

Prayer Course II: Week 2

Imaginative Bible Reading (St Ignatius)

Introduction:

This exercise is based on one of the many exercises developed by St Ignatius, that use our imaginations to enter more fully in to the Christian life. In this case into the stories of the gospels.

Background:

St Ignatius developed a large set of exercises that are intended to be part of a ten week silent retreat course and this is just one of those. It helps us to see the bible stories in a more intimate way and from a number of perspectives by our using our imaginations to imagine our selves into different positions and characters in the gospel stories.

Purpose:

To really experience the Bible, rather than just read it, and to do so from a number of perspectives.

Process:

- Get yourself comfortable.
- Pray for help in your reading and meditating upon the bible.
- Read the passage slowly
- Imagine the story vividly using as many senses as possible (what do things smell like? taste like? feel like?)
- Reread the story imagining you are one of the characters, How do you feel? what are you thinking?

- Try a few different characters
- Try from the point of view of an unmentioned onlooker.
- Sit in silence and listen.
- Give thanks for what you have been shown.
- Say the Lord's Prayer

Readings:

1. Baptism of Christ: Matthew 3:13-17
2. Temptation of Christ: Luke 4:1-13
3. Call of the Apostles: Mark 1: 16-20
4. Sermon on the mount: Matthew 5:1-48
5. Calming of the storm: Matthew 8:23-27
6. The Transfiguration: Matthew 17:1-13
7. The resurrection of Lazarus John 11:1-44

Further reading and resources:

'The Bible'
'Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola',
Ignatius of Loyola (Saint)
<https://www.ignatianspirituality.com>