

Your Retreat in Daily Life

Readings for first Week of the retreat:

*(Insert a reading for Lectio Divina
and a reading for Imaginative Prayer here.)*



A retreat is a period in which you commit to spending time with God every day - time when you can speak to Him and listen to Him.

Even if your daily life is manic, hectic and busy, He is still there with you in every minute and every experience of every day.

This retreat offers you the chance to make prayer a habit in your life and reward you with a richer and deeper relationship with God.

To help you in that journey we invite you to use one or both of two prayer styles, both based on Scripture.

To get started, we offer (on the back page) two pieces of Scripture for you to focus your prayer on for the first week. You can choose one or use both as you wish.

On subsequent weeks, your prayer guide may then suggest, or work out with you, further Scripture passages to focus on to help you follow where you are being led.

Below you will find a description of the two prayer styles, with suggested steps, but don't get hung up on technique. Let the Spirit lead you.

LECTIO DIVINA or DIVINE READING

A slow, prayerful reading of a piece of Scripture.

This prayer form goes back to the earliest monastic tradition. Monks were taught to listen with their hearts to the Word of God.

1. Choose a passage from Scripture
2. Go to a quiet place in awareness that you are about to listen to the Word of God as it speaks to you in the here and now.
3. Read the passage aloud so that you hear the Word spoken to you.
4. Pause. Recall if some word or phrase stood out for you - touched you, disturbed you, inspired you.
5. Savour the insight, feeling, understanding
6. Read the passage again
7. Pause again - talk with God, converse with Him. Listen to how he is reaching to you.



IMAGINATIVE PRAYER

Imaginative prayer offers a way to enter more fully into the Gospels and get to know Jesus more intimately - through the gift of imagination. When we imagine prayerfully, He allows insights and new ideas into our minds so that we can hear and see things which our logical thinking often blocks.

God speaks to us in our deepest human experiences - in our feelings, desires, thoughts, ideas. We meet him in our prayer, in music, in nature, in meetings with others and events that are thrust upon us. He is also present in our imaginations, and we can ask what God is saying to us there.

This prayer "method" involves taking a Gospel passage and reliving it as if we were a participant at the original event and listening to what Jesus has to say to us in particular.

It calls into play all of our senses - hearing, seeing, smell, touch, to make the Gospel scene real in our mind's eye.

1. Select a Gospel passage in which Jesus is interacting with others.
2. Remind yourself that you have come to the Word of God to hear what Jesus is saying to you here and now.
3. Read the passage twice to become familiar with it. Let its mood meet you. Don't analyse it or ponder on the theology.
4. Close your eyes, and in your mind's eye, reconstruct the scene. Imagine the event is happening NOW. Picture what is happening, hear the sounds, smell the smells, tune into the mood. Picture how people are reacting to Jesus. How are they interacting with each other?
5. Put yourself into the picture as one of the players - as one of the main characters, or as an observer not even mentioned. Make a video in your head. Engage in a conversation with Jesus. What does he say to you? What do you say in response? How does he look at you?
6. As this proceeds, how are you feeling about what Jesus says to you, what does God touch in you?