

PRAYER FOR MISSION IN THE IMAGINATIVE (IGNATIAN) WAY

This style of prayer may be used in a group or adapted for use by individuals. In a group setting the leader introduces each movement of the prayer. A passage of scripture may be chosen from those listed here(or some other suitable passage) for the focus of the prayer time. This will need to be chosen before the prayer time begins and some thought given to the way the guided meditation will be led. The leader should be prayerful about the choice of scripture and the way she/he will lead the group ahead of time.

Is 6:1-8; Is 45:7-13; Jer 1:4-10;

Mt 4:18-25; Mt 5:13-16; Mt 10: 1-16; Mt 14:13-21; Mt 13: 44-53; Mt 25:31-45;

Mt 28:16-20

Mk 1:16-20; Mk 6:6-13; Mk 10: 46-52

Lk 4:14-22; Lk 10: 1-16 Lk 14: 25-35

Jn 1:29-34; Jn1: 35-42; Jn 4:1-42; Jn 10:1-17; Jn 13:4-17; Jn 14:8-14; Jn 14:25-27;

Jn 15:1-11; Jn 16:12-15; Jn 20:19-23

Acts 2:1-11

1 Settling into Prayer (5 minutes approx)

(If reading this for a group it needs to be done slowly with some pauses to allow people to properly relax into their prayer)

Make yourself very comfortable. Become very still with eyes closed. Focus your attention on your breathing..... Allow your breathing to gently become deeper and slower..... Imagine the Holy Spirit flowing in and through your body relaxing each part- beginning at the top of your head.... your face..... neck.... shoulders.....arms and hands..... chest.... abdomen.....thighs..... calves..... ankles.... feet.

Allow any tension to flow out through your toes so that your whole body is relaxed.

Offer this prayer time to God and surrender to however the Holy Spirit will use it.

2 A Prayer of Preparation (5 mins)

Become aware of the way you feel as you come to prayer (hopes, doubts hopes, tiredness etc) be honest! *(Pause)*

Bring these feelings to God.

. Become aware of what you most deeply from God for the mission of the church and for your place in that mission. *(Pause)*

Bring this desire to God.

3 Guided Meditation. (10 minutes)

Read the scripture passage slowly.

Explain that you will read it again and as you do invite the group to imagine the scene as vividly as they can - applying all their senses.

Invite them to imagine the landscape, or the house, or the synagogue or whatever the scene is. Suggest they imagine the colours, the features, and the textures of the place. Imagine the people - the colours of their clothing. Imagine any animals or birds (if appropriate).

Imagine the weather (feel whether its warm or cool), imagine the time of day.

Invite them to hear the sounds of the scene (You might suggest what these might be).

Invite them to smell the possible aromas of the place, to taste whatever may be tasted and to or touch whatever may be touched in the scene. (Make suggestions here too)

Invite the group to enter the story in their imagination not as an observer but as at least

one of the characters in the story. Explain that after the passage has been read again they will have 30 minutes of silence in which to be those characters and to carry on conversations with others in the story, especially Jesus (if you have chosen a gospel story).

Invite them to try not to control the prayer themselves but trust that the Holy Spirit is guiding whatever happens.

Read the passage again slowly.

3 Silent Prayer (30 minutes)

4 Exit from prayer

After half an hour, suggest that they bring their conversations to a close and in prayer give thanks to God for all that has transpired.

5 Review after the prayer. This is an important step in that people will notice things about their prayer that did not occur to them during the prayer. They may find it helpful to journal their responses to these questions. (10 minutes)

Invite the group (in silence) to slowly cast their mind back over the prayer time as if they were watching a video replay.

How did they feel during their prayer?

What did they learn about Jesus, or about mission, or about themselves?

What if anything, did God ask of them, or of the church?

What inspired them? What challenged them?

What did they avoid?

What might they want to do as a result of this prayer?

Is there some special gift or grace they may now want to ask of the Lord?

Invite them to do so now in the silence of their own hearts.

If it seems appropriate you may invite the participants to share with one another something of their experience

Close with the Grace or the Lord's Prayer