

Prayer Week 5

LISTEN

Sit comfortably, away from distractions.

Listen to the sounds around you, and acknowledge them.

Deepen your breathing.

Focus on God.

Offer him your thanks and praise.

Ask Him to be part of your day.

REFLECT *from Matt 5*

3 “You’re blessed when you’re at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule.

4 “You’re blessed when you feel you’ve lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you.

5 “You’re blessed when you’re content with just who you are—no more, no less. That’s the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can’t be bought.

6 “You’re blessed when you’ve worked up a good appetite for God. He’s food and drink in the best meal you’ll ever eat.

7 “You’re blessed when you care. At the moment of being ‘care-full,’ you find yourselves cared for.

8 “You’re blessed when you get your inside world—your mind and heart—put right. Then you can see God in the outside world.

9 “You’re blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. That’s when you discover who you really are, and your place in God’s family.

10 “You’re blessed when your commitment to God provokes persecution. The persecution drives you even deeper into God’s kingdom.

PRAY

Loving God,

help me to be, in everything I do and say,

an instrument of grace and a witness to your Kingdom.
May I be no one's enemy,
and may I be the friend of that which is eternal and abides.
May I never quarrel with those nearest me:
and if I do, may I be reconciled quickly.
May I love, seek, and attain only that which is good.

Eusebius (3rd century)

pray for... (any other needs)

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love,
Where there is injury, pardon
Where there is doubt, faith,
Where there is despair, hope,
Where there is darkness, light,
Where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much
seek to be consoled as to console,
not so much to be understood as to understand,
not so much to be loved, as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
it is in dying that we awake to eternal life.

Francis of Assisi (1182-1226)

CONCLUDE

God of grace and glory give us the mind, the heart, and the strength to live for you. Walk with us and work through us that we may be faithful in prayer, grow in holiness and draw many to you. As we walk in the power of the Spirit transform us into the likeness of Christ, to the glory of your name.

Amen.

Triggering the imagination

When we listen to a pop song or poem it triggers all sort so images and thoughts in our head.

Sometimes we call these sudden thoughts inspiration – and sometimes it (in prayer) these thoughts are the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

This way of reading looks for the thoughts and ideas that are inspired as we read the poetry (prayers that have stayed with the church through the ages) and scripture.

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

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Where there is injury, pardon

Where there is doubt, faith,

Where there is despair, hope,

Where there is darkness, light,

Where there is sadness, joy.

By Francis of Assisi has been treasured because it triggers our thoughts

Read as fast or slow as you like

When an idea sparks – go with it – **let it form**

Reflect on it – is it from God? Does it show me something of myself?

Express it to God

Move on – carry on to the next part or **let it land** (ending gently)

The exercise has been a simple version of ‘Lectio Divina’

Prayerful Reading of Scripture

This ancient form of prayer, sometimes called ‘Lectio Divina’ or ‘Sacred Reading,’ has been practiced by Benedictine monks for almost fifteen hundred years.

It begins with a time of relaxation, where you make yourself comfortable and attempt to clear your mind of mundane thoughts or cares. Some Christians find it helpful to focus upon their breathing for a few moments. Others have a simple prayer word or phrase that they gently recite in order to quieten their mind.

Once you begin, there are four phases of prayer which you can move between freely as the Holy Spirit guides:

Read

Read the Bible passage gently and slowly several times. Savour each verse or portion. Listen for the “still small voice” that speaks to you through a word or phrase.

Reflect

Think about the word or phrase for a few minutes. Let it sink in slowly and deeply. Try to identify what it might be saying to you at this moment in your life, what it might be offering to you, what it might be demanding of you.

Express

When you feel ready, openly and honestly share with God the thoughts that have arisen during your time of reflection. This may lead you into a time of thanksgiving, petition, intercession, lament, or praise.

Rest

Allow yourself to rest quietly with God.