



## Praying the Scripture - a few simple steps at home

### Sunday 21st July 2019

1. Start with stillness and quietening down; then gently read the passage, noticing any feelings and connections to your own experience.
2. Read the passage again and spend time noticing what you don't readily understand. *The notes in your Bible may be of help at this point.*
3. Read the passage a third time - wondering how you yourself might pray the text over the next few days.
4. Over the next week, set aside times to come back more than once to the passage. You could read it all or part of it again, slowly. Perhaps there is a special word for you in this passage of Scripture? Keep this word or phrase in your thoughts and gently repeat it, bringing it to mind and allowing God to speak to you in your heart.
5. Finally, come back to the text to conclude: What is God in this scripture asking of you this week? What is the one challenge, one little change you are asked to make or the thing you have been asked to do? Then say a prayer of thanksgiving for the good news in the passage. End in quiet prayer.



### **THIS SUNDAY'S GOSPEL - LUKE 10:38-42**

Jesus entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her."

Some scripture scholars remark that this gospel is less about work versus prayer and more about breaking boundaries. They understand that sitting at Jesus' feet or, listening to any rabbi was reserved for men only. They in turn would become teachers of faith. But here, Mary has stepped out of the traditional role when she should be in the women's quarters and Jesus fully approves, inviting Martha to do the same.

What boundaries, constraints and restrictions does the way we live our faith or practice our beliefs put on others?

### **SOME POINTERS FOR PRAYER**

- Jesus does not condemn Martha for trying to be a good hostess. Rather, he tells her that she has become anxious and troubled over catering issues! She had lost her perspective of why she was serving in the first place. Have I lost sight of what is most important in life? Am I so busy doing many things that I do not have any time for God?
- Many people misunderstand hospitality. They worry and fret about decorating the house and preparing abundant food. Yet sometimes it is something else that is needed to make people feel at home, namely, to sit with guests and to listen to them speaking. What has been your experience of being a cherished guest and when have you been able to make others feel welcome and at home?
- We can make the same mistake in relation to people who are important to us in life: children, friends, parents, or others. We can worry and fret about doing things for them when perhaps the important thing is to give them time and to listen to them. What does your experience tell you?
- When it comes to welcoming God into our lives, one appropriate response is to give time listening to God's word. When have you found time devoted to the word of God enriching for you

### **Prayer**

Loving God you draw near to us in Christ and make yourself our guest. Amid the cares of our daily lives, make us attentive to your voice and alert to your presence, that we may treasure your word above all else. Amen