

LENT

2021

Listening to God
with the Gospel of Matthew

Week 4

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 8th March

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

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

(Matthew 13:44)

Read, Reflect, Respond, Rest

Reading through Matthew in Lent: Matthew 13:36-58

Tuesday 9th March

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

Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full.

(Matthew 14:19-20)

Read, Reflect, Respond, Rest

Reading through Matthew in Lent: Matthew 14:1-36

Wednesday 10th March

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

After Jesus had left that place, he passed along the Sea of Galilee, and he went up the mountain, where he sat down. Great crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the maimed, the blind, the mute, and many others. They put them at his feet, and he cured them, so that the crowd was amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the maimed whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel.

(Matthew 15:29-31)

Read, Reflect, Respond, Rest

Reading through Matthew in Lent: Matthew 15:1-39

Thursday 11th March

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

Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?"

(Matthew 16:24-26)

Read, Reflect, Respond, Rest

Reading through Matthew in Lent: Matthew 16:1-28

Friday 12th March

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

He said to them, "Because of your little faith. For truly I tell you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you."

(Matthew 17:20)

Read, Reflect, Respond, Rest

Reading through Matthew in Lent: Matthew 17:1-27

Saturday 13th March

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

and said, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

(Matthew 18:3-5)

Read, Reflect, Respond, Rest

Reading through Matthew in Lent: Matthew 18:1-35

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