

## **Meditation, Imagination, Colloquy, and Prayer**

**By Gina Williams**

God has given us humans a gift of imagination, and we can use that gift to be closer to Him. To me, meditation is using imagination to that end. Often, but not as often as I'd wish, I will take the time to meditate after reading scripture. When I am mentally quiet, having "listened" to what I was reading, I feel the uplifting presence of God's Holy Spirit and will speak the resulting meditation into my phone. This is because the handwriting or typing itself gets in the way or the memory escapes. Then I transfer it to my computer to fix misspellings, missing words and typos. I want to save it for reading again later, to receive the same insight or exultation as originally.

The meditations can be in various forms. For me, they are most often colloquies (conversations between Jesus and me or others from the Bible) or simply prayers. Below is a familiar passage from the Gospel of John, followed by my meditation, in which I take on the role of Peter and then pray. (I have copied here only the verses 9-19 because of space). My original reading was John 21: 1-19. You might want to read the entire passage.

John 21: 9-19 (NRSV)

When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread.

Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught."

So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn.

Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast."

Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?"

He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you."

Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." A second time he said to him, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?"

He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you."

Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of

John, do you love me?"

Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?"

And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you."

Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go." (He said this to show the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, "Follow me."

### **Meditation on John 21:1-19**

I imagine I am Peter:

Jesus, oh I'm coming! I can't wait! I'll swim in.

I know it's him. I have been longing for him. And now he's here, and he's eating with us.

Oh, why can't this last forever? And now he's questioning me. Of course, I love him.

Again! What does he mean, feed his sheep? I don't get it; he's being mysterious again.

Don't know what he means, but it seems I will grow old. I'm lost as usual, but I will always follow him. I wish he weren't going away. What will happen to us? What would we do without him? I'm to feed his sheep, me? Me. O Lord have mercy.

I thought, why Peter? He was clueless, no more, no less than the other disciples. But his heart was open to Jesus, to the Holy Spirit.

Like mine, Lord. You give me grace, gifts, despite my keeping you away at times. But I invite you in and you come, and it is heaven.

You come when I pray,

You come when I ignore you.

You listen when I speak nonsense.

You speak when I'm not listening.

I don't deserve your attention

Oh, but you deserve mine all the time.

The time I don't have for you.

What is it?

It is wasted time.

Lord, I want to give you my time.

All of it.

I have nothing else to give.

You already have my heart.