

Lord, Teach Me To Pray

Three-Part Ignatian Prayer Series for Women

LTMTTP News

*Proclaim your love of Jesus
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LTMTTP now has garden flags with the Banner of Jesus Christ! They are 20" by 12" and can be displayed on a standard garden flag holder. Order by sending a check for \$12 (includes shipping) made to LTMTTP to Carol Weiler, 11 Warbler St, New Orleans, LA 70124.

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Save the date!*

The next LTMTTP Weekend of Prayer will be February 17 – 20, 2011 at the New Orleans Airport Hilton. We open with Mass on Thursday at 7:00pm and close at noon on Sunday. Join us for another amazing weekend with Fr. Marty Gleeson OP, Fr. Andrew Apostoli C.F.R. and a Jesuit.

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VERITAS

The Eucharist: Body, Blood, Soul & Divinity

Many of the disciples of Jesus who were listening said, "This saying is hard; who can accept it?" . . . As a result of this, many of his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer walked with him. Jesus then said to the Twelve, "Do you also what to leave?" Simon Peter answered him, "Master, to whom shall we go?" (John 6: 60, 66-68a)

For six of the seven weeks of the Easter Season, beginning with the second Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy Sunday), virtually every day at the celebration of the Eucharist, the Gospel reading is taken from the Gospel of St. John. During the weekdays of the third week John takes us through the *Bread of Life Discourse* (John 6: 25-71). It is at the very end of this discourse that John tells us that "many of his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer walked with him." What happened? What had Jesus said that was so hard, or so offensive, that they could no longer walk with him? When we hear Peter responding to Jesus on behalf of the Twelve, we get the impression that the "saying" was indeed hard, but they didn't walk away. Where would they go? Peter goes on to say "You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God" (vv 68b-69).

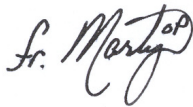
How strange it must have sounded to them all: "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink" (vv 53-55). Of great importance in this entire discourse is that when many of his disciples turn around and begin to walk away because "this saying is

hard,” Jesus doesn’t say “Hey, wait! Come back! It’s not that hard of a saying. I didn’t mean to offend you. I was speaking figuratively. I was simply using a metaphor to make a point.” No, he doesn’t panic when he sees them walking away. He doesn’t backtrack and spin his words into a less offensive or more acceptable message. Instead, he lets them go and then turns to the Twelve and asks them if they too wanted to leave. It is as if Jesus is gently but firmly drawing a line in the sand. The truth is the truth no matter how hard it is to accept.

Fast forward to the Last Supper. Jesus didn’t say “This is a symbol of my body.” Nor did he say “This cup is a symbol of my blood.” Rather, he says very clearly “This is my body” and “This is the cup of my blood”. I would venture to say that most likely each one of you reading this short article truly believes in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist . . . body, blood, soul and divinity. At the same time, I would venture to say that most of you occasionally encounter co-workers, friends, family members, maybe even your own children, who express a doubt about the real presence in the Eucharist. Certainly most of our non-Catholic Christian brothers and sisters do not believe this truth. It is easy to become intimidated by those who might challenge us; who might find that, like some of the early disciples, “This saying is hard; who can accept it?”

Don’t be intimidated. Gently invite them to pray with John 6: 25-71. Then, you pray for them.

Peace & Love in the Crucified and Risen Christ,



Fr. Marty Gleeson, O.P.
Spiritual Advisor to LTMTTP

**Do you have questions about facilitating?
Comments to share with other facilitators?
Send them to carolweiler@cox.net. Technical
problems with the newsletter? Change of email
address? Contact caverlyd@cox.net**

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(John 20: 11-18) The scene came alive. I saw Mary Magdalene weeping as she approached the tomb. She is sobbing and bends down to look inside. A moment goes by. I can’t see her any longer but I notice as I look down I am dressed in her robe and wearing her sandals. Next I realize I am kneeling outside the tomb. I look inside while weeping from a feeling of deep sorrowful loss; but Jesus’ body is not there. I ask the men inside if they know where his body is. Suddenly someone comes up behind me. I turn and I see a man standing there. I am experiencing a feeling of desperation; a terrible loss beyond anything I’ve ever felt before. I beg this man to tell me if he has taken Jesus’ body; to show me where he has put him. I am in a panic of tears as I beg him to show me where he has put him. “Carol” . . . this man calls out my name; and instinctively my heart recognizes my Master’s voice. I fall to his feet weeping, sobbing deeply and clinging to him. “My Lord and my God! It is you!” I say. Jesus bends down and picks me up by my arms. I am looking into the blinding beauty of His Divine Face. “Carol”, he says, “you must go tell all that I am your God and their God and that I love them.”

As I close my Bible I am overwhelmed by the terrible feelings of loss that I have just experienced. This time of prayer seemed unbearable. For those few moments I felt what it would be like to be separated for Our Lord. I can only describe it as a darkness beyond description and a pain beyond horrific. I believe God was showing me what I would experience if I were to abandon prayer. Saint Teresa of Avila tells us that we must start our journey of prayer with a “determined will.” She goes on to say that “the devil hates these determined souls because they do him great harm because all

Facilitators' Q & A with Carol

Q: Carol, how can I be sure that I am not making up my contemplations? I worry about this.

A: This is a very good question and it is one we need to always ask ourselves. I want to share with you St. Teresa of Avila's writings on this very question. St. Teresa would tell us that if our "imagining doesn't have any effect afterward, and we find ourselves left feeling cold afterward, it is wise not to pay any attention to this kind of imagining. What was seen will be quickly forgotten. An authentic contemplation most likely comes suddenly and unexpectedly stirring both our interior senses through a sudden feeling of fear which immediately moves into a happy peace."

The experience of authentic contemplation stays forever in our "memory" gracing our life. I always like to think of Holy Mary and her experience of the "Annunciation". Immediately her response was fear but the angel reassured her, "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "**Do not be afraid, Mary,** for you have found favor with God" (Luke 1:28-31).

(The quote from St. Teresa is taken from *St. Teresa of Avila: The Collected Works*).

the harmful plans the devil has for these souls always turns out to benefit them". She tells us "no one knows how important determination is".

St. Teresa warns us further that if the devil sees us being "careless" in our relationship with Jesus; or if we are "changeable and unsteady"; he will keep after us with "fears and anxiety". Moreover, he will present many obstacles to us in an effort to prevent us from continuing on the journey of prayer. So we must not let the devil intimidate us. We must be willing to fight like a "desperado" (i.e., willing to die rather than to surrender) as St. Teresa says, knowing that the devil's plans are always to destroy our joy in Christ. "Every little gain on the spiritual road is worth all the struggle." "We will end up rich in joy" beyond our expectations for making Jesus the true treasure and our "friend".

Let us all take a moment to beg for the graces needed to strengthen our will in determination to follow Jesus by devoting ourselves to daily prayer until he comes for us. If the devil has successfully distracted you or filled you with doubts and fears which have stopped you from facilitating; or even caused you to think maybe you shouldn't be a facilitator or that you can't facilitate; stop immediately and ask yourself "Am I still praying daily for an hour with Sacred Scripture?"

The Lord needs you, and he always needs more facilitators! The commitment to pray each

part of the series when we are facilitating is a tremendous offering of grace from God and a terrible defeat for the devil. As facilitators for LTMTTP we are growing closer to Jesus day by day through our prayer; but we are also assisting others to come along with us to "know and love" Jesus Christ passionately. Remember, it is always "Spiritual Exercise Time". Set your will faithfully in determination to follow Jesus. Together we will build up great, big, strong, juicy hearts of love of God. Do the "heart pump" – pray, pray, pray!

With much, much gratitude and love to you all,

Carol Weiler

(Excerpts taken from: *St. Teresa of Avila: Volume Two*, Translation by Kieran Kavanaugh O.C.D., Otilio Rodríguez, O.C.D.)