# Connection

Seven recollections from my time as a seminary student and a seminary professor.

(1) When I was at seminary as a student, I went through a time when I wasn’t sure I belonged to God and to God’s people. It wasn’t a doubt about whether the Christian faith was true. It was a doubt about whether I was in, whether I belonged to the elect.

One day I went to morning chapel. It was part of our life as a seminary that we gathered together each morning and evening, and each morning and evening we were working through the scriptures systematically. In the morning we happened to be reading Deuteronomy, and one particular morning we read Deuteronomy 17 because the previous day we had read Deuteronomy 16 and next day we would be reading Deuteronomy 18. Deuteronomy 17 includes some words about the fact that the Israelites had come out of Egypt, and its includes the words “You will not return that way again.” The words came home to me as a promise from God, that he had taken hold of me and wouldn’t let go of me. When I went to chapel, I didn’t know if I belonged to God; when I left chapel, I knew I did, and I never worried about that question again.

One reflection on this experience. It happened only because I did go to chapel that day. I didn’t go because it was a meaningful event each time I went. It wasn’t always like that. It was just part of our life as a seminary. Many Fuller students tell me they can’t find a church. I say: if you’re not part of a worshiping community, whether you like it or not, you’re not living as a Christian. It’s a way God makes connection with us. If you aren’t a member of a church, try four, then commit yourself to the least bad of them, and go every week. Make it a church where they read the Bible and pray. If you like you can go each week and ask God to give you one small thing out of the worship that is an encouragement, even if you dislike most of it.

(2) Here’s the second recollection. When I was in seminary in England as a professor, I went through a period when I had no sense of God. I wouldn’t say I had stopped believing in God. It was the kind of time people refer to as a period of spiritual dryness. One week I came out of the main midweek evening chapel, where as usual I had had no sense of connecting with God. A student asked me what I thought of the service and I told him I felt distanced from God. “Perhaps that’s where God wants you to be,” the student said. It was really an extremely insensitive remark, yet it was a help.

What it makes me reflect now is this. One of the themes for today is maintaining connection with God. But one of the implications of that experience of mine is that it doesn’t lie with us to maintain a connection with God. Maintaining a connection with God is not like your computer maintaining a connection with mains electricity or your router. It’s a personal relationship and maintaining it doesn’t rest simply with you. It rests with the person on the other side of the relationship too. Indeed, the fact that God is bigger than you are implies that it probably rests much more with God than with you. It links with that fat that people in the Bible very very often lament the fact that God has gone away from them. When we don’t feel in touch with God, it may be that it’s our fault, but the Bible makes clear that it isn’t necessarily the case. There is a poster that sometimes appears outside churches that says “God seems far way? Guess who moved?” It’s a wicked poster because it make people who are already suffering suffer more. It’s important that we don’t think we can maintain a connection with God.

There’s something else. The fact that you don’t feel a connection with God doesn’t mean you don’t have one. It also doesn’t mean that God is not real. God is real and the connection is real whatever your feelings about it. Conversely, the fact that you think you have a connection with God doesn’t necessarily mean you do, just as is the case when you think you have a connection with another human being.

Whether you have a connection with God may well depend on whether you are living by the Spirit, living a godly life. It’s an especially important question for us living in Southern California because we live in the most godless place on earth, and many of us are involved with Hollywood, which is the more godless part of the most godless place on earth. We are always being driven by the culture into an attitude to life that is the antithesis of the gospel. We need to be counter-cultural. Maybe what we need is a rule of life. At the end of these seven reflections are a couple of examples of a rule of life, based on the Ten Commandments.

(3) Here’s the third recollection. My first wife was disabled with multiple sclerosis and we lived with that situation for forty-three years. Things got worse and worse through my time as a professor in England and I went through a particular period when I wouldn’t be able to sleep. The way that affects me is that I get to sleep okay but I wake up at 2 o’clock or so and then I can’t get back to sleep. It was at this time that the Psalms became important to me. I would get up and go downstairs and sit on the sofa and cry out to God in what I realized was a psalm-like fashion. The Psalms are Scripture’s gift to us as a means of expressing ourselves to God.

There’s an old book on prayer by Otto Hallesby, the title is simply called *Prayer*, which I have sometimes come back to when I have felt I am at a dead end in prayer. The key bit of the book for me is when he talks about prayer being for people who are helpless. He explains how what we think are barriers to prayer, like doubt or anger or depression, are actually our way into prayer, because they are what makes us helpless. And prayer is a matter of telling God each day in what way we are helpless. The Psalms are brilliant for doing that.

At the end of these reflections are a couple of handouts about using the Psalms that we used with our church just now as a Lent Course.

(4) The fourth recollection concerns a period a bit later when I felt just like someone who had had their heart broken. I had this chronic pain inside as if there was a hole in my stomach. I would get up each morning with the hole there. I used to go for s run around the seminary soccer field in those days, and as I ran I would cry out to God, Will it be all right? And I would shower and go to chapel and listen to the Scriptures read – again there would be a psalm, an Old Testament passage, a New Testament passage. And every day there would be something that spoke to me where I was and gave me something to think about after chapel. It didn’t exactly make me feel fine, but it made me feel I could go on.

The moral of the story is: read the Bible in the company of God’s people every day. You are unlucky at Fuller – we don’t have chapel every day. So you will have to find another way of reading the Bible every day. Read it expecting that the Holy Spirit will take just a phrase from somewhere and make it a word from God to you.

At the ends of these reflections there are a couple of ways of organizing your reading of the OT and the NT to see if you can have that experience of God speaking through you.

(5) The fifth recollection concerns an odd time in the seminary when we were between presidents and between provosts and even the registrar was on sabbatical and I was in effect fulfilling all three positions as well as doing my own job. It nearly killed me. The habit I got into was going into my office once or twice a day for a few minutes and letting my whole body and spirit relax as I opened myself to God. I could then pull myself back to my feet and face the tasks again.

The 24/7 nature of the lives that many of you live means you need something like that. In particular, if you don’t take a sabbath and you don’t feel in touch with God, don’t be surprised.

(6) The sixth and seventh recollections relate to my coming here. Exactly fifteen years ago Fuller was in the midst of offering me a job and I was in the midst of wondering whether to bring that disabled wife of mine across the Atlantic to this strange place. One of our students at the seminary in England sensed God saying to her one day in chapel, “Tell John, ‘Judges 18:6.’” “I don’t know what it says,” she replied. “Never mind,” God said, “Just tell John ‘Judges 18:6.’” So she did. “That’s the story of the Levite and his concubine, isn’t it?” I said to her. Actually that’s Judges 19. We looked up Judges 18, and found that it says, “Go in peace, your journey has the Lord’s approval.” It came as a wondrous confirmation that I could take the risk of bringing Ann to this strange setting without knowing how a number of aspects of life would work out.

The moral of the story is: don’t be surprised if God speaks to you. Maybe God will say something for you. Maybe God will say something to you for someone else. If you think God might have done that, take the risk of sharing it rather than take the risk of not sharing it.

In those days in England, people weren’t surprised if God spoke to them. If the Holy Spirit is living in the church, you’d expect that to happen. Maybe god has abandoned us and won’t speak to us. But be open to the possibility that God will.

In a situation where people don’t have much experience of God speaking to them or giving them visions and they don’t read the Bible and expect God to speak to them, Fuller students are inclined to think that they can find God through nature or through movies. Finding God through nature is Canaanite religion. You won’t find the real God there. And the movie industry is the habitation of Satan, so you won’t find God there. Listen for the Holy Spirit in Scripture and when he speaks to you direct or when someone else brings a word from God to you.

(7) Here’s the last recollection. When I was in England, the daily worship of the seminary community was integral to my connection with God; here there’s no such thing. It isn’t possible in an institution like Fuller. For some time I didn’t know what to do. It’s been one of the great things about marrying Kathleen that we say the four daily prayer services in the Episcopal Prayer Book. When we wake up, I make the tea and we say the morning prayers. At lunch when we are home we say the midday prayers. At dinner when we are home we say the evening prayers. Before we go to sleep we say the night prayers. It hardly ever fails to remind me that God is with us and to orient us to our place in God’s world and to God’s way of looking at things.

In the current issue of the journal *Books and Culture* (March-April 2012) there’s a great article about Thomas Cranmer, the sixteenth-century archbishop who was the mind and spirit behind the Anglican Prayer Book. The article talks about the way Cranmer adapted the pattern of services in the life of a monastery so that they could work for ordinary people. He combined the eight services of the monastery into two, one for the morning, one for the evening, so that people could begin and end their day by hearing and responding to Scripture. I have always loved the very first words of Morning Prayer, from the Psalms: “O Lord, open our lips; and our mouth shall show forth your praise. O God make speed to save us; O Lord, make haste to help us.” In that service the very first things we do each day is acknowledge our dependence on God even to be able to open our mouths in prayer and praise. Opening our mouth doesn’t depend on us. Those words, the article says, “lay down the ground-bass of life,” of the life we will then live through the day. They lay down the ground base of life.

So my advice is – find a couple of people to pray with every day. It might be that you can also read the scriptures together. Advertise in the Semi. Put up a notice on a notice board. Put it on Craigslist.

Those four daily four services from the Episcopal Church appear below.

# St Barnabas Pasadena Lent Course 2012

# February 28 - March 27

# Praying the Psalms

Come to John and Kathleen’s house on Tuesdays from 6.00 to 7.30 to study some of the Psalms, think about how to pray, and enjoy a simple dinner. We live at 111 South Orange Grove Bvd, Apartment 108 (626 405 0626). Park in Green Street.

The course will last five weeks, but you can come just to one or two if you can’t come to all of them.

After the first week, there will be a psalm for you to pray each day as you can, and we will talk about these psalms and about your experience of praying them when we meet.

Before the first evening, you could start reading Psalm 119…

February 28

## The Way the Psalms Pray

Giving Praise: “You’re great”

Praying for Oneself:

“Help, help, help!”

Praying for Our Church

Praying for Someone Else

Praying for Our Neighborhood

Praying for Our Nation

Praying for the World

Giving Thanks:

“Thank you, thank you, thank you.”

Making Confession:

“Sorry, sorry, sorry.”

March 6

## Praying for Oneself

A psalm each day to pray and think about, as you have time:

Wednesday Psalm 6

Thursday Psalm 15

Friday Psalm 19

Saturday Psalm 25

Sunday Psalm 30

Monday Psalm 33

Tuesday Psalm 42

March 13

## Praying for Someone Else

A psalm each day to pray and think about, as you have time:

Wednesday Psalm 11

Thursday Psalm 22

Friday Psalm 27

Saturday Psalm 31

Sunday Psalm 34

Monday Psalm 43

Tuesday Psalm 63

March 20

## Praying for the Neighborhood

A psalm each day to pray and think about, as you have time:

Wednesday Psalm 20

Thursday Psalm 23

Friday Psalm 32

Saturday Psalm 38

Sunday Psalm 40

Monday Psalm 41

Tuesday Psalm 57

March 27

## Praying for the Nation and the World

A psalm each day to pray and think about, as you have time:

Wednesday Psalm 46

Thursday Psalm 47

Friday Psalm 51

Saturday Psalm 65

Sunday Psalm 66

Monday Psalm 72

Tuesday Psalm 80

# Four Things You Can Say to God in the Psalms

**Hallelujah: Psalm 95**

1O come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

2Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

3For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

4In his hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are his also.

5The sea is his, for he made it, and the dry land, which his hands have formed.

6O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!

7For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. O that today you would listen to his voice!

8Do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wilderness,

9when your ancestors tested me, and put me to the proof, though they had seen my work.

10For forty years I loathed that generation and said, “They are a people whose hearts go astray, and they do not regard my ways.”

11Therefore in my anger I swore, “They shall not enter my rest.”

**Help, help, help! Psalm 22**

1My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?

2O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest.

3Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.

4In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them.

5To you they cried, and were saved; in you they trusted, and were not put to shame.

6But I am a worm, and not human; scorned by others, and despised by the people.

7All who see me mock at me; they make mouths at me, they shake their heads;

8“Commit your cause to the Lord; let him deliver— let him rescue the one in whom he delights!”

9Yet it was you who took me from the womb; you kept me safe on my mother’s breast.

10On you I was cast from my birth, and since my mother bore me you have been my God.

11Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.

20Deliver my soul from the sword, my life from the power of the dog!

22I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:

23You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him; stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!

24For he did not despise or abhor the affliction of the afflicted; he did not hide his face from me, but heard when I cried to him.

**I trust you! Psalm 27**

1The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

2When evildoers assail me to devour my flesh— my adversaries and foes— they shall stumble and fall.

3Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war rise up against me, yet I will be confident.

4One thing I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.

5For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will set me high on a rock.

6Now my head is lifted up above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing and make melody to the Lord.

7Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud, be gracious to me and answer me!

8“Come,” my heart says, “seek his face!” Your face, Lord, do I seek.

9Do not hide your face from me. Do not turn your servant away in anger, you who have been my help. Do not cast me off, do not forsake me, O God of my salvation!

10If my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will take me up.

13I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

14Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!

**Thank you, thank you, thank you: Psalm 30**

1I will extol you, O Lord, for you have drawn me up, and did not let my foes rejoice over me.

2O Lord my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me.

3O Lord, you brought up my soul from Sheol, restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit.

4Sing praises to the Lord, O you his faithful ones, and give thanks to his holy name.

5For his anger is but for a moment; his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

6As for me, I said in my prosperity, “I shall never be moved.”

7By your favor, O Lord, you had established me as a strong mountain; you hid your face; I was dismayed.

8To you, O Lord, I cried, and to the Lord I made supplication:

9“What profit is there in my death, if I go down to the Pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it tell of your faithfulness?

10Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me! O Lord, be my helper!”

11You have turned my mourning into dancing; you have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy,

12so that my soul may praise you and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever.

# Daily Devotions from the Book of Common Prayer

**In the Morning**

*From Psalm 51*

Open my lips, O Lord, \*

 and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, \*

 and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from your presence \*

 and take not your holy Spirit from me.

Give me the joy of your saving help again \*

 and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: \*

 as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

*A Reading*

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope

through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

*1 Peter 1:3*

*A period of silence may follow.*

*A hymn or canticle may be used; the Apostles' Creed may be said.*

*Prayers may be offered for ourselves and others.*

*The Lord's Prayer*

*The Collect*

Lord God, almighty and everlasting Father, you have brought

us in safety to this new day: Preserve us with your mighty

power, that we may not fall into sin, nor be overcome by

adversity; and in all we do, direct us to the fulfilling of your

purpose; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

**At Noon**

*From Psalm 113*

Give praise, you servants of the LORD; \*

 praise the Name of the LORD.

Let the Name of the LORD be blessed, \*

 from this time forth for evermore.

From the rising of the sun to its going down \*

 let the Name of the LORD be praised.

The LORD is high above all nations, \*

 and his glory above the heavens.

*A Reading*

O God, you will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are

fixed on you; for in returning and rest we shall be saved; in

quietness and trust shall be our strength. *Isaiah 26:3; 30:15*

*Prayers may be offered for ourselves and others.*

*The Lord's Prayer*

*The Collect*

Blessed Savior, at this hour you hung upon the cross,

stretching out your loving arms: Grant that all the peoples of

the earth may look to you and be saved; for your mercies'

sake. *Amen.*

*or this*

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles, "Peace I give to

you; my own peace I leave with you:" Regard not our sins,

but the faith of your Church, and give to us the peace and

unity of that heavenly City, where with the Father and the

Holy Spirit you live and reign, now and for ever. *Amen.*

**In the Early Evening**

*This devotion may be used before or after the evening meal.*

*The Order of Worship for the Evening, page 109, may be used instead.*

O gracious Light,

pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven,

O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!

Now as we come to the setting of the sun,

and our eyes behold the vesper light,

we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices,

O Son of God, O Giver of life,

and to be glorified through all the worlds.

*A Reading*

It is not ourselves that we proclaim; we proclaim Christ

Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants, for Jesus' sake.

For the same God who said, “Out of darkness let light

shine,” has caused his light to shine within us, to give the

light of revelation--the revelation of the glory of God in the

face of Jesus Christ. *2 Corinthians 4:5-6*

*Prayers may be offered for ourselves and others.*

*The Lord's Prayer*

*The Collect*

Lord Jesus, stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is

past; be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts, and

awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in

Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake

of your love. *Amen.*

**At the Close of Day**

*Psalm 134*

Behold now, bless the LORD, all you servants of the LORD, \*

 you that stand by night in the house of the LORD.

Lift up your hands in the holy place and bless the LORD; \*

 the LORD who made heaven and earth bless you out of Zion.

*A Reading*

Lord, you are in the midst of us and we are called by your

Name: Do not forsake us, O Lord our God. *Jeremiah 14:9,22*

*The following may be said*

Lord, you now have set your servant free \*

 to go in peace as you have promised;

For these eyes of mine have seen the Savior, \*

 whom you have prepared for all the world to see;

A Light to enlighten the nations, \*

 and the glory of your people Israel.

*Prayers for ourselves and others may follow. It is appropriate that*

*prayers of thanksgiving for the blessings of the day, and penitence for our sins, be included.*

*The Lord's Prayer*

*The Collect*

Visit this place, O Lord, and drive far from it all snares of the

enemy; let your holy angels dwell with us to preserve us in

peace; and let your blessing be upon us always; through Jesus

Christ our Lord. *Amen*.

The almighty and merciful Lord, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

bless us and keep us. *Amen.*

# Discipleship in Light of the Ten Commandments

One version of a possible rule of life, in light of the OT (not closely related to the real Ten Commandments):

1. Praise God at dusk and at dawn
2. Relax and sleep for the time in between
3. Grow things to eat
4. Tithe what you grow
5. Keep out of department stores and shopping malls (beware the internet, too)
6. On Thursdays, pray laments for people who are suffering
7. On Fridays, think about the fact that you are going to die
8. On Saturdays, have a day’s rest (you can tend your garden if it’s not your regular work)
9. On Sundays, talk with your friends or family about Scripture
10. Three times a year, hold a week-long holiday with your friends or family and celebrate what God has done for us in nature and in delivering us

Another, in light of the NT (based on the Ten Commandments):

1. To acknowledge as God only the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
2. To worship, serve, understand, and speak of God in accordance with Scripture
3. To attach God’s name only to that to which God’s name belongs
4. To balance work and rest in our lives
5. To seek peace with our neighbors even when they are our enemies
6. To honor our parents and our children
7. To give ourselves sexually only to our wives or husbands
8. To be generous with our possessions
9. To tell the truth
10. To be content with what we have

# An Ignatian OT Reading Scheme

1 Knowing Who God Is and Knowing Who We Are

*Week 1—Psalms of Praise: Psalms 8; 19; 33; 66; 96; 100*

*Week 2—God as Creator and Us as God's Created: Genesis 1-2*

*Week 3—How Life is Designed to Work: Proverbs 8.1-4, 22-36; 3.1-18; 3.19-35; 15; 16; 21*

*Week 4—How We Are Designed to Seek and to Love: Song of Songs*

*Week 5—How God Delivered a People: Exodus 1.1-21; 1.22-2.22; 2.23-3.22; 4.1-31; 5.1-6.1; 14.1-31*

2 Owning the Negatives (Hurt, Lost-ness, Grief, Anger…)

*Week 6—Psalms that Tell It Like It Is: Psalms 22; 42-43; 80; 85; 88; 126*

*Week 7—Owning Meaninglessness: Ecclesiastes*

*Week 8—Owning Abandonment: Job 1-2; 3; 6; 7; 14; 23*

*Week 9—Owning Disappointment and Fear (and Dealing with it in People): Numbers 11-14; 20*

*Week 10—When God is Tough: 1 Samuel 13; 15; 28; 2 Samuel 6; 11-12; 24*

3 Keeping the Faith under Pressure

Week 11—Psalms that Hold onto Trust and Hope: Psalms 16; 27; 62; 84; 119.41-64; 139

Week 12—Embodying Grace and Commitment: Ruth

Week 13—Being a Man of God: 2 Kings 2; 4.1-7; 4.18-44; 5; 6.1-23; 6.24-7.20

Week 14—Living in the World: Esther or Daniel 1-6

Week 15—Living with God’s Promises: Abraham and Sarah

4 Owning Failure

Week 16—Psalms of Confession: Psalms 25, 32, 38, 51, 90, 130

Week 17—The Spheres of Our Sin and the Way it Works: Genesis 3.1-13, 13-24; 4.1-10, 11-24; 6.1-4 and 9.20-27; 11.1-9

Week 18—How Sin Affects Our Relationship with God: Exodus 32-34

Week 19—Forms of Sin: Religiousness, Violence, Family Sin, Sexual Sin: Judges 2, 5, 9, 11, 16, 19

Week 20—How We Are Implicated in Our People’s Sin: Amos

5 Rediscovering God’s Grace and Power

*Week 21—Psalms of Thanksgiving: Psalms 30, 34, 73, 103, 116, 138*

*Week 22—How We Never Learn: Genesis 25.19-34; 27.1-45; 27.46-28.22; 32.1-21; 32.22-32; 33.1-20*

*Week 23—How We Combine Insight and Blindness: Genesis 37; 39; 40; 41; 45; 50*

*Week 24—How We Can Prove God’s Mercy and Faithfulness: 2 Chronicles 6.12-42; 7.1-22; 14.1-15.7; 20.1-30; 32.1-26; 34.1-33*

*Week 25—How God Encourages the Forsaken: Isaiah 40.1-11; 41.8-20; 42.1-9; 42.18-43.7; 54.1-17; 55.1-13*

6 Committing Ourselves to God’s Service

*Week 26—Psalms that Speak from God to Us: Psalm 1, 15, 24, 37, 50, 81*

*Week 27—God’s Expectations of Us: Deuteronomy 4-11*

*Week 28—Heeding God’s Call: 1 Samuel 3; Isaiah 6; Jeremiah 1; Ezekiel 2.3-3.21; Isaiah 61; Nehemiah 1*

*Week 29—Persisting with God’s Call: 1 Kings 19; Amos 7; Jeremiah 36; Ezekiel 33; Isaiah 49; Nehemiah 4-5*

*Week 30—Being a Servant of God: Deuteronomy 31; 32:48-52 and 34:1-12; Joshua 1; 3-4; 23; 24*

# An Ignatian NT Reading Scheme

Following the story of Jesus’ life, ministry, death, and resurrection has often helped people find new direction from God when they thought they might be at a crossroads in their life. So as you work through the readings, stand back from time to time (maybe looking back over your journal) to see if there is some new direction emerging for you. Ignatius also laid out a series of meditations on the Kingdom of Christ, the Two Standards, and the Contemplation of Divine Love, which are integral to a proper Ignatian retreat. You can find these in any edition of Ignatius’ *Exercises*.

1. *Jesus’ Invitation: ‘Come to me’*

John 2:1-11; 4:1-26; 5:1-14; 7:37-46; 8:2-11; 11:1-45

Luke 15:1-10; 15:11-24; 15:25-32; 18:1-8; 18:9-14; 19:1-10

John 14:1-14; 14:15-31; 15:1-27; 16:1-15; 16:16-33; 17:1-26

Romans 5:1-11; 8:1-11; 8:12-25; 8:26-39; 15:7-13; Phil 3:1-11

Philippians 3:12—4:7; Ephesians 1:1-10; 1:11-23; 2:1-10; 2:11-22; 3:1-21

1. *‘I came to call sinners’*

Luke 3:1-9; 3:10-18; 7:36-50

Matthew 5

Matthew 6

Matthew 7

Galatians 5; 1 Corinthians 13; James 1

1. *Jesus’ birth and the beginning of his ministry*

The background: Luke 1:5-25; 1:26-38; 1:39-56; John 1:1-18

The birth: Luke 2:1-7; 2:8-20; Matt 2:1-12; Phil 2:5-11

Jesus waits: Luke 2:21-40; Matt 2:13-18; 2:19-23; Luke 2:41-52

Jesus prepares: Mark 1:9-13; John 1:29-34; Matt 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13; Heb 4:14-16

Jesus calls: John 1:35-42; 1:43-51; Matt 4:12-22; Luke 5:1-11

1. *Jesus’ ministry, and the intensifying of a crisis*

Mark 1:21-34; 1:35-45; 2:1-12; 2:13-17

Mark 4:35-41; 5:1-20; 5:21-43; 6:1-13

Mark 6:14-29; 6:30-44; 6:45-56; 7:24-37

Mark 8:22-26; 8:27—9:1; 9:2-8; 9:14-29

Mark 9:30-37; 10:17-34; 10:35-45; 10:46-52

1. *Jesus on trial and executed*

Luke 19:28-45; Luke 22:1-20; John 13:1-30

Matt 26:30-46; Luke 26:47-56; John 18:1-23

Matt 26:57-75; Luke 23:1-16; Matt 27:15-26

Matt 27:27-31; John 18:33—19:16; Luke 23:26-32

John 19:17-37; Matt 27:33-44; Luke 23:34-49

1. *Jesus resurrected and exalted*

John 19:38-42; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56

Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-12; Luke 24:13-35

John 20:1-10; John 20:11-18; John 20:19-23

John 20:24-29; John 21:1-22; Matt 28:16-20

Acts 1:1-14; Acts 2

*[Under “An Ignatian Approach to Reading the OT” on John Goldingay’s Fuller webpage there are some hints on using these sets of readings]*