

IGNATIAN METHOD OF PRAYER

Ignatius of Loyola was known for his remarkable imagination, which was responsible in large part for his conversion to Christianity. While recovering from battle injuries, Ignatius filled a notebook with his thoughts as he read about the life of Christ and the saints. There, he recorded noble ideas of what he might do with his life. These daydreams and imaginings formed the foundation of his future work, *Spiritual Exercises*.

As Ignatius discovered, our sanctified imagination becomes a way to help us know and encounter God. As we read a scripture passage, we become a careful observer of all that takes place.

Giving free rein to our imagination (God has given us the incredible gift of imagination where we begin to dream with Him), we become both watchers and participants in the story. We feel the heat of the sun, smell the dust as we walk along, and sense the desperation of the sick who come to Jesus for healing. And not only do we hear the words recorded in the Gospels, but we also imagine other things Jesus might have said or done.

Imaginative prayer—the Ignatian method—helps Jesus come alive to us.

As you read the scripture, reflect on questions such as:

- What do I see and hear? What do I smell, taste, or touch?
- Who are the characters and what's going on with them?
- If I were in this movie, what role would I play?
- If I were Jesus in this story, what would I be thinking, feeling, saying?