

Tuesday of the Fourth Week of Lent (Leader)

Opening Prayer: We ask you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to join us and lead us in this scripture meditation. May Jesus, through His Word, lead us to Our Father. May we rest in Our Father's presence and be inspired by the Holy Spirit as we read, reflect, respond, and rest.

Introduction to the Text (John 5: 1-16): The self-revelation of Jesus continues in Jerusalem at a feast. The third sign [first sign: changing water to wine at Cana (2:1-12); second sign: curing the royal official's son in Capernaum (4:46-54)] is performed, the cure of a paralytic by Jesus' life-giving word. The water of the pool fails to bring life; Jesus' word does.

Lectio Divina Process: Read (*Lectio*), Reflect (*Meditatio*), Respond (*Oratio*), Rest (*Contemplatio*)

1. First Reading: We begin as we read (*Lectio*) John 5: 1-16. During the reading, focus on question #1 below. We will pause for 2 to 3 minutes after the reading for you to reflect (*Meditatio*) and share a word or phrase from the reading. You may write the word or phrase in the space below the question. In the quiet, it will help to repeat it in your mind and to reflect on it.

2. Question 1: What is one word or phrase the Holy Spirit impresses on you? In silence meditate on that.

“Rise, take up your mat, and walk.” (8)

3. First Response: You are now invited to share your word or phrase. We will reflect on the shared word or phrase **without explanation or commentary**. It may help to **circle the words or phrases shared to see the group's focus**.

4. Second Reading: We will now read (*Lectio*) our scripture passage a second time. As we read the scripture, focus on question #2 below. Imagine yourself there in the scripture. We will pause for 2 to 3 minutes of silence, then you will be invited to share your feelings and/or a short personal prayer (*Oratio*), your response to the Word. You may write your response in the space provided.

5. Question 2: What do you **feel**? What **specific situation** in your life today relates to the scripture or to the word or phrase you have chosen.? Write down your feelings, how the scripture relates to you and/or a **prayer**.

How do you feel: I feel Jesus' compassion and his challenge to rise, take up my mat, and walk.

Specific situation: I have experienced God's mercy in the sacrament of reconciliation. I got up, carried my burdens, but at some point sinned again.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for your merciful love. Please give me the strength not to fall into sin.

Others: _____

6. Second Response: You are now invited to share your response to question #2. Group members may express words of support without judgment. Advice and reassurance are left to God in silence.

7. Third Reading: We will now read (*Lectio*) our scripture passage a third time. During the reading, we focus on question #3 below. In 2 to 3 minutes of silent rest and quiet (*Contemplatio*) after the reading, you can write down what you sense God may be saying to you and/or offer a prayer of thanks for what God is showing you. Imagine resting in God's presence and repeating your word or phrase seeking meaning. Ending the silence: *In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

8. Question 3: What is God's personal invitation to you from the Scripture? You can write down **what the Lord may be saying** to you and/or a **prayer of thanks**. Or simply rest quietly in the Spirit's presence.

What the Lord is saying (action): I will always help you to arise from your sins. Don't be discouraged. Continue to come to me with sincerity to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

A prayer of thanks: Thank you Lord for your patience and abundant mercy.

Others: _____

9. Third Response: You are now invited to share your response to question #3. We listen with **prayerful empathy without needing to give judgment, advice, or assurance**.

10. Closing Prayer: We **praise** you, Lord, for your Holy Word. We **thank** you for being there for us when we need healing. Please give us the strength to always arise from our sins and to follow your Way. We **pray for those in need of prayer**. For Leo Lemmus' recovery from cerebral hemorrhages. We also pray that many unborn will be saved from abortion during these 40 days for life and we pray for the homeless in our community, for [the prayer intentions of our group members] _____...and for all the prayer intentions in our hearts) Our Father

11. Announcements: Handout from The Magnificat. Have a great week.

Gospel: John 5: 1-16 Cure on a Sabbath

1 After this, there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

2 Now there is in Jerusalem at the Sheep [Gate]- a pool called in Hebrew Bethesda, with five porticoes.

3 In these lay a large number of ill, blind, lame, and crippled.

4-5 One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years.

6 When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been ill for a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be well?"

7 The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; while I am on my way, someone else gets down there before me."

8 Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your mat, and walk."

9 Immediately the man became well, took up his mat, and walked.

10 So the Jews said to the man who was cured, "It is the sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to carry your mat."

11 He answered them, "The man who made me well told me, 'Take up your mat and walk.'"

12 They asked him, "Who is the man who told you, 'Take it up and walk'?"

13 The man who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had slipped away, since there was a crowd there.

14 After this Jesus found him in the temple area and said to him, "Look, you are well; do not sin any more, so that nothing worse may happen to you."

15 The man went and told the Jews that Jesus was the one who had made him well.

16 Therefore, the Jews began to persecute Jesus because he did this on a sabbath.

From: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/matthew/18> This approach to *Lectio Divina* is based on <https://www.soulshpherdng.org/lectio-divina-groups/>