

RELIGION | Reflecting on Gospel Passages



This reflection can be done with any piece of the Christian heritage: a story of a saint, an event from church history, or a bishop's pastoral letter. The directions here presuppose a reading from Scripture out of the cycle of readings for Sundays in the year.

1. Read the Gospel passage for the next Sunday. First read it to yourself slowly, then read it aloud slowly. Look at the language in the story, at the interchanges between and among people, at the shifts in action and energy.

- What is this story about?
- What is the heart of the matter?

Answer the question in terms of the text with its interactions and movements.

As much as possible, set aside what you think you know about the particular piece of tradition and about Christianity generally. Attend to the text with fresh eyes. Let it be unfamiliar. Sit with the Gospel passage until an image emerges that captures the central focal point in it.

2. Let the image lead you to your own situation in life.

- What incidents from your experience does the image evoke for you?
Pick one incident and explore it.
- What were your thoughts and feelings in that situation?
- What does the image tell you about that situation?
- About your interpretation of it up to this point?
- Is your interpretation confirmed, challenged, revised?

3. Move back from your exploration of your life experience to the original passage from Scripture.

- What do you see in the passage now that you did not see before?
- Has your attitude toward the passage or the characters in it changed?
- Do you hear its message differently now?

4. What will you take with you from this reflection to your daily life?