

Jesus' Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20)

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Guidelines: Protect confidentiality and follow the leader's prompts.

Ignatian Meditation Process: Ignatius chose this Gospel story for Week 4 of *The Spiritual Exercises*. Read the introduction and then "ask for the grace." Then quietly read the passage by using your imagination to enter into the story, sensing and feeling what's going on. Don't analyze the passage or seek insights — *experience yourself as a character in the story*. After the second reading have a "colloquy" (short, personal conversation) with the Lord. You can use the prompts and questions at the bottom to guide your prayer time and journaling (and sharing with others).

Introduction: After rising from the dead and showing himself to many people, Jesus meets his eleven faithful apostles on a mountain retreat to commission them for their service. They worship him enthusiastically as their God and Savior, but some hold back. His mission for them and for us is to apprentice people to him, baptize them in Trinitarian reality, and teach them how to implement his teachings in daily life. We're able to do this when we trust in Christ's authority and rely on him with us day-by-day.

Ask For the Grace: Dear Father, I ask for the grace I desire: to be glad and to rejoice intensely because of the great glory and joy of Christ our Lord.

Imagine Yourself in the Gospel: Matthew 28 (MSG)

16-17 Meanwhile, the eleven disciples were on their way to Galilee, headed for the mountain Jesus had set for their reunion. The moment they saw him they worshiped him. Some, though, held back, not sure about *worship*, about risking themselves totally.

18-20 Jesus, undeterred, went right ahead and gave his charge: "God authorized and commanded me to commission you: Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life, marking them by baptism in the threefold name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Then instruct them in the practice of all I have commanded you. I'll be with you as you do this, day after day after day, right up to the end of the age."

1st Reading: Visualize yourself in the Gospel story. 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?

2nd Reading: 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?