



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

### Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> Dec 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 - Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.' Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, 'Out of Egypt I have called my son.' When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead.' Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, 'He will be called a Nazorean.'

### SOME POINTERS FOR PRAYER

- What strikes you most in this passage from Matthew?
- Matthew introduces us to the person of Jesus as one who becomes one with the fate of His people. Read the passages cited in the key to the reading so as to reflect and pray on the events of the people of God, with which Jesus identified Himself. What are similar situations in our world? Ask yourself what you can do to better the conditions where you live and work?
- Jesus, Mary and Joseph went through a period of being – like tens of millions today – 'displaced persons'. Think of those who have had to flee their homeland and seek refuge in a foreign land.
- Perhaps we could call Joseph 'the saint of trust' - being kept in the dark till the last moment – and then having to put his faith in whatever direction he was given. How do we respond in faith to God's call?
- The rich farmer is a fool not because he is wealthy or because he saves for the future, but because he appears to live only for himself, and because he believes that he can secure his life with his abundant possessions. How do I live for others?
- Like any newly married couple, Mary and Joseph had their dreams and hopes. He was a skilled carpenter, so their future seems secure. Suddenly everything falls apart – the birth in a stable, the flight into Egypt, the long wait till they could return to Galilee. But in all the mess they stay faithful to one another, and they rear the Son of God. How do we support family life no matter how much it is threatened?

### Prayer

Loving Father, thank you for my family, for those who have given me example, support and strength. Let your word guide me so as to do and be my best for others. Amen