

TRINITY NEWS

Easter II Christian Meditation on the Gospels

The gospel stories are rich in content for **Christian meditation**. I use the word “meditation” because of the misunderstandings that go with the word “contemplation”. **Contemplation** is a word that is associated with mystics rather than with the multitude of rank-and-file Christian believers who trust in the Lord, say their prayers, well most times, serve the Lord, and go to worship on Sundays in churches around the world. But everyone can contemplate, as Thomas Merton taught us, taking his lead from Jesus and John of the Cross.

To meditate in a Christian way simply means to stop thinking and to stop talking and just listen to God with Christ present.

Jesus himself went aside to quiet places and prayed. We know the content of some of his prayers in the prayer that he taught his disciples. We also have the prayer to his heavenly father in John 17. We have a very short prayer in the garden of Gethsemane which is summed up in the words, “Not my will but yours be done.” I suspect that most of his prayers were just listening to God.

Preparation: Think of a word that you would like to focus on in your Quiet Time such as “Lord”, “Love”, “Yeshua”, etc. Or turn to the Gospel of John and find a scene that attracts you or some luminous words. Visualize it as much as you can, but don’t try too hard.

Stop still

Shut up

Listen

The scene before us from John’s Gospel today is an upper room in Jerusalem in which Jesus met with his disciples a week after his resurrection. The real purpose of the gathering is to confront Thomas who was riddled with doubts about Jesus’ actual resurrection. Jesus suddenly appears in the midst and I suspect that he appeared right in front of Thomas. Meditation allows me the licence to see him immediately standing there. Listen to the words of Scripture in which Jesus asks Thomas to put his finger on the skin of his hands and trace the imprint of his wounds on them. He also tells him to put his hand in his side to actually feel and to see the hollow wound mark there from the spear thrust at the Cross. The challenge to Thomas from Jesus is the challenge to us, “Stop doubting and believe.” Thomas cries out, “My Lord and my God!” Apparently he didn’t even need to touch the wounds. But he must have looked at the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, the “awesome fascinating mystery”, and who could avoid it?

We can **meditate** on these matters and be drawn into the event. Then if we have maintained the focus we may find ourselves **contemplating** the presence of God in the upper room. It is not only in the person of Jesus, it fills the room.

Then we may be led from sitting in meditation to our knees in prayer.

This is only a first pass at entering a huge inner world that affects everything that we do.

Try reading John 20:24-29 following the above procedure.

Bishop Arthur Jones

TO PLAN:

Tuesday, April 9:
NATIONAL HOLIDAY.

Office closed.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

Acts 9:1-19a; Psalm 33
Revelation 5:6-14; John 21:1-14

Advance notice is given of a group that will meet to discuss the key aspects of **Christian Meditation**. This will begin next week. Registrations will be sought.

BANNS OF MARRIAGE

I publish the
Banns of Marriage
between
*John Jerusalem Agustin
Tiongson*
and *Maria Luisa Gwenn Florido
Pabellano*.

If any of you know just cause why they may not be joined together in Holy Matrimony, you are bidden to declare it.
This is the first time of asking.