

Imaginative Contemplation – The Spirit of Truth



Trinity (Andrei Rublev) From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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 your 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 guide our hearts and enlighten our minds for the grace to believe the mystery that God has revealed himself to us in the Trinity – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Reading John 16:12-15

Jesus said to his disciples:

"I still have many things to say to you
but they would be too much for you now.

But when the Spirit of truth comes he will lead you to the complete truth,
since he will not be speaking as from himself
but will say only what he has learnt;
and he will tell you of the things to come.

He will glorify me,
since all he tells you will be taken from what is mine.
Everything the Father has is mine: that is why I said:
All he tells you will be taken from what is mine."

Contemplation

Today, the Sunday immediately after Pentecost, we celebrate the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity. The Gospel Reading is taken from St John's long discourse at the Last Supper where Jesus speaks of his relationship with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Let us enter the scene as we listen to Jesus trying to comfort his confused and anxious disciples by telling them they will not be facing a future without him alone..

- Who are you within the story? Are you one of the disciples? If so, which one? Perhaps you are someone not specifically mentioned in the story?
- Look around the room you are in with Jesus and the disciples. What is the atmosphere like? Is it hot and stuffy? Is it cool and

airy? What do you notice about those around you? Are they attentive? Sleepy? Confused? Anxious? Tense? Expectation?

- When Jesus says "I still have many things to say to you but they would be too much for you now", how do you feel? Does it make you feel afraid of the future? Does it make you feel afraid that he may ask you something you are not comfortable with? Does it make you feel afraid to hear what he might say next? Do you feel confused? Do you feel that there is just too much to take in at this moment in time? What is there in your life that perhaps is too much for you to take in? Do you feel you need time to reflect on what Jesus is saying to you?
- When Jesus says "When the Spirit of truth comes he will lead you to the complete truth" how do you feel? Reassured and comforted by Jesus telling you that the Holy Spirit will help you understand? Afraid because you do not know what the truth will bring? Or does it bring you peace of mind because you trust that what Jesus wants for you is life-giving?
- Do you think that the Spirit of Truth will help you in the mission Jesus has in mind for you? Do you think the Spirit of Truth will enable you to see and hear the word of God in your daily life as taught by Jesus? What do you believe is the truth brought to you by the Spirit?
- Do you understand when Jesus reminds you that everything he is telling you comes from the Father and then comes to you through the Spirit? That there are not three separate messages but one truth? Do you realise you will need the help of the Spirit to be open to understanding this truth? That this truth the Spirit is leading you to is one of the presence of God's love in your life and in the life of others?
- As Jesus speaks, do you feel the unique relationship he has with his Father and the Spirit – that great mystery of the Blessed Trinity – three persons that share everything? As you reflect on Jesus' words and try to make sense of them, do you recall the times he prayed to the Father and spoke to him as a separate person whilst being at one with him? Do you also recall that he promised to send the Holy Spirit after he was no longer with you?
- As you continue to reflect on the fact that there are three persons in the one God, How do you feel? Confused? Anxious because you don't understand? Or are you comforted in the fact that Jesus showed us the truth that God is love, that he created us out of love

and for love? That we are created out of the relationship of love of the Trinity for a relationship of love for God and one another?
Ask Jesus for the graces and blessings to be open to the Spirit of Truth so that you can bear witness to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in your every day life.

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 and Doubleday and Company Ltd