**ENCOUNTERS WITH JESUS**

Encountering Jesus for myself through reflecting on the Jesus encounters of Jesus which people have in the Gospel. The passage follow the pattern of the life of Christ in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola.

Each sessions consists of 1.) A Brief Introduction, 2.) A Scriptural Reading, 3.) A 20 minute Guided Meditation on the Reading, 4.) Break out rooms to reflect on the Guided Meditation (20 minutes) with Facilitator in each Group 5.) Return to plenary and Final Prayers.

The introduction would include prayerfully reminding ourselves of the presence of God and asking for the grace sought for each session. The “points” might provide a guide for the guided meditation. The questions might be a basis for the group reflection but the most important question is the first one about what moved me in the prayer.

**Week 1. The cure of the leper Mk 2:40-45 – experiencing the compassion of Christ.**

Grace: to know my need of Christ’s healing and forgiveness and experience his compassion.

And a leper came to him beseeching him, and kneeling said to him, “If you will, you can make me clean.” **41**Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, “I will; be clean.” **42**And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. **43**And he sternly charged him, and sent him away at once, **44**and said to him, “See that you say nothing to any one; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a proof to the people.”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark%201%3A40-45&version=RSV#fen-RSV-24254a)] **45**But he went out and began to talk freely about it, and to spread the news, so that Jesus[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark%201%3A40-45&version=RSV#fen-RSV-24255b)] could no longer openly enter a town, but was out in the country; and people came to him from every quarter.

Points for prayer:-

1. The leper expresses his faith that Jesus can cure him
2. Jesus reaches out and touches him
3. The leper spreads the news of what Jesus has done for him

Questions:-

What moved me in this passage? What did I find difficult?

Where do I need Jesus healing?

Do I have faith that Jesus will heal me?

Do I recognise and share what God has done for me?

**Week 2. The call of the first disciples Mt 4:18-22 – called to follow Jesus**.

Grace: to hear and respond to the call of Christ

As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. **19**And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” **20**Immediately they left their nets and followed him. **21**And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zeb′edee and John his brother, in the boat with Zeb′edee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. **22**Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

Points for prayer:-

1. The fishermen are going about their daily business.
2. Jesus calls them to follow him.
3. They leave everything immediately and follow him.

Questions:-

What moved me in this passage? What did I find difficult?

What are daily things that absorb my energy?

How do I experience the call of Jesus to follow him?

How ready am I to change my life to respond to Jesus call?

**Week 3.** **Walking on the water Mt 14:22-33 – called to trust in Christ.**

Grace: to trust in Christ

**22**Then he made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. **23**And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, **24**but the boat by this time was many furlongs distant from the land,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mt+14%3A22-33+&version=RSV#fen-RSV-23620a)] beaten by the waves; for the wind was against them. **25**And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. **26**But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, “It is a ghost!” and they cried out for fear. **27**But immediately he spoke to them, saying, “Take heart, it is I; have no fear.”

**28**And Peter answered him, “Lord, if it is you, bid me come to you on the water.” **29**He said, “Come.” So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus; **30**but when he saw the wind,[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mt+14%3A22-33+&version=RSV#fen-RSV-23626b)] he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, “Lord, save me.” **31**Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, “O man of little faith, why did you doubt?” **32**And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. **33**And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”

Points for prayer:-

1. The disciples are battling against the wind and the waves when Jesus comes to them
2. Peter tells Jesus to call him to walk on the water.
3. Peter begins to be afraid, but Jesus rescues him and calms the storm.

Questions:-

What moved me in this passage? What did I find difficult?

What are things that I battle against in my life?

Am I ready to take risks to follow Jesus?

Do I trust Jesus to calm the storms in my life?

**Week 4. Bartimaeus Mk 10:46-52 – experiencing Christ’s healing and following him along the road to Calvary.**

Grace: to experience the healing power of Christ and follow him along the road to the cross.

**46**And they came to Jericho; and as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great multitude, Bartimae′us, a blind beggar, the son of Timae′us, was sitting by the roadside. **47**And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” **48**And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent; but he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” **49**And Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” And they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take heart; rise, he is calling you.” **50**And throwing off his mantle he sprang up and came to Jesus. **51**And Jesus said to him, “What do you want me to do for you?” And the blind man said to him, “Master,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mk+10%3A46-52+&version=RSV#fen-RSV-24631a)] let me receive my sight.” **52**And Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your faith has made you well.” And immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way.

Points for prayer:-

1. Bartimaeus calls out to Jesus to have mercy on him?
2. Jesus calls him forward, asks him what he wants Jesus to do for him and cures him.
3. Bartimaeus follows Jesus along the road, which is the road to Jerusalem and to the cross (the next scene in the Gospel is the entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday).

Questions:-

What moved me in this passage? What did I find difficult?

Do I have faith in Jesus to give me what I need?

What is my response to Jesus question, “What do you want me to do for you?”?

What is my response to Jesus action in my life? Am I ready to follow Jesus even if the road leads to the cross?

**Week 5. This man was Son of God Mk 15: 33-39 – The Centurion recognises who Jesus really is through witnessing his Crucifixion.**

Grace: to understand the reality of Christ’s passion and to recognise him in this moment

**33**And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mk+15%3A+33-39+&version=RSV#fen-RSV-24849a)] until the ninth hour. **34**And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, “E′lo-i, E′lo-i, la′ma sabach-tha′ni?” which means, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” **35**And some of the bystanders hearing it said, “Behold, he is calling Eli′jah.” **36**And one ran and, filling a sponge full of vinegar, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, “Wait, let us see whether Eli′jah will come to take him down.” **37**And Jesus uttered a loud cry, and breathed his last. **38**And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. **39**And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that he thus[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mk+15%3A+33-39+&version=RSV#fen-RSV-24855b)] breathed his last, he said, “Truly this man was the Son[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mk+15%3A+33-39+&version=RSV#fen-RSV-24855c)] of God!”

Points for prayer:-

1. Jesus cries out “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?”.
2. Jesus dies on the cross and the curtain of the Temple is torn in two.
3. The centurion recognises Jesus as the Son of God.

Questions:-

What moved me in this passage? What did I find difficult?

How do I respond to watching the suffering and death of Jesus?

What is the barrier between me and God which must be torn open by the Cross?

Do I have faith that the one who was crucified is the Son of God?

**Week 5. Mary at the tomb Jn 20: 11-18 – Mary of Magdala meets the risen Jesus and is told to go and share the news with his disciples.**

Grace: to experience the joy of encountering the risen Lord and to go and share that joy with others.

**11**But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb; **12**and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. **13**They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” **14**Saying this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. **15**Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom do you seek?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” **16**Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rab-bo′ni!” (which means Teacher). **17**Jesus said to her, “Do not hold me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brethren and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.” **18**Mary Magdalene went and said to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

Points for prayer:-

1. Mary sees the tomb and the angels, but she is taken up with her grief, she does not even recognise Jesus when he comes to her.
2. Jesus calls her name, and she recognises him.
3. Jesus tells her to share the good news with the disciples.

Questions:-

What moved me in this passage? What did I find difficult?

What keeps me from recognising Jesus?

How do I react to Jesus personal love for me?

How am I called to go and share the Good News?