

If this way of prayer is new to you, it may need practice. It has a long history within the Christian tradition.

Imagination isn't always pictorial, visual. Sometimes it's more a feeling imagination - sensing presence.

If you stray from the scene, gently bring yourself back.

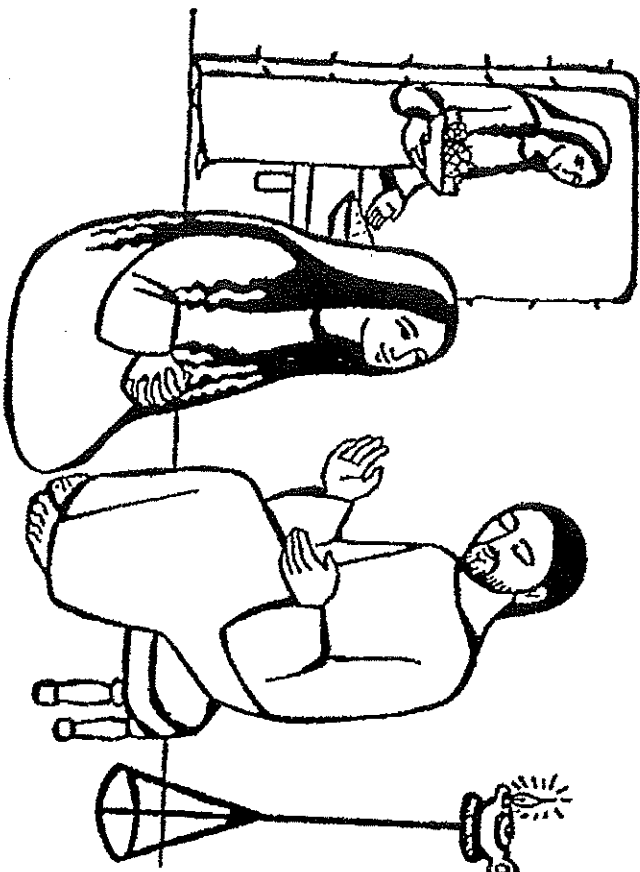
Seeing...
touching...
feeling...
tasting...
listening...
talking to the characters in the scene
- these help us to be there.

If persistent 'distractions' occur, let them enter the biblical scene. - It may help you to encounter God in your life experience.

Whatever happens in the prayer, talk to Jesus at the end of it, expressing your feelings and thoughts - just as one good friend with another.

Glory be to Him whose power working with in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine - Eph. 3:20-21

IMAGINATIVE CONTEMPLATION - SCRIPTURE



Luke 10:38-42

... I see the place...

The HOLY SPIRIT...

will teach you everything and remind you of all I have said to you. -

John 14:26



Imaginative Contemplation of Scripture

In imaginative contemplation, we enter into a life event or story passage of scripture. We enter into the passage by way of imagination, making use of all our senses.

Theologians tell us that through contemplation we are able to 'recall and be present at the mysteries of Christ's life'.

The Spirit of Jesus, present within us through baptism, teaches us, just as Jesus taught the apostles. The Spirit recalls and enlivens the particular mystery into which we enter through prayer.

As in the Eucharist, the Risen Jesus makes present the paschal mystery [Passover lamb], in contemplation He brings forward the particular event we are contemplating and presents Himself within that mystery.

- Bergan and Schwan, *Take and Receive*¹

BE THERE with Him and for Him.

WANT HIM, hunger for Him.

LISTEN to Him.

LET HIM be for you what He wants to be.

RESPOND to Him.

Method -

Guidelines to help you get into this way of praying - not structures to be kept to rigidly...

- ❖ Spend a little time coming to relaxed attentiveness.
- ❖ Read the passage a few times to familiarise yourself with it, then put it to one side.
- ❖ Ask for what you desire.
- ❖ Imagine the event is happening now. Take time to see in imagination the place, the buildings, countryside, etc.
What kind of day is it? Feel the breeze or the sun on you.
Listen to the sounds. Use touch, taste, smell if it helps this scene to become present to you.
It can help attentiveness to ask yourself of any scene -
Who is present? What are they doing? What are they saying?
Actively participate in the scene... Talk with the characters...
Talk to Jesus...
- ❖ Whatever happens, spend a little time at the end of the prayer period in being with Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Be with God as you would with a good friend, sometimes talking, sometimes listening, sometimes being together in silence. Speak from the heart, simply and honestly.

¹ Bergan, Jacqueline and S Marie Schwan, *Take and receive: a guide for prayer*, Crookston, MN: Center for Christian Renewal, 1984.