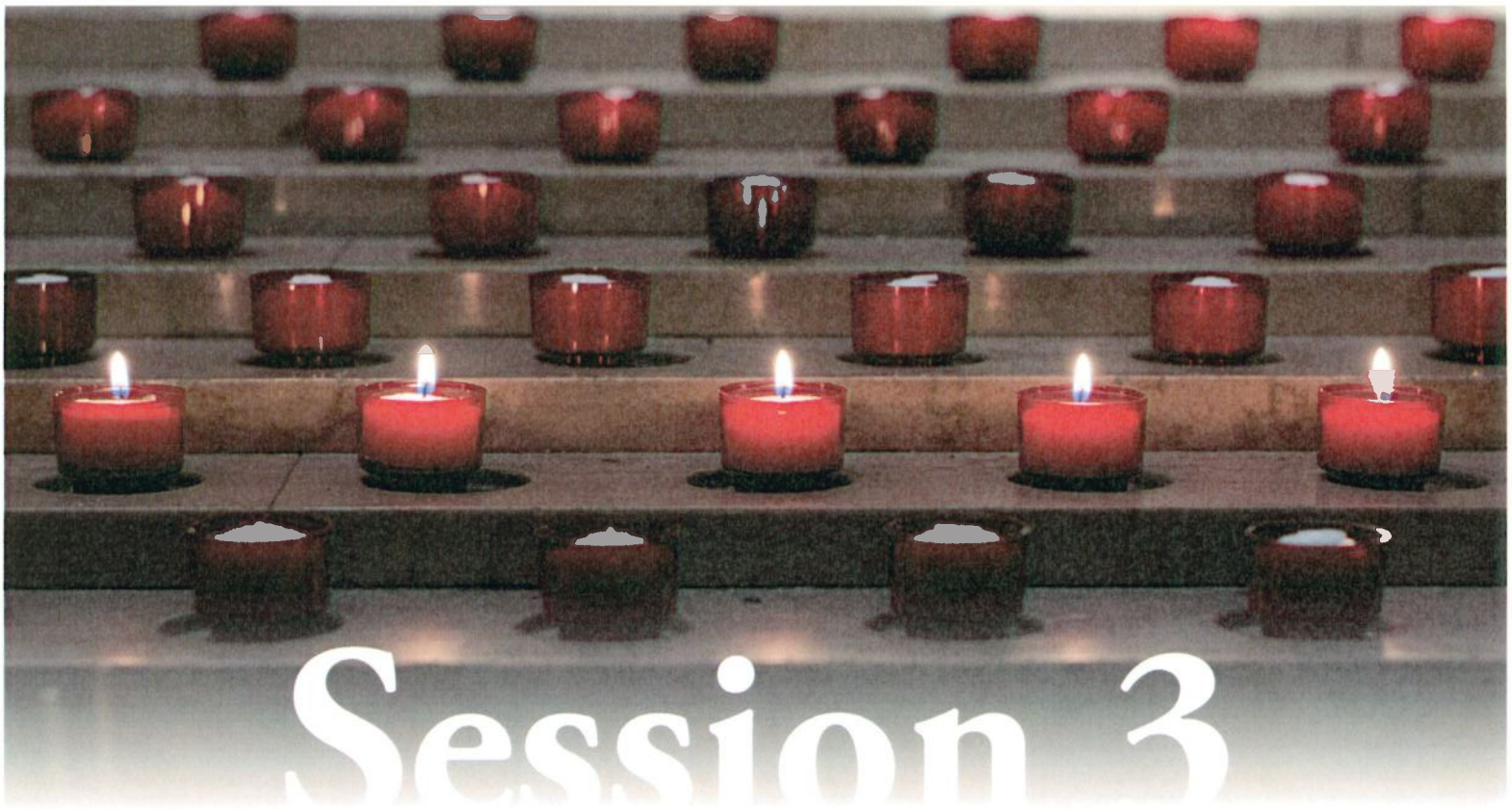

# Session 3

Lord God, I want to trust you and experience your love and tender mercy.

# From: On Gospel Contemplation

## By J. Veltri, S.J.

This is how you can enter into the life of Jesus through prayer:

1. ***Select a short concrete/action passage.***
   First, from one of the Gospels, select an action passage, preferably fast moving and colorful in detail. When you first begin to use this method, do not attempt to pray a parable or a sermon.

2. *Relax and settle into God's presence.*
   Ask for a particular grace that you are seeking or the particular gift you need at this time — perhaps to know Jesus more intimately, or to become more compassionate, or too be healed in a particular area of your heart, etc.

3. ***Read aloud the passage several times, pausing half a minute or so between each reading while the gospel episode takes hold of you.***
   Slowly read the passage once — aloud, if circumstances allow. Then for 30 seconds or so look up from the page and let the scene sink into your imagination. Do a second oral reading, noticing the details which you missed in the first reading. Again, look up from the page for 30- seconds or so, until these new details fit into the total scene in your imagination. In the third reading, you will see more details for the first time, also insights, questions and interpretations will begin to occur to you. Use a half-minute to let them settle into your memory. Then read a fourth or even a fifth time until almost all the distractions have disappeared, and the Gospel scene totally saturates your imagination.

4. ***Now place the Bible aside and let the scene happen.***
   Do nothing to promote it except to stay alert to its developments. As you let yourself sink into the scene, you will tend to lose the sense of yourself and to identify with the situation. Suppose, for example, that you have read about Jesus quieting the storm on the lake. You may imagine the wind howling, the boat pitching, the apostles struggling at the oars. If this identification deepens, you will find yourself in the boat, e.g., at the oars, or you may find yourself to be Peter or Philip. Sometimes you will discover yourself drifting in and out of the scene, in and out of various people of the scene.

5. *Allow yourself to take part* ***in*** *the scene, which is now present to you.*

   Be as passive as possible while being as alert as possible. In fact, let everyone else control the event: Jesus, Peter, Mary, Martha and John. You merely interact with the persons, listen and reply to their words, take part in their activity — conversing with them, accompanying them, helping them in their occupations, in whatever ways you find yourself as part of the event that is present to you.

6. ***Do not moralize or try to make applications.***
   Don't moralize (for example, "I should be more spontaneous like Peter when I am with my friends...") or draw conclusions (for example, "Notice how the Pharisees are so much like the people I am working with...") By losing yourself in the persons, words and activity of the gospel event, your whole being is affected and influenced. You won't need applications because you will notice what happens to you either in the period of reflection after your prayer or, more subtly, in the effects in your life as almost by osmosis you begin to put on the mind and heart of Jesus's spirit.

7. *After your period of* ***prayer comes to an end, make a review for a few minutes by reflecting upon what took place during the prayer.***
   What happened in you during this prayer exercise? What did you notice as standing out even slightly? Is there something you should return to in a later period of prayer? Give thanks to the Lord for being with you during this time.

# PRAYING WITH IGNATIUS-SAINT IGNATIUS HIGH SCHOOL

## HOME PRAYER SELECTIONS

### Week 3

**PREPARE:** Choose Place, Posture, Prayer Time, Prayer Passage, and become mindful of the Presence of God.

**GRACE SOUGHT: Lord God, I want to trust you and experience your love and tender mercy.**

**Pray:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Luke 15:1-10 | The Lost Sheep and the Lost Drachma |
| Luke 15:11-32 | Prodigal Son/Loving Father |
| Luke 7:36-50 | Woman Who Was a Sinner |
| Luke 19:1-10 | Zacchaeus |
| John 4:1-32 | Woman at the Well |
| Luke 13:10-17 | Sabbath cure of the Bent-Over woman |

**Review of Prayer:**

1. What did you like? What resonated with you?
2. What didn't you like? Where did you feel resistance?
3. Did you experience and spiritual insight? Delight?

    1. What was revealed of God?
    2. What was revealed of yourself?

3. What is being revealed of your relationship with God?