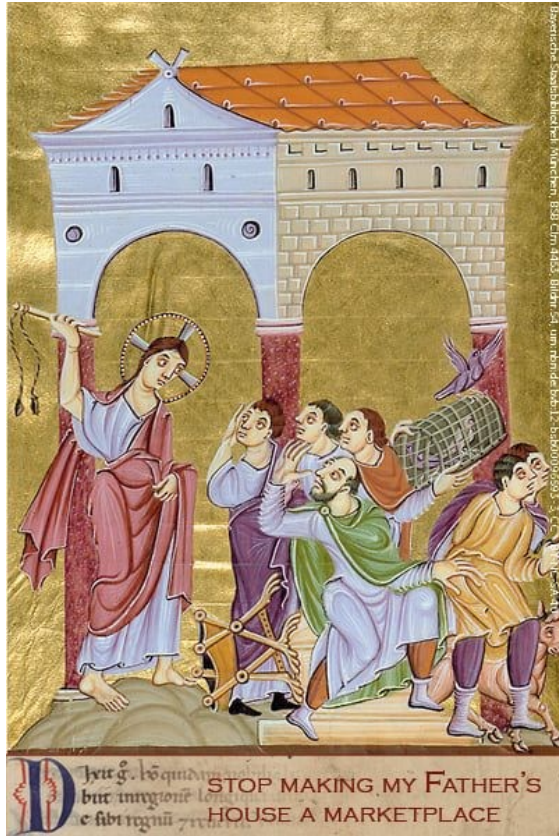


Lectio Divina – Destroy this sanctuary, and in three days I will raise it up



Lectio Divina – Listening to God's Word with our hearts

“And the word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us”

In Imaginative Contemplation we pray with the Scriptures, allowing Christ in the Scriptures to speak to us through our imagination. In Lectio Divina we pray with the Scriptures by dwelling on God's word by listening with our heart. In Imaginative Contemplation, Jesus' words, actions, teaching and relationships with people become familiar to us when we enter into the Scripture passage using our imagination. In Lectio Divina, God's word becomes familiar to us by listening with our hearts and dwelling on His words. Listening with our hearts is something we do automatically in everyday life when we for example dwell on the beauty of nature or listening to someone we love or recall a poignant memory.

Lectio Divina or divine reading has four parts: reading, repeating, responding and resting.

Reading: Begin by reading the Scripture Passage slowly until a word or a phrase resonates with you. Then stop for the moment.

Repeating: Dwell on the words you have chosen. Repeat them again and again as though God is saying them to you. Try not to analyse them, just let them speak to you. Savour the words.

Responding: Allow God's heart to speak to your heart. He wants to be close to you so ask yourself what this invitation could mean. Speak to God with your heart. Be open to what he is trying to reveal to you. Share with God whatever is coming into your heart and mind.

Resting: Rest in the embrace and love of God. It is God's response to us. Your whole being is focussed on God so dwell in the moment. When you feel ready, move on.

As you listen to the following passage, note which parts move you but don't analyse anything. Then when you are ready, **read, repeat, respond** and **rest** and when you have dwelt on the words that initially resonated with you, continue on reading the passage and repeat the process.

Prayer

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

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 to the knowledge that we are temples of God and that there is a sacred place within each of us where love can dwell and flow from us, a place of peace and light, a place where God is

Reading John 2:13-25

Just before the Jewish Passover Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and in the Temple he found people selling cattle and sheep and pigeons, and the money changers sitting at their counters there. Making a whip out of some cord, he drove them all out of the Temple, cattle and sheep as well, scattered the money changers' coins, knocked their tables over and said to the pigeon-sellers, 'Take all this out of here and stop turning my Father's house into a market'. Then his disciples remembered the words of scripture: Zeal for your house will devour me. The Jews intervened and said, 'What sign can you show us to justify what you have done?' Jesus

answered, 'Destroy this sanctuary, and in three days I will raise it up'. The Jews replied, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this sanctuary: are you going to raise it up in three days?' But he was speaking of the sanctuary that was his body, and when Jesus rose from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and the words he had said.

During his stay in Jerusalem for the Passover many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he gave, but Jesus knew them all and did not trust himself to them; he never needed evidence about any man; he could tell what a man had in him.

Questions for Reflection

As you slowly read this Gospel passage, allow the words of this Gospel Passage to soak into your mind. You may want to light a candle to help you ponder the passage or reflect on the words of Pope Francis below or meditate on the icon at the top of the page.

1. What is this passage saying to you?
2. What word(s), sentence or phrase in this Gospel passage most caught your attention; most touched your heart; most challenged you; most comforted you? Is there anything in this passage that you found uncomfortable?
3. Jesus made a whip and drove out all those who were trading in the temple as well as liberating the animals to be used as sacrifice.. Can you remember a time when you were consumed by rage at what you knew to be a terrible injustice? Can you remember a time of seeing someone, or perhaps yourself, confront an injustice or an abuse courageously?
4. Knowing that you, yourself are a temple of God, what are the things in your life that need to be driven out in order for you to follow Jesus more faithfully? In what ways can you place God more centrally in your life without all the disordered attachments?
5. The Jews wanted to see a sign from Jesus to justify his actions. Are you able to entrust yourself completely to God's hands in an act of faith, or do you ask for signs? Do you see the signs God's presence in your life? How can you be more attentive to God's loving presence in your daily life?

Pope Francis asks us:

- Does the Lord feel at home in my life?
- Do we allow Him to “cleanse” our hearts and to drive out the idols, those attitudes of cupidity, jealousy, worldliness, envy, hatred, those habits of gossiping and tearing down others?
- Do I allow Him to cleanse all the behaviours that are against God, against our neighbour, and against ourselves?
- Each one can answer for him/herself, in the silence of his/her heart: “Do I allow Jesus to make my heart a little cleaner?”

Jesus cleanses with tenderness, mercy, love. Mercy is the His way of cleansing. Let us, each of us, let us allow the Lord to enter with His mercy — not with the whip, no, with His mercy — to cleanse our hearts. With us, Jesus’ whip is His mercy. Let us open to Him the gates so that He will make us a little purer.

Let us now spend 10 minutes reading, repeating, responding and resting and then 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 and Doubleday and Company Ltd