



PRAYING A GOSPEL CONTEMPLATION

To begin....

I begin by reading through the Gospel story once or twice so that I am familiar with it.

Then I will spend some time becoming quiet.

Entering into the Imagination

Then I imagine myself as fully as possible using all of my senses into the story.

I trust that God created my imagination and will use my imaginative ability to speak to my heart.

I imagine what I can hear, see, touch, taste and smell; I really get into the story, becoming part of it, perhaps as a bystander, perhaps as one of the characters.

What happens when things change?

Some people get very anxious when they pray this way because they don't keep exactly to the story. For instance, they might start off being the Samaritan woman at the well, and end up having Jesus as a petrol attendant in their local garage. This is not a problem. We use stories as a springboard to our encounter with Jesus. But always remember that the risen Christ is with us here and now and will prompt our imaginations towards what he wants to say to us.

Different ways of doing Gospel Contemplation

There are a variety of ways of praying Gospel Contemplations.

The classic way is to sit in silent contemplation, imagining the whole story.

Some people find it much easier to write the story of what happened. Others write a letter from the perspective of one or other of the characters.

Pope John Paul II suggests in his apostolic letter Rosarium Virginis Mariae, contemplating or imagining oneself into the scene while saying a decade of the rosary.

As I come to an end.....

As we come to the end of our contemplation, there is a space for conversation with God. This is a space where we talk over with the Lord how we have felt in the contemplation – we reflect on it with him and listen to him.

One can think of this as a time of heart to heart conversation with the Lord.

In certain contemplations we may be drawn to speaking with Mary, or with another of the saints. It is always important to be sensitive to whatever the Holy Spirit is prompting us to do at this stage of the prayer.

Remember, as in all prayer, there is no right or wrong way to pray Gospel contemplations. We must explore and experiment for ourselves to see how God wants to work with us.