

Imaginative Contemplation

The most frequent way of praying that Saint Ignatius uses in his book, *The Spiritual Exercises*, is that of imagining ourselves in a Gospel scene.

We imagine ourselves as a character in a Scriptural story.

We take part in the story, seeing Jesus and all the other people, being aware of what's going on and how we are feeling.

The purpose of praying with the imagination is to allow Christ in the Scripture to speak to us. To bring the Gospel stories alive for us. We are not trying to recreate history. It doesn't matter if my imagination takes the story off in a different direction to the Scripture. It doesn't matter if the story takes place in 1st century Palestine or where we live now in the 21st century. What is important is what God wants to say to us through this passage.



Choose a passage, read and familiarise yourself with the story.

You are in the presence of God, acknowledge this. Offer yourself, your time and your imagination to God so that whatever you imagine will be inspired by God.

Ask God for what gift or grace you need, what are your deepest desires. This could be for a greater love of Jesus, in words such as: Jesus, may I know you clearly, love you more dearly and follow you more nearly.

Set the scene from your scripture passage.

Take your time, see all that is around, hear, feel, taste and smell.

What is the setting of the story in your imagination?

You may imagine it in the present day, or 2000 years ago.

You may be involved with people you know.

Become a character in the story..... Who are you?

You may be a central character or someone on the side-lines.

Let the scene unfold naturally.

The story might depart from the Gospel scene and take on a life of its own; that's fine, trust God; everything human is appropriate material for prayer.

Conversation (colloquy): When the story has finished talk in your own words to Jesus, God the Father, Mary or one of the characters in the story you have contemplated, imagine how they might reply.

Finally: End the prayer with a formal prayer like the Lord's Prayer/Our Father.

Journal – you might like to note down main points you want to remember to share with your Guide.

Article taken from ISC,Glasgow website.

Further Resources

Printable Sheet on [Imaginative Contemplation](#)

Workshop on [Imaginative Contemplation](#) (YouTube)

Workshop on [Imaginative Contemplation](#) - Story of Blind Bartimaeus - sound file.

