

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Ignatian Meditation Guides by Bill Gaultiere

Introduction to Ignatian Meditation

In Ignatius' 16th century approach to Scripture instead of analyzing a text, you use your senses to imagine yourself as a character in the story. Then you have a short, personal conversation with the Lord. Each reading is guided by a focus question below. In a group context follow the leader's instructions on what to share and be sure to protect people's confidentiality.

Background to the Text

This Gospel reading in *The Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius is in Week Three which focuses on the passion of Christ. Jesus and the Twelve are in the Upper Room enjoying the Passover Feast. They're lounging side-by-side as they eat, talking, happily anticipating the redemption of Israel, and singing. In the middle of their intimate celebration Jesus gives the unbelievably bad news that one of them will betray him to be apprehended by enemies. Judas is the traitor! Then Jesus institutes communion by breaking bread and passing the cup of wine, saying they are his body and blood. In this way he gives himself for them all, apparently including even Judas. (Matthew, Mark, and John imply this.)

Ask For the Grace

Father God, I desire the grace of sorrow, regret, and confusion because of my sins that send Jesus to the cross.

Imagine Scripture: Matthew 26

20-21 After sunset, he and the Twelve were sitting around the table. During the meal, he said, "I have something hard but important to say to you: One of you is going to hand me over to the conspirators."

22 They were stunned, and then began to ask, one after another, "It isn't me, is it, Master?"

23-24 Jesus answered, "The one who hands me over is someone I eat with daily, one who passes me food at the table. In one sense the Son of Man is entering into a way of treachery well-marked by the Scriptures—no surprises here. In another sense that man who turns him in, turns traitor to the Son of Man—better never to have been born than do this!"

25 Then Judas, already turned traitor, said, "It isn't me, is it, Rabbi?"

Jesus said, "Don't play games with me, Judas."

26-29 During the meal, Jesus took and blessed the bread, broke it, and gave it to his disciples: "Take, eat. This is my body."

Taking the cup and thanking God, he gave it to them: "Drink this, all of you. This is my blood, God's new covenant poured out for many people for the forgiveness of sins."

"I'll not be drinking wine from this cup again until that new day when I'll drink with you in the kingdom of my Father."

30 They sang a hymn and went directly to Mount Olives (MSG).

Prayer / Journaling / Soul Talk Prompts

1. Visualize yourself in the Gospel. Don't seek intellectual insights—stay with the imagery. Use your senses to see, touch, feel, and hear. What part of the story are you drawn to? Which character do you identify with or are you a bystander?
2. Experience the story in the role of the character God led you to. Then talk with the Lord. What do you feel? How does this relate to something in your life today? What is God saying to you?