**IMAGINATIVE PRAYER - IGNATIAN CONTEMPLATION**

* Way of praying by imagining oneself inside a scene from the gospels and encountering Jesus there. Way to meet Jesus face to face.
* God speaks to us through our imagination & the Holy Spirit makes present a mystery of Jesus’ life in a way that is meaningful for us now. Makes the Jesus of the Gospel our Jesus.
* Use imagination to dig deeper into story so God may communicate with us in a personal manner.
* Opportunity to enter conversation with God or simply enjoy God’s loving presence.

**PREPARATIONS FOR PRAYER**

* Find a comfortable posture, relax, breathe slowly and deeply for a minute or two.
* Recall that you are in the presence of God and offer yourself to God
* Pray for guidance ask the Lord to speak to you through this prayer
* Ask God for the grace you hope to receive: what do you hope to gain from this time of prayer?
* Slowly read the gospel passage once or twice so that you can remember the events. Then put the text away & begin to imagine the story in detail - be as specific as possible

**IMAGINING IN PRAYER**

* Enter gospel, let action of story unfold by itself under guidance of the Holy Spirit. Do not actively direct actions - participate in whatever way seems natural.
* Picture the setting
  + Imagine the scenery, the landscape, the environment, buildings
  + What time and kind of day is it?
  + Engage all senses: touch, smell, sound, sight, taste
* See & hear the people
  + Who are the characters? What are they doing? Observe their actions
  + What do they look like? What are they wearing?
  + What does Jesus look like? What is he wearing? How do others react to him.
  + What is Jesus doing? Who is he interacting with?
  + What are the people saying to each other?
  + What is Jesus saying and how does he talk to and treat those he encounters?
* Be there with the mystery
  + Who are you in the scene – a central character, an observer, someone to be healed or helping others to Jesus
  + What do you feel? What are you doing?
* Time for conversation with Jesus “as one friend speaks to another”. Picture him present before you, ask him questions or say whatever you need to say to him. Take some time to listen for his response. What might he be telling or showing you?

**ENDING IMAGINATIVE PRAYER**

* Pray the Our Father
* Take time to reflect on what stood out for you the most from your prayer:
  + How did you feel during this time of prayer?
  + What struck you the most?
  + What was the most consoling moment of prayer? The most challenging?
  + When did you feel closest to God?