

IMAGINATIVE PRAYER:

(Largely from: *Taste and See: Experiencing the Goodness of God with Our Five Senses* By Ginny Kubitz Moyer)

St. Ignatius was a big fan of engaging the senses in prayer. One prayer method he advocated was to imagine yourself as one of the people in a gospel story. Here's how:

- Choose a gospel passage that speaks to you. It's best to choose one that involves action of some kind.
- Reread the passage until you know it well. Ask yourself: **which character will I imagine being today?** Maybe a bystander, an apostle, one of the people who interacts directly with Jesus.
- Close the bible. Find a comfortable place to sit. Close your eyes and imagine the setting. What do you **see, hear, smell?** If **touch** or **taste** figures in the story, imagine those details as well. Don't worry about making your setting perfectly faithful to the period; this is more about making an *emotional* connection to the story than about historical accuracy. Let the impression and images come to you without judging them or trying to make the scenario perfect.
- **Let the gospel story unfold, imagining yourself as part of it.** What do you think or feel as you hear, see and perhaps touch Jesus? What enters your mind as you see others interact with him? Pay attention to your emotions. **Be open to surprises** and to what God wants to reveal to you through this exercise.
- After concluding this prayer, take a few moments to reflect upon the insights you gained. Many people find that this exercise not only helps them understand Jesus as a real, living person, but it also **helps them gain wisdom and insight into the most pressing issues they are facing.**
- Some stories that are particularly good for engaging the senses and imagination:
 - Jesus and the death of Lazarus (John 11:17-44)
 - The healing of the paralytic (Mark 2:1-12)
 - The baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:13-17)
 - Jesus' response to the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11)
 - The wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11)
 - The storm at sea (Mark 4:35-41)
 - The road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35)
 - Jesus cooking the fish at the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1-14)