



Praying the Scripture - a few simple steps at home

Sunday 18th April 2021

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 24:35-48 'Peace be with you.'

Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. He said to them, 'Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.' And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate in their presence.

Then he said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.'

A Short Thought

The gospel insists on the event that happened that first day of the week, when the Risen Jesus came among his disciples to free them from their doubt and fears and convince them that he really was alive. To us it might seem surprising, even inexplicable, and without any possible excuse, that the people closest to Jesus were so slow in coming to believe that he had risen. We forget that they had seen him dying and they knew the place where he was buried. They were eyewitnesses of his death and ill-prepared to accept the reality of a life that they could not even imagine, of which they had no experience, and which they were not in any way expecting. It is no easier for us today than it was for the first disciples, to reach the conviction that Christ is alive. We did not see him dying on the cross but it is difficult for us to imagine him alive in our midst. This is our problem. We confess that Jesus is risen, but we have to admit that, at the end of the day, we are not too sure of it, since we have never met him. It is easy to repeat with our lips the statement of his resurrection, since we did not see him dying on the cross, but we find it hard to feel that we are accompanied by the Risen Lord. Why is it that we are so slow to share our faith with one another, that we are afraid to speak the hope that sustains us in adversity, and we lack the simplicity to be sincere with those who share our love of Christ?

SOME POINTERS FOR PRAYER

1. "Peace be with you" - here again we see that Jesus' presence brings peace – Where do you feel the peace of Christ in your life?
2. Jesus is very practical in the way he shows them he is real. How does Jesus try to help his disciples accept that he really has risen from the dead?
3. What helps you trust Jesus? What builds your faith that he is alive and in our midst today? Can you talk to your friends or family about it?. Jesus describes the disciples as "witnesses to these things" (verse 48).
4. They were eyewitnesses. In what way can we today also be considered witnesses?

5. Can you recall a time of spiritual joy or peace when life was tough? Pray for God to remind you and for others who may need this hope today.

Prayer -

God of life, source of all faith, through the waters of baptism you have raised us up in Christ and given us life that endures. Day by day, refine our faith that we who have not seen the Christ, may truly confess him as our Lord and God, and share the blessedness of those who believe.

We ask this through Jesus, who died and rose for love of us and who lives and reigns 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

