

## **Lent Sermon Series 2014**

### **3rd Sunday in Lent, 23rd March**

St John's 9.30am

Sr Mary Steven CSJB: notes on *Praying with Scripture*

#### **Praying with Scripture is part of our tradition:**

- Psalms – Jesus would have grown up with these – a core of prayer from the earliest times – Jesus would have grown up with them and almost certainly known them by heart.
- John 8.31 - If you make my word your home, you will then know the truth and the truth will make you free.
- The Lord's Prayer
- Essential part of our Liturgies and of our personal prayer. Enables our relationship with both our families , friends, the world, and most importantly with God.
- Prayer is about developing your unique relationship with God – pray as **you** can, not as **you** can't.

#### **How can scripture help? There are two main ways:**

##### **1. Imagination**

Fantasy prayer using scripture as your inspiration – usually an encounter with Jesus in one of the recorded events of his life; or another incident not directly involving Jesus – *eg Peter's denial; the Annunciation. We know it was used by Francis of Assisi using a nativity crib as a starting point. Nowadays more closely associated with Ignatius of Loyola and often known as 'Ignatian Prayer'.*

Can lead to valuable insights into your own character and responses to God's will.

##### **2. Lectio Divina or Holy Reading**

*Taste and see that the Lord is good* Ps 33.8

A word, phrase or sentence savoured as food. Usually with a psalm or other relevant scripture passage – but a or line from a favourite hymn or poem can be used too.

Associated particularly with St Benedict. You read slowly through at chosen text until a word or phrase 'lights up' for you. Not an intellectual choice and no need to think 'why? '

Just go for it. You repeat it aloud or silently and let it become part of you, like savouring something tasty or sucking a favourite sweet. When you find yourself resting in silence you stay with that, noting your feelings. What comes up for you? When it feels right, move on until another word or phrase lights up. There's no need to finish, or hurry – just go at your own pace accepting how the Spirit leads you.

***Biblical references:***

Ezekiel 3.1-3 : Eat this scroll - honey in your mouth;  
others include ps119 vv 103, 131, ps 34.8

***Also note:***

Jesus and food:

Wedding feast at Cana; I am the bread of life;

The Last Supper – and the Eucharist as our central act of worship.

**Rest of the time praying with the NT reading of the day and the Gospel.**