him about the contribution you can make to the mission of the Church. Notice that you are being asked to start where you are.

Let us now spend ten minutes in quiet contemplation

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.