



## Healing through Scripture

*Denis Linn SJ\* tells of how he prayed with Judy for the healing of her grief over the loss of her mother. Judy said that what pained her most was the way her mother died, struggling for breath and experiencing terrible thirst.*

*As Judy remembered her mother struggling for breath and dying with a terrible thirst, she joined Mary at the foot of the cross where Jesus also struggled for breath and died with a terrible thirst. Judy talked to Mary about Jesus' death and started to feel close to Mary, sharing her suffering, even comforting her.*

*As she did this, she started to see her mother's death in a whole new light. She began to feel freed from her grief, able to release her mother and her own feelings of helplessness into the hands of Jesus.*

*The Scriptures are not 'dead' words from long ago, they are God's Word, and have the power to transform us in the present.*

*\* Praying with Another for Healing (Paulist Press, 1984)*

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Year B

# Journey to wholeness

## The Healing Power of Praying with Scripture

*The Scriptures invite us to enter deeply into the mind and heart of Jesus, becoming one with him.*

### Step 1: Open yourself to God's love

Begin by getting in touch with God's great love for you. It may help to recall:

- A time when you most felt loved;
- The person who most loves you.

Let God love you through these loving memories.

### Step 2: Read the Scripture passage

Today's Gospel tells of Jesus healing the man possessed by an 'unclean spirit' (Mk 1:21-28). Read the passage, slowly, prayerfully.

### Step 3: Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you that part of you that God wants to heal.

Ask yourself: What 'unclean spirit' afflicts me at present?

- A poor self-image?
- An addictive behaviour?
- A tendency to be negative or to criticise others?
- Anxiety about the future?
- An urge to control a particular person/situation?

Allow the feelings associated with this 'unclean spirit' to be experienced for what they are. How does God want to heal and cleanse me?

### Step 4: Enter more deeply into the Gospel Story.

(Or perhaps there is another Scripture story which speaks to you personally.)

- Enter the Story.
- Imagine the scene: what do you see, hear, smell, feel?
- Where do you find yourself in the story? With which character do you most identify?
- Watch, listen, interact with Jesus in the story. What does he say, do? How does he respond to you?

- Let Jesus, or perhaps another person in the story, love you as he/she knows best. 'Stay with' this experience of being loved, let it seep into you deeply, powerfully.

### Step 5: Rejoice in God's love

For whatever healing steps/insights were experienced during this prayer, praise God. Be thankful for steps in life and love, no matter how tiny.

Remember: healing usually takes time. You may like to 'stay with' this scripture, carrying it with you and returning to it during the day, the coming week, or even longer.

If you find yourself 'stuck' or hitting a brick wall, don't fret. Return to Step 1: memories of love. Simply open yourself to God's great love for you. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you forward, but don't 'force' things. When in doubt, simply ask yourself: what is the next most loving step I can take?

### Healing resources further afield

The Catholic Church offers many kinds of healing experiences. For example, for marriages in difficulty, or for couples and families who have suffered the pain of divorce and separation, the Catholic community offers:

#### Retrouvaille

[www.retrouvaille.org](http://www.retrouvaille.org)

#### Seasons for Growth

[www.goodgrief.org.au](http://www.goodgrief.org.au)

#### The Beginning Experience

[www.beginningexperience.org](http://www.beginningexperience.org)

#### Centacare Counselling Services

Ph 9473 4500