

# LOYOLA PRAYER SHEETS

## IMAGINE A SOWER GOING OUT TO SOW

### *Praying with the Imagination*

One way God often seems to speak to people in prayer is through the imagination. This can get beyond what I feel I *ought* to think or say in God's presence, what the *correct* ideas to have are. The imagination helps me to see instead what I really want from God, and what God is actually offering me, or calling me to, at this stage in my life.

"But," many people say, "I have no imagination." They tend to mean they don't have the kind of imagination that comes up with vivid, technicolour images. But imagination works in different ways for different people. Some see images with the detail of a film director. Others get a sense of the "feel" of a place, without picturing it in the same way. Others again will build up a mental scene detail by detail.



But no-one has no imagination. Take a moment now to get a sense of a place you are fond of, or a person you love. The power that enables you to know what that feels like is the imagination. And the following exercise can help you to use that same power in prayer.

This prayer works well with any gospel or Old Testament scene where there is action taking place (so don't choose passages that are simply teaching or poetry). One or two examples of suitable passages are given below.

Take a few moments to become still and quiet, and invite God to work through your imagination as you pray with the passage. Ask God for what you want, perhaps "To know you more clearly, love you more dearly, follow you more nearly".

Read through the text two or three times until you are thoroughly familiar with the story. Then let the scene gradually build up in your mind's eye. Take your time, see everything that is around, hear, feel, taste, and smell.

Where are you? Take your own place in the unfolding scene. You may start as a bystander, or one of the central characters, or simply enter into the action as yourself.

Let yourself be drawn naturally into conversation with Jesus or another participant. Stay in the scene for as long as you have chosen to, and then draw the prayer to a close.

***Some passages suitable for imaginative prayer***

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| Matthew 14: 22-33 | Peter walks on the water         |
| Mark 10: 46-52    | The cure of Bartimaeus           |
| Luke 5: 1-11      | Call of four disciples           |
| John 13: 1-17     | Jesus washes the disciples' feet |
| Exodus 3: 1-6     | Moses and the burning bush       |
| 1 Samuel 3: 1-10  | The call of Samuel               |

