

Awaken me to your presence
Alert me to your love,
Affirm me in your peace.

Open to me your way
Reveal to me your joy,
Enfold me in your warmth.

For my heart is ready,
Holy One, my heart is ready.

...silence ...

from Psalm 107

- ¹⁷Some were sick through their sinful ways,
and because of their iniquities endured affliction;
¹⁸they loathed any kind of food,
and they drew near to the gates of death.
¹⁹Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
and he saved them from their distress;
²⁰he sent out his word and healed them,
and delivered them from destruction.
²¹Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
for his wonderful works to humankind.
²²And let them offer thanksgiving sacrifices,
and tell of his deeds with songs of joy.

a personal issue:

Am I at peace?

Do I love the life I am living?

Where does my sense of meaning come from?

Achieving? Relationships? Suffering? Exploring?

how is my mental and emotional health?

at dawn : John 19.25 to 20.1, 11-18



The sacred gaze

Look at the image. Let go of other images in and around you. Simply gaze.

Notice the colours, lines, forms and texture. Watch for the movement, the stillness, the opposites, the contrasts.

Let your eyes travel over the whole of the scene – and then rest where your attention draws you most. What is 'lit up'?

Where do you feel invited to stop? Where do you feel least invited to dwell?

Where do you feel comfortable? Where do you feel uncomfortable?

Position yourself somewhere in the painting.

Stay with what most 'affects' you or invites you. Let it deeply enter your awareness..... Does it reflect your life in any way?

What Jesus said:

Why are you weeping?

Who are you looking for?

Do not hold onto me. Go instead to my brothers and tell them.

What might it mean for Jesus to speak one of these to you in your life right now? Linger with this

Mary weeps before the gardener – until he says her name. Jesus, the Risen One, knows your name too. Be very still and use every one of your senses.

Listen as Jesus says your name. Listen. Sense, think and feel what it means for you to hear Jesus say your name.

Gently withdraw from the image. Notice your breath flowing through you – and relax. Consciously step out of this experience and choose a reflection that is helpful.

Reflection

Where in this meditation has God touched me? How – perhaps – has the image helped me to hold before God some aspect of the self that is me? What have I begun to be known?

What is stirring in me as I pray? Am I consoled, troubled, left cold?

Response

Imagine Jesus himself standing or sitting alongside, and share thoughts and feelings with him.

Or maybe write a simple letter to God.

Share your insights with someone you trust.

A Leunig prayer

We pray for the fragile ecology of the heart and mind. The sense of meaning. So finely assembled and balanced and so easily overturned. The careful ongoing construction of love. As painful and exhausting as the struggle for truth and as easily abandoned.

Hard fought and won are the shifting sands of this sacred ground, this ecology. Easy to desecrate and difficult to defend, this vulnerable joy, this exposed faith, this precious order. This sanity.

We shall be careful. With others and with ourselves.

AMEN

A few weeks later Mary Magdalene, the first apostle (John 20.18), was in the midst of a different life: “[they] were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.” (Acts 1.14)

Rest

In this final and most important stage of a meditation, sit quietly with God, at rest in the presence of the One who loves you. Do not worry that you may appear to be doing ‘nothing’. Trust that the Holy Spirit is at work in the depths of your spirit, deepening your faith.

Let the image and its message move from your head to your heart to dwell there in peace-full silence.

...

May the gentleness and strength of the Holy One

The delight and vulnerability of thy Way of Christ

And the graceful mystery of the life-giving Spirit

Be with you now and always.

AMEN

