



## Praying the Scripture - a few simple steps at home Sunday 8th August 2021

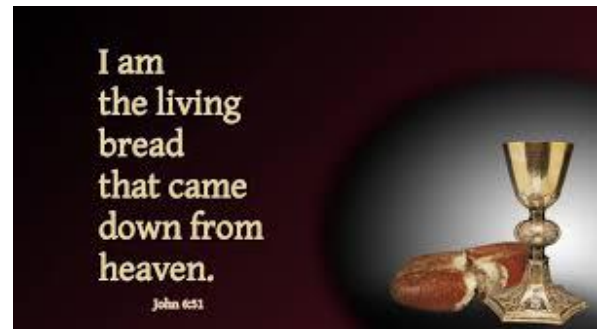
1. Start with stillness and quietening down; then gently read the passage, noticing any feelings and connections to your own experience.
2. Read the passage again and spend understand. *The notes in your Bible may be of help at this point.*
3. Read the passage a third time - wondering how you yourself 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 – John 6:41-51** I am the living bread ...

*Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, 'I am the bread that came down from heaven.' They were saying, 'Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, "I have come down from heaven"?' Jesus answered them, 'Do not complain among yourselves. No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day. It is written in the prophets, "And they shall all be taught by God."*

*Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father. Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.'*



### **A Short Thought**

People start to grumble because Jesus said that He is the Bread of Heaven. They know His father and mother. How could He have come from heaven?

Jesus responds by saying that nobody can come to the Him unless the Father draws them. Anyone who believes has eternal life. He is the Bread of Heaven, just like the manna their ancestors ate in the desert.

Salvation is a person, not a religion. If we really want to be sure of eternal life, we must attach ourselves to Jesus and follow His way. We must build a personal relationship with one who truly nourishes us.

Good deeds and religious virtues can never make us right with God. Only Jesus can do that. Anyone who believes (*a better translation would be "trusts"*) in Jesus has eternal life.

Teilhard de Chardin writes: 'we are spiritual beings on a human journey'. This means that at our deepest we are spiritual. Our essence is from God and for God, and the journey is human. Both are one.

In all of this is the presence of Jesus. The one who is our bread of life, and through us he feeds others in many ways. In receiving the bread of life we commit ourselves to being 'Eucharist People' offering the love and compassion of God to the world.

Sometimes we have to wait, and maybe sift through different moods. In the awaiting is the feeding. We are being fed all the time by God, and sometimes we don't notice. The Eucharist is the summit of other feedings and meals.

Our hopes of life after death and our resurrection give the food that always lasts. At the time of death we need reminders of meeting God in the next life!

We might picture people in great need – of food, of meaning in life, of hope.

Pray for them offering to bring food for body and soul when we can. Give us this day our daily bread, O Lord.

## SOME POINTERS FOR PRAYER

1. 'Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, "I have come down from heaven"?' The crowd let their prejudices get the better of them: assuming they knew everything about Jesus they had a good excuse not to take his words seriously. Do I make assumptions, quick judgements about others? How have I felt when this happened to me?
2. Jesus is appealing to us to be aware of the divine relationships that underpin our lives. More is going on than we realise: we are being made into the daughters or sons of God! There is more to us than meets the eye, no matter how poorly we are responding! Do we sell ourselves, others and even God short at time?
3. The Father is always drawing us into divine life, because he loves us limitlessly. He does this through Jesus who is one like us and who tells us what the Father has in mind for us. How do we really get to know Jesus? How are we building our personal relationship with him?
4. We are invited daily to the Eucharistic table, to eat and be nourished by the bread of eternal life. Do I approach that table with apathy or with a quickening heart? When were my eyes last opened and when did I last recognise Christ in the breaking of the bread?
5. Spend a few minutes in prayer – How would you complete the "I am" statement – for yourself? And for Jesus?

### Prayer -

Nourishing Father you give us bread that dispels all hunger and satisfies the deepest longing and need in us. Let us truly know that we are fulfilled in you. We make our prayer 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*

