

Praying the Scripture - a few simple steps at home

Sunday 7th August 2022

1. Start with stillness and quietening down; then gently read the passage, noticing any feelings and connections to your own experience.
2. Read the passage again and spend understand. *The notes in your Bible may be of help at this point.*
3. Read the passage a third time - wondering how you yourself might pray the text over the next few days.
4. Over the next week, set aside times to come back more than once to the passage. You could read it all or part of it again, slowly. Perhaps there is a special word for you in this passage of Scripture? Keep this word or phrase in your thoughts and gently repeat it, bringing it to mind and allowing God to speak to you in your heart.
5. Finally, come back to the text to conclude: What is God in this scripture asking of you this week? What is the one challenge, one little change you are asked to make or the thing you have been asked to do? Then say a prayer of thanksgiving for the good news in the passage. End in quiet prayer.



THIS SUNDAY'S GOSPEL – Luke 12:32-48

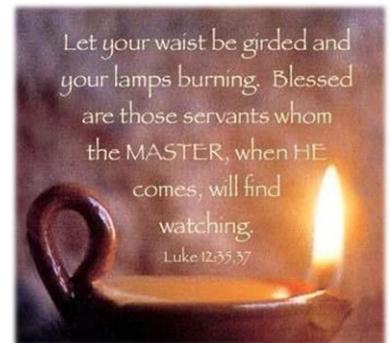
For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Someone in the crowd said 'Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near, and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

'Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. If he comes during the middle of the night, or near dawn, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.

'But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.'

Peter said, 'Lord, are you telling this parable for us or for everyone?' And the Lord said, 'Who then is the faithful and prudent manager whom his master will put in charge of his slaves, to give them their allowance of food at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master will find at work when he arrives. Truly I tell you, he will put that one in charge of all his possessions. But if that slave says to himself, "My master is delayed in coming", and if he begins to beat the other slaves, men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk, the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour that he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and put him with the unfaithful. That slave who knew what his master wanted but did not prepare himself or do what was wanted, will receive a severe beating. But one who did not know and did what deserved a beating will receive a light beating. From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded.



A Short Thought

It is alarming to think that "where our treasure is, there your heart will be also." To find out where my treasure is I need to look not at what I think but at what I do. How do I choose to spend my time? Where does my best concentration go? What "things" in life provide me with the greatest challenge and the greatest fulfilment? When am I most truly myself? Even more, to know myself spiritually, introspection is only a limited guide. What I really need to do is to take account of how I act. What about the last week, for example? What does that tell me about myself?

SOME POINTERS FOR PRAYER

1. "The opening verses of this gospel invite us to ask ourselves what do we see as our purpose in life? What are our priorities? Is our heart set on material progress and advance, or do we have other priorities? What has helped you to appreciate that there is more to your life than earthly possessions and success?"
2. At times, one can sense in Jesus an urgency, as if he wanted to shake people and wake them up to take his words seriously. The parable has that tone: "Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit." When have you found that being alert enabled you to grasp a moment of opportunity that you might easily have missed, e.g., when a child or friend gives a hint that they would like to talk and a very meaningful conversation ensues.
3. Another consideration that adds to the sense of urgency in the words of Jesus is that we only have one life, and we do not know how long that will last. So Jesus calls us on us to live in the now and to treasure our time. Sometimes we can drift aimlessly through a day, and on other occasions use a day purposefully. What difference does that make, if any, to how you experience the day?
4. What do I do in order to be always vigilant?

Prayer -

O God, on whom our faith rests secure and whose kingdom we await, sustain us by word and sacrament and keep us alert for the coming of the Son of Man, that we may welcome him without delay. We ask this through your Son who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit forever and ever, **Amen**

Prayer in these uncertain times

We pray for all those in our country and throughout the world suffering from the Corona Virus. May its victims and their families be strengthened by the support of our community of faith and restored soon to full health. We also pray for our leaders and medical personnel who deal with the virus. May we keep calm and may we join together in solidarity with care and compassion to tackle this emergency. This we ask in confidence through Christ Our Lord. Amen

We pray for Ukraine. For all of humanity distorted by war. For all the lives lost, homes seized, and peace broken. May the Spirit of comfort and compassion envelop all who dwell in fear. May peace prevail and justice reign. May love always be the guide and measure of our actions and responses. Amen

