

## Praying the Scriptures

An Ecumenical Scripture Resource for  
Parishes/Groups/Communities to use during  
Ecumenical Bible Week 2019



### We Pray Together

Confident that Jesus is our loving brother who cares for us, we offer our prayers:

For the pilgrim Church in every land

***R/. May it be filled, guided and governed by your Holy Spirit.***

For the religious leaders of the world

***R/. Come with your unfailing help and give them your strength in their ministry.***

For missionaries throughout the world

***R/. Bless their work that all people may know the light of Christ.***

For all who suffer

***R/. Comfort and strengthen them and keep us attentive to their needs.***

For Our Community of Faith

***R/. May we always be fearless witnesses through our words and actions to your loving presence with us.***

***We take a moment to bring our own prayers...***

**Our Father...**

### Closing Prayer

Almighty God, we bless you for giving your Son to be the example of Your love for us here on earth. Grant that we who are strengthened by his risen presence may follow him in our daily life and always be examples of his compassionate love to all. May your Spirit strengthen us. This we ask in Jesus' name. ***Amen.***

And may the Lord bless us and keep us forever in His love, ***In the name of the Father...***



**Welcome & Introduction to the gospel passage**

**Centring Prayer - We invite the Lord**

**Opening Prayer** God, the living word, we ask that we may be aware of the power of your word speaking in our lives. As we gather to explore this word for ourselves and each other we do so in an atmosphere of openness and respect for all gathered here and for your presence among us. AMEN

**Lectio** - *Reading the Bible passage gently and slowly several times. (We will read the scripture a few times during this prayer with a break for silence in between allowing the Word to settle in our hearts)*

Remember the passage itself is not as important as the savouring of each portion of the reading, constantly listening for the "still, small voice" of a word or phrase that somehow speaks to you.

**Acts (2:1-11)** - *New International Version (NIV)*

*When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.*

*Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power."*

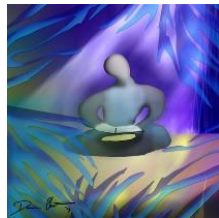
*After a short pause - The text is read a second time – possibly from a different version or in a different language*

**As you are listening ask yourself:**

***Is there anything about this passage that I do not understand? Is there anything that I find confusing or would like explained?***

After some silence ask your question simply and briefly and allow the group to respond briefly.

**Meditatio** - Reflecting on the text of the passage and thinking about how it applies to one's own life. This is considered to be a very personal reading of the Scripture and very personal application



**Ask yourself the question –**

***What word or phrase catches my attention?***

As you recognize a word, phrase, or idea, focus your attention on that word, repeating it to yourself silently allowing the word of God to sink deep into your heart.

*Each person has an opportunity to share that word or phrase without comment or embellishment.*

**Oratio** – Responding to the passage by opening the heart to God. This is not primarily an intellectual exercise, but is thought to be more of the beginning of a conversation with God.

*The text is read again.* This time, focus your attention on how the word, phrase, or idea speaks to your life today.



**Ask yourself:**

***What does it mean for me today? How is Christ, the Word, speaking to me about my life through this word, phrase, or idea? What challenge is being set before you?***

*You are now invited to share briefly.*

**Contemplatio** - Listening to God. This is a freeing of oneself from one's own thoughts, both mundane and holy, and hearing God talk to us. Opening the mind, heart, and soul to the influence of God.

*We read the text again.* This time, focus on what God is calling you to do or become. Experiencing God's presence changes us. It calls us to something—

**During this final reading ask yourself the question –**

***What is God calling you to do or to be as a result of this experience?***

After a period of silence, you are now invited to share and discuss with the group your thoughts, maybe confronting everyday problems and maybe offering concrete solutions that YOU can begin to do.

*Allow the group wisdom, experience and the Holy Spirit to grow and deepen your understanding.*