

Peter Denies Knowing Jesus (Mark 14:27-31, 66-72)

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

Ignatian Meditation Process: Ignatius focuses on the Passion of Christ in Week 3 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: Jesus predicts that Peter, his lead disciple, will deny him three times. With stubborn pride Peter insists he is willing to die for his Lord. His heart-intentions are good, but he is not ready for this trial. So Jesus tells Peter he needs to train by watching and praying, but he falls asleep (Mark 14:32-42) and then he does end up denying Jesus three times. Fortunately, Jesus had prayed for Peter earlier that when he falls his faith wouldn't fail (Luke 22:32). Later Peter returns to Jesus and is restored.

Ask For the Grace: Father God, I ask for the grace I desire: for sorrow, regret, and confusion because the Lord is going to his Passion for my sins.

Imagine Yourself in the Gospel: Mark 14 (MSG)

27-28 Jesus told them, “You're all going to feel that your world is falling apart and that it's my fault. There's a Scripture that says, ‘I will strike the shepherd; The sheep will go helter-skelter.’ But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you, leading the way to Galilee.”

29 Peter blurted out, “Even if everyone else is ashamed of you when things fall to pieces, I won't be.”

30 Jesus said, “Don't be so sure. Today, this very night in fact, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times.”

31 He blustered in protest, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never deny you.” All the others said the same thing...

66-67 [Later] Peter was down in the courtyard. One of the Chief Priest's servant girls came in and, seeing Peter warming himself there, looked hard at him and said, “You were with the Nazarene, Jesus.”

68 He denied it: “I don't know what you're talking about.” He went out on the porch. A rooster crowed.

69-70 The girl spotted him and began telling the people standing around, “He's one of them.” He denied it again.

After a little while, the bystanders brought it up again. “You've *got* to be one of them. You've got ‘Galilean’ written all over you.”

71-72 Now Peter got really nervous and swore, “I never laid eyes on this man you're talking about.” Just then the rooster crowed a second time. Peter remembered how Jesus had said, “Before a rooster crows twice, you'll deny me three times.” He collapsed in tears.

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?