



Praying the Scripture - a few simple steps at home

Sunday 28th June 2020

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 10:37-42 – Take up your cross and follow me

"Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward."

A Short Thought

Jesus sends the apostles to proclaim the gospel. In today's passage, he gives them the last guidance. He says, "Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me" We are asked to preach the Gospel message through our words and deeds - to have in front of us Jesus and His gospel – and live this always in our hearts. But this isn't always easy, in fact it can be far from it. If take an example of a priest. As a novice he maybe full of zeal and the desire to bring the message Christ to the world and is willing to dedicate his life to it through the vocation of priesthood. Over time, problems, failures, pressure of the administration of a parish, perhaps even boredom and disappointment can come. The focus can shift and even at times may get lost in the mundane struggles of everyday life. It is difficult to live the word of Jesus in the ordinary, to commit every day to the cross and walking our lives for Him. And yet, this is exactly what liberates us. Accepting your cross does not mean only giving up, but also accepting our fragility, weakness, failure. It is exactly in the mundane struggles and pressures of every day life that the Gospel message is transformative. American spiritual writer Henry Nouwen says: It is not the right question: "Am I strong enough to be the proclaimer of the gospel?" But "am I sufficiently weak?"

SOME POINTERS FOR PRAYER

1. Sometimes our heart is so cluttered with worries, fears or responsibilities that we can not hear or respond to God's call – Do we give ourselves space and time to truly listen?
2. The Gospel of Jesus is not only about a way of life founded on love and mercy, but above all about the person of Jesus himself. Today Jesus claims a special place in our lives, more important than our dearest ones. Being a disciple is not a marginal aspect of my life, it is central. Ask for the grace to be a real disciple of Jesus, capable of taking our cross and following him.
3. Jesus assures us that even the smallest gesture of mercy to those in need will not go unnoticed.

Where have you seen God's mercy at work in your life and in the lives of others? Reflect on the many such gestures that fill your life.

4. We are rarely asked for a cup of water. But the rewards promised by Jesus extend beyond individual almsgiving to those who work for others in a thousand hidden ways, for instance maintaining a city water system, or caring for public hygiene, as civil servants, plumbers, engineers, scientists, street-cleaners or parents of families. We live in a more complex society, but the same care and generosity are found in all walks of life, wherever people devote themselves to the service of others. Who have been the unseen examples of love and service to us? Have we been that for others?
5. Pray for strength and courage to truly follow Jesus – What does this ask of you?

Prayer -

Lord we thank you for the people of Wisdom you sent into our lives. As we welcomed them we were able to share their greatness and grow in wisdom and hope. Forgive us for the times we go about with a sense of superiority rather than humility and gratefulness to you for helping us on our journey. Lord help us to walk with all your people in a spirit of humility and love. Let us trust in your presence, to bring hope and new life to those in need. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. **Amen**

Prayer in these uncertain times

We pray for all those in our country and throughout the world suffering from the Corona Virus. May its victims and their families be strengthened by the support of our community of faith and restored soon to full health. We also pray for our leaders and medical personnel who deal with the virus. May we keep calm and may we join together in solidarity with care and compassion to tackle this emergency. This we ask in confidence through Christ Our Lord. Amen

