



# Praying the Scripture - a few simple steps at home

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> Sept 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 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 14:1, 7-14

*On a Sabbath Jesus went to dine at the home of one of the leading Pharisees, and the people there were observing him carefully. He told a parable to those who had been invited, noticing how they were choosing the places of honour at the table. "When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not recline at table in the place of honour. A more distinguished guest than you may have been invited by him, and the host who invited both of you may approach you and say, 'Give your place to this man,' and then you would proceed with embarrassment to take the lowest place. Rather, when you are invited, go and take the lowest place so that when the host comes to you he may say, 'My friend, move up to a higher position.' Then you will enjoy the esteem of your companions at the table. For every one who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted." Then he said to the host who invited him, "When you hold a lunch or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or your wealthy neighbours, in case they may invite you back and you have repayment. Rather, when you hold a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; Blessed indeed will you be because of their inability to repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."*

## SOME POINTERS FOR PRAYER

- Take a breath and imagine how you would feel if a person in authority came to you and told you to move so that your seat could be given to someone else. Would you resist? Would you argue? Would you go willingly? Would your response be one of anger? Frustration? Shame? Seeking respect and (*metaphorically*) my place at the table is a normal human desire. It can become deformed into the raw putting of myself first while ignoring others. Spend a bit of time thinking about this, this week.
- The first scene portrays a common dilemma - choosing between a received tradition and what is good in a particular situation. When have I been faced with such dilemmas and how did I respond?
- Jesus consistently places the "good" above the rules, a challenging position for today's church at a critical juncture. For example, the Catholic tradition of a celibate clergy can result in depriving communities of the Eucharist. Have I had similar experiences in my own sphere of influence?
- In a disturbing way, Jesus upturns the everyday view of social interaction and relationships. The radical call of the gospel can be very threatening and yet we know that this practical expression mirrors the inclusivity of Jesus' own proclamation. Where do I feel such a radical call and how do I act?

## Prayer

Compassionate God, at your table, all are welcome. As we enjoy your hospitality, help us to take it to heart, so that as we have received, so we may give. Amen