



**Roman Catholic  
Diocese of Middlesbrough  
Adult Formation**



**A Retreat for Holy Week  
5 April to 12 April 2020**



# Holy Week 2020

Holy Week 2020 is being celebrated amid extraordinary circumstances. There are probably few, if any of us, who can remember such a time as this, when we have been directed by the Government and the Church to self isolate in order to protect each other from being infected with the Covid-19 virus. Hopefully our cooperation with these directives will significantly help to slow down and prevent the spread of the virus meaning that fewer people will get sick and still fewer people will succumb to the virus.

Many of our clergy have taken the initiative to live stream their Masses and prayer liturgies. This has proven to be a source of great comfort for those with access to technology and are able to use it. For others, not being able to get to church for Mass increases the sense of isolation and loneliness.

This 'Mini Retreat' is an attempt to ease the burden on those who are unable to watch streamed Masses and other liturgies.

The pages of this booklet are intended to help us journey through Holy Week by using the Gospel passages of the day taken from Holy Mass.

We offer a structure for your prayer time and suggest that you choose a time during the day that suits you best. This could be the time that you would usually attend Mass or, early in the morning, midday, whatever suits you.

This may supplement your usual daily prayer so please don't stop praying your everyday prayers.

Each day is structured in the following way:

- ♦ Be still and become aware of God's presence
- ♦ Opening prayer
- ♦ Psalm
- ♦ Thanksgiving to God
- ♦ Reading the Gospel of the day (Bible reference will be given) ***Dig out your Bible!***
- ♦ Reflecting and praying with the Gospel
- ♦ Act of Spiritual Communion
- ♦ Closing prayer

Take things at your own pace, take as long as you wish, there's no rush.

May God's blessing be with you and on your home.



## Palm Sunday 5 April

It is a moving experience each year on Palm Sunday as we go up the mountain with Jesus, towards the Temple, accompanying him on his ascent. But what are we really doing when we join this procession as part of the throng which went up with Jesus to Jerusalem and hailed him as King of Israel? Does it have anything to do with the reality of our life and our world? To answer this, we must first be clear about what Jesus himself wished to do and actually did. He was journeying towards the temple in the Holy City, towards that place which for Israel ensured in a particular way God's closeness to his people. The ultimate goal of his pilgrimage was the heights of God himself; to those heights he wanted to lift every human being. Our procession today is meant, then, to be an image of something deeper, to reflect the fact that, together with Jesus, we are setting out on pilgrimage along the high road that leads to the living God.

(Pope Benedict XVI)



Become silent, aware of the awesome presence of God who never ceases to be with us.

**Bless yourself in the + Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall, world without end. Amen.**

**Here I am Lord, I come to do your will**

**Read:** Psalm 100

**Personal Prayer and recollection;** As well as thanking and giving praise to God, we remind ourselves of the needs of our family, friends, community, wider world and we remember especially all those affected by Covid-19 and we remember our own personal needs.

**We know that you are with us Lord. You never leave us or abandon us in our need. I now open my ears and my heart to listen to your voice coming to me through the Holy Gospel.**

**Read:** The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew 26:14-27:66

**Silent meditation on the Gospel:** Is there a sentence or paragraph that seems to resonate with me? What is my reaction to it?

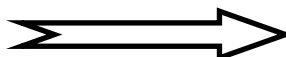
Maybe read over that part of the text a couple of times, reflecting and praying with it. If you wish you can use the Lectio Divina process outlined at the back of this booklet.

**Give thanks to God for what he has revealed to you during your prayer time.**

**Conclude your prayer time with:**

**Our Father; Hail Mary; Glory be.**

**Act of Spiritual Communion**



**We humbly beseech you, O Lord, that, just as through the death of your Son you have brought us to hope for what we believe, so by His Resurrection you may lead us to where you call. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.**

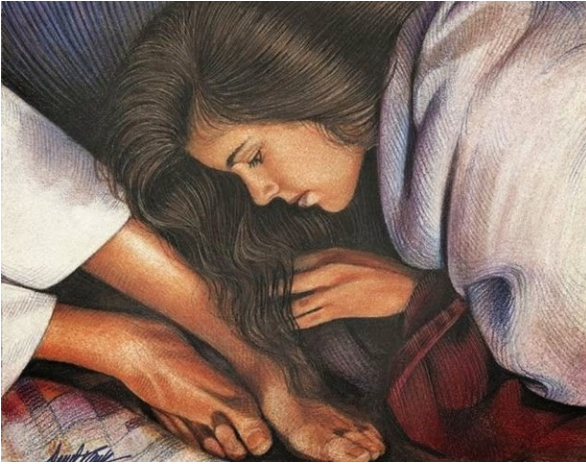


### Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

## Monday of Holy Week 6 April

### Anointing of Jesus by Mary at Bethany



There is only one anointing that is strong enough to meet death and that is the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the love of God. There is, then, something that is both exemplary and lasting in Mary's anointing of Jesus at Bethany. It was above all a concern to keep Christ alive in this world and to oppose the powers that aimed to silence and kill him. It was an act of faith and love. Every such act can have the same effect.

Pope Benedict XVI

Become silent, aware of the awesome presence of God who never ceases to be with us.

**Bless yourself in the + Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall, world without end. Amen.**

**Here I am Lord, I come to do your will**

**Read:** Psalm 103:1-5

**Personal Prayer and recollection;** As well as thanking and giving praise to God, we remind ourselves of the needs of our family, friends, community, wider world and we remember especially all those affected by Covid-19 and we remember our own personal needs.

**We know that you are with us Lord. You never leave us or abandon us in our need. I now open my ears and my heart to listen to your voice coming to me through the Holy Gospel.**

**Read:** The Holy Gospel according to John 12:1-11

**Silent meditation on the Gospel:** Is there a sentence or paragraph that seems to resonate with me? What is my reaction to it?

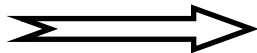
Maybe read over that part of the text a couple of times, reflecting and praying with it. If you wish you can use the Lectio Divina process outlined at the back of this booklet.

**Give thanks to God for what he has revealed to you during your prayer time.**

**Conclude your prayer time with:**

**Our Father; Hail Mary; Glory be.**

**Act of Spiritual Communion**



**May your protection, O Lord, we pray, defend the humble and keep ever safe those who trust in your mercy, that they may celebrate the paschal festivities not only with bodily observance but above all with purity of mind. Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**



#### Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.



## Tuesday of Holy Week 7 April

### Judas Betrays Jesus

It's very important to note that Jesus was "deeply troubled." This shows His humanity. Jesus had a human heart and loved Judas with a divine love through His human heart. As a result of this perfect love of Judas, Jesus' heart was deeply troubled. It was "troubled" in the sense that Jesus could do nothing more than He had already done to change the mind and heart of Judas. It's not that Jesus was personally offended or angered by Judas' betrayal. Rather, it's that Jesus' heart burned with a deep sorrow at the loss of Judas whom He loved with a perfect love. Judas had free will. Without free will Judas could not freely love Jesus. But with free will, Judas chose to betray Jesus. The same is true with us. We have free will and we are given the same ability that Judas had to accept the love of Jesus or to reject it. We can let His loving gift of salvation and grace enter our lives or refuse it.



Become silent, aware of the awesome presence of God who never ceases to be with us.

**Bless yourself in the + Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall, world without end. Amen.**

**Here I am Lord, I come to do your will**

**Read:** Psalm 71:1-6

**Personal Prayer and recollection;** As well as thanking and giving praise to God, we remind ourselves of the needs of our family, friends, community, wider world and we remember especially all those affected by Covid-19 and we remember our own personal needs.

**We know that you are with us Lord. You never leave us or abandon us in our need. I now open my ears and my heart to listen to your voice coming to me through the Holy Gospel.**

**Read:** The Holy Gospel according to John 13:21-33,36-38

**Silent meditation on the Gospel:** Is there a sentence or paragraph that seems to resonate with me? What is my reaction to it?

Maybe read over that part of the text a couple of times, reflecting and praying with it. If you wish you can use the Lectio Divina process outlined at the back of this booklet.

**Give thanks to God for what he has revealed to you during your prayer time.**

**Conclude your prayer time with: Our Father; Hail Mary; Glory be.**

### Act of Spiritual Communion

**May your mercy, O God, cleanse the people that are subject  
To you from all seduction of former ways and make them  
Capable of new holiness.  
Through Christ our Lord  
Amen**

### Act of Spiritual Communion

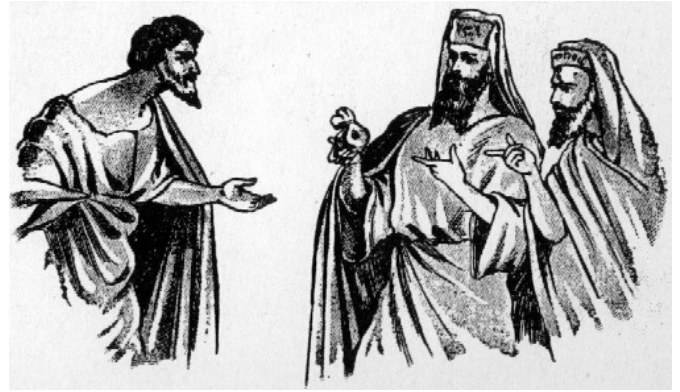
My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

## Wednesday of Holy Week 8 April

### The betrayal of Jesus continued...

The Jewish authorities wished to find a way to arrest Jesus without provoking a riotous disturbance. Judas presented them with this opportunity. There could be three main reasons why Judas betrayed Jesus:

- ♦ Avarice; sold Jesus out for less than £5
- ♦ Hatred based on disillusionment. Jews had their dream of power
- ♦ Judas never intended Jesus to die rather he wanted to spur Jesus into action



Judas refused to accept Jesus as he was and tried to make him what he wanted him to be. It is not that Jesus can be changed by us but we who must be changed by Jesus (Barclay, Daily Study Bible Matthew pp331/2).

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Become silent, aware of the awesome presence of God who never ceases to be with us.

**Bless yourself in the + Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall, world without end. Amen.**

**Here I am Lord, I come to do your will**

**Read:** Psalm 34:1-9

**Personal Prayer and recollection;** As well as thanking and giving praise to God, we remind ourselves of the needs of our family, friends, community, wider world and we remember especially all those affected by Covid-19 and we remember our own personal needs.

**We know that you are with us Lord. You never leave us or abandon us in our need. I now open my ears and my heart to listen to your voice coming to me through the Holy Gospel.**

**Read:** The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 26:14-25

**Silent meditation on the Gospel:** Is there a sentence or paragraph that seems to resonate with me? What is my reaction to it?

Maybe read over that part of the text a couple of times, reflecting and praying with it. If you wish you can use the Lectio Divina process outlined at the back of this booklet.

**Give thanks to God for what he has revealed to you during your prayer time.**

**Conclude your prayer time with: Our Father; Hail Mary; Glory be.**

### Act of Spiritual Communion

**Grant your faithful, O Lord, we pray, to partake unceasingly of the paschal mysteries and to await with longing the gifts to come, that, persevering in the Sacraments of their rebirth, they may be led by Lenten works to newness of life. Through Christ our Lord**

### Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

## Holy Thursday 9 April



*Help one another: this is what Jesus teaches us and this, what I am doing, and doing with all my heart, because it is my duty. As a priest and a bishop, I must be at your service. But it is a duty which comes from my heart: I love it. I love this and I love to do it because that is what the Lord has taught me to do. But you too, help one another: help one another always. In this way, by helping one another, we will do some good. Now we will perform this ceremony of washing feet, and let us think, let each one of us think: "Am I really willing, willing to serve, to help others?". Let us think about this, just this. And let us think that this sign is a caress of Jesus, which Jesus gives, because this is the real reason why Jesus came: to serve, to help us.*

Homily of Pope Francis at Prison for Minors 28 March 2013

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Become silent, aware of the awesome presence of God who never ceases to be with us.

**Bless yourself in the + Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall, world without end. Amen.**

**Here I am Lord, I come to do your will**

**Read:** Psalm 115:12-13, 15-18

**Personal Prayer and recollection;** As well as thanking and giving praise to God, we remind ourselves of the needs of our family, friends, community, wider world and we remember especially all those affected by Covid-19 and we remember our own personal needs.

**We know that you are with us Lord. You never leave us or abandon us in our need. I now open my ears and my heart to listen to your voice coming to me through the Holy Gospel.**

**Read:** The Holy Gospel according to John 13:1-15

**Silent meditation on the Gospel:** Is there a sentence or paragraph that seems to resonate with me? What is my reaction to it?

Maybe read over that part of the text a couple of times, reflecting and praying with it. If you wish you can use the Lectio Divina process outlined at the back of this booklet.

**Give thanks to God for what he has revealed to you during your prayer time.**

**Conclude your prayer time with: Our Father; Hail Mary; Glory be.**

### Act of Spiritual Communion

**Grant, almighty God, that, just as we are renewed by the Supper of your Son in this present age, so we may enjoy his banquet for all eternity.  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.  
Amen**

### Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.



## Friday of the Passion of the Lord 10 April

The liturgy applies to Jesus' descent into the night of death the words of Psalm 23 (24): "Lift up your heads, O gates; be lifted up, O ancient doors!" The gates of death are closed, no one can return from there. There is no key for those iron doors. But Christ has the key. His Cross, his radical love, is the key that opens them. The love of the One who, though God, became man in order to die –this love has the power to open those doors. This love is stronger than death.

Pope Benedict XVI

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Become silent, aware of the awesome presence of God who never ceases to be with us.

**Bless yourself in the + Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall, world without end. Amen.**

**Here I am Lord, I come to do your will**

**Read:** Psalm 30:2,6,12-13,15-17,25

**Personal Prayer and recollection;** As well as thanking and giving praise to God, we remind ourselves of the needs of our family, friends, community, wider world and we remember especially all those affected by Covid-19 and we remember our own personal needs.

**We know that you are with us Lord. You never leave us or abandon us in our need. I now open my ears and my heart to listen to your voice coming to me through the Holy Gospel.**

**Read:** The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John 18:1-19;42

**Silent meditation on the Gospel:** Is there a sentence or paragraph that seems to resonate with me? What is my reaction to it?

Maybe read over that part of the text a couple of times, reflecting and praying with it. If you wish you can use the Lectio Divina process outlined at the back of this booklet.

**Give thanks to God for what he has revealed to you during your prayer time.**

**Conclude your prayer time with: Our Father; Hail Mary; Glory be.**

**Act of Spiritual Communion**

**May abundant blessing, O Lord, we pray, descend upon your people, who have honoured the Death of your Son in the hope of their resurrection: may pardon come, comfort be given, holy faith increase, and everlasting redemption be made secure. Through Christ our Lord. Amen**

### Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.



## Holy Saturday 11 April



On Holy Saturday the Church waits at the Lord's tomb in prayer and fasting, meditating on his Passion and Death and on his Descent into Hell, and awaiting his resurrection. The Church abstains from the Sacrifice of the Mass, with the sacred table left bare, until after the solemn Vigil, that it, the anticipation by night of the Resurrection, when the time comes for paschal joys, the abundance of which overflows to occupy fifty days.

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### A reading from an ancient homily for Holy Saturday

What is happening? Today there is a great silence over the earth, a great silence, and stillness, a great silence because the King sleeps; the earth was in terror and was still, because God slept in the flesh and raised up those who were sleeping from the ages. God has died in the flesh, and the underworld has trembled.

Truly he goes to seek out our first parent like a lost sheep; he wishes to visit those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. He goes to free the prisoner Adam and his fellow-prisoner Eve from their pains, he who is God, and Adam's son.

The Lord goes in to them holding his victorious weapon, his cross. When Adam, the first created man, sees him, he strikes his breast in terror and calls out to all: 'My Lord be with you all.' And Christ in reply says to Adam: 'And with your spirit.' And grasping his hand he raises him up, saying: 'Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light.'

'I am your God, who for your sake became your son, who for you and your descendants now speak and command with authority those in prison: Come forth, and those in darkness: have light, and those in sleep: rise.

'I command you: Awake, sleeper, I have not made you to be held a prisoner in the underworld. Arise from the dead; I am the life of the dead. Arise, O man, work of my hands, arise, you who were fashioned in my image. Rise, let us go hence; for you in me and I in you, together we are one undivided person.

'For you, I your God became your son; for you, I the Master took on your form, that of a slave; for you, I who am above the heavens came on earth and under the earth; for you, man, I became as a man without help, free among the dead; for you, who left a garden, I was handed over to Jews from a garden and crucified in a garden.

'Look at the spittle on my face, which I have received because of you, in order to restore you to that first divine inbreathing at creation. See the blows on my cheeks, which I accepted in order to refashion your distorted form to my own image.

'See the scourging of my back, which I accepted in order to disperse the load of your sins which was laid upon your back. See my hands nailed to the tree for a good purpose, for you, who stretched out your hand to the tree for an evil one.

'I slept on the cross and a sword pierced my side, for you, who slept in paradise and brought forth Eve from your side. My side healed the pain of your side; my sleep will release you from your sleep in Hades; my sword has checked the sword which was turned against you.

'But arise, let us go hence. The enemy brought you out of the land of paradise; I will reinstate you, no longer in paradise but on the throne of heaven. I denied you the tree of life, which was a figure, but now I myself am united to you, I who am life. I posted the cherubim to guard you as they would slaves; now I make a cherubim worship you as they would God.

'The cherubim throne has been prepared, the bearers are ready and waiting, the bridal chamber is in order, the food is provided, the everlasting houses and rooms are in readiness, the treasures of good things have been opened; the kingdom of heaven has been prepared before the ages.'

### Concluding Prayer

Almighty, ever-living God, whose Only-begotten Son descended to the realm of the dead, and rose from there to glory, grant that your faithful people, who were buried with him in baptism, may, by his resurrection, obtain eternal life.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen

Extract from Divine Office Vol II pp321/2, 327

## Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord 12 April

Let us receive the special grace of this moment. We pause in reverent silence before this empty tomb in order to rediscover the grandeur of our Christian vocation: we are men and women of the resurrection, not of death. From this place we learn how to live our lives, the trials of our churches and of the whole world, in the light of Easter morning. Every injury, every one of our pains and sorrows, has been borne on the shoulders of the Good Shepherd who offered himself in sacrifice and thereby opened the way to eternal life. His open wounds are like the cleft through which the torrent of his mercy is poured out upon the world. Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of the basis of our hope, which is this: *Christos anesti!* Let us not deprive the world of the joyful message of the resurrection! And let us not be deaf to the powerful summons to unity that rings out from this very place, in the words of the One who, risen from the dead, calls all of us "My brothers" (Pope Francis, The Gospel of Matthew—a Spiritual and Pastoral Reading p 239).



Become silent, aware of the awesome presence of God who never ceases to be with us.

**Bless yourself in the + Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall, world without end. Amen.**

**Here I am Lord, I come to do your will**

**Read:** Psalm 117: 1-2, 16-17, 22-23

**Personal Prayer and recollection;** As well as thanking and giving praise to God, we remind ourselves of the needs of our family, friends, community, wider world and we remember especially all those affected by Covid-19 and we remember our own personal needs.

**We know that you are with us Lord. You never leave us or abandon us in our need. I now open my ears and my heart to listen to your voice coming to me through the Holy Gospel.**

**Read:** The Holy Gospel according to John 20:1-9

**Silent meditation on the Gospel:** Is there a sentence or paragraph that seems to resonate with me? What is my reaction to it?

Maybe read over that part of the text a couple of times, reflecting and praying with it. If you wish you can use the Lectio Divina process outlined at the back of this booklet.

**Give thanks to God for what he has revealed to you during your prayer time.**

**Conclude your prayer time with: Our Father; Hail Mary; Glory be.**

**Act of Spiritual Communion**

**Look upon your Church, O God, with unfailing love and favour,  
So that, renewed by the paschal mysteries, she may come to the  
Glory of the resurrection.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen**

**Happy Easter!!!**

### Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

**LECTIO DIVINA** (holy reading) is not a strict method, but the following steps may help you pray with the Scriptures or other sacred text, on your own or in a group.

- **Choose** a short Bible passage or other text. Decide how long you are going to set aside for prayer.
- **Opening prayer** from a Psalm or your heart. Sitting comfortably, invite the Holy Spirit to guide your reading and open your heart and mind.
- **First reading (Lectio).** Read the passage aloud or in silence, then sit for a while in silence. Be open to God's presence in stillness. What is God saying through this text and the events of this day? What did the text mean to its first readers/hearers, and what does it mean today?
- **Second reading (Meditatio).** A time of reflection. Note any word or phrase that touches your heart. Reflect silently why it might be significant for you. You may wish to speak just that word or phrase aloud.
- **Third reading (Collatio).** A time of sharing, if praying with others. Share your impressions and reactions about the text if you wish. This is not a time for debate or study, but rather for personal and community reflection.
- **Fourth reading (Oratio).** A time for spoken or silent prayer of the heart. Your prayer may be one of repentance, thanksgiving, intercession, or however the Spirit moves you.
- **Fifth reading (Contemplatio).** Spend a good while resting in God. As much as is ever possible, try to clear your mind – even of the text itself – and enter into the silence where God is seeking you. Giving God your 'intention' is more important than your 'attention', so if you get distracted gently give back your intention to God by silently saying your chosen word or phrase.
- **Sixth reading (Actio).** In silence try to discern if God is calling you to make some kind of action or commitment in your life. How will the Word bear fruit?
- **Closing prayer** to thank God for this encounter with the Word.

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**Sources:** CTS Daily Missal; Divine Office Vol II

The Gospel of Matthew– A Spiritual and Pastoral Reading by Pope Francis

We hope that you have found using this pamphlet a rewarding experience and that it has helped you to celebrate this special time of year.