

**LENT**

**2021**

Listening to God  
with the Gospel of Matthew

Week 3

## ***Introduction***

Welcome to our Lent material for 2021.

During the 40 days before Easter we often give something up or take something on as a sign of our devotion to God. This year we would like to encourage you to spend time with the gospel of Matthew. Through “Lectio Divina”, an ancient spiritual practice that comes from the Christian monastic tradition, we have the opportunity to experience the presence of God. These simple and easy to learn spiritual practices are designed to slow life down and allow God to speak to us through his word.

For Lectio Divina we use a short reading each day from the gospel of Matthew. We have prepared a reading each day for you to use. As an option, there is the reference for a longer reading each day as well. You could read this reading at a different time from the Lectio Divina time and it would guide you to read through Matthew in Lent.

You might like to use your own bible for the readings and you might like to write down your thoughts or feelings in this booklet or somewhere else like your notebook or journal.

## ***Opening***

Sit comfortably and quietly and take a few deep breaths to quieten yourself. Repeat the name of Jesus in your heart to allow yourself to focus on him.

Through a prayer ask God to fill you and be with you.

## ***Lectio Divina Rhythm explained***

**Read** (“Lectio”) the Scripture passage for the first time.

Listen with the “ear of your heart.” What word or phrase or sentence stands out to you? Underline it, circle around it, colour it in. Focus on that word, phrase or sentence over and over, allowing it to settle deeply in you heart.

**Reflect** (“Meditatio”), relish the words. Let them resound in your heart. Let an attitude of quiet reflection penetrate the prayer time. Listen to what speaks to your heart.

**Respond** (“Oratio”) spontaneously as you continue to listen to the word, phrase or sentence. Speak out a prayer of praise, thanksgiving or petition and return to repeating the words in your heart.

**Rest** (“Contemplatio”) in God. Simply “be with” God’s presence as you open yourself to a deeper hearing of the Word of God.

Repeat if desired. Different words, phrases or sentences might stand out to you each time, or the same words keep drawing you in. Let the Holy Spirit lead you through this exercise.

## ***Closing prayer***

Take a moment to pray. Talk to God and offer what you have heard and felt back to Him.

## ***Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March***

**Prayer: God of grace, thank you for your love for us, may we be one with you and with your love. Amen**

When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

(Matthew 10:19-20)

Read, Reflect, Respond, Rest

Reading through Matthew in Lent: Matthew 9:35-10:23

## ***Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March***

**Prayer: King Jesus, we come to you with our ears and hearts opened, help us to know you more. Amen**

Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward."

(Matthew 10:41-42)

Read, Reflect, Respond, Rest

Reading through Matthew in Lent: Matthew 10:24-42

## ***Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March***

**Prayer: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful people with the fire of your love. Amen.**

"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

(Matthew 11:28-30)

Read, Reflect, Respond, Rest

Reading through Matthew in Lent: Matthew 11:1-30

## ***Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March***

**Prayer: Loving God, we long to know more of your love and goodness, speak to us we pray. Amen**

Or have you not read in the law that on the sabbath the priests in the temple break the sabbath and yet are guiltless? I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. But if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is lord of the sabbath."

(Matthew 12:5-8)

Read, Reflect, Respond, Rest

Reading through Matthew in Lent: Matthew 12:1-21

## ***Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March***

**Prayer: Come, Lord Jesus come, speak to us all and fill us with your love and grace. Amen**

Someone told him, "Look, your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you." But to the one who had told him this, Jesus replied, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" And pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."

(Matthew 12:47-50)

Read, Reflect, Respond, Rest

Reading through Matthew in Lent: Matthew 12:22-50

## ***Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> March***

**Prayer: Holy Spirit, we invite you into our hearts and minds again, guide us into your love. Amen**

He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

(Matthew 13:31-32)

Read, Reflect, Respond, Rest

Reading through Matthew in Lent: Matthew 13:1-35

*All scripture readings from NRSV: 'New Revised Standard Version Bible: Anglicized Edition, copyright 1989, 1995, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.'*