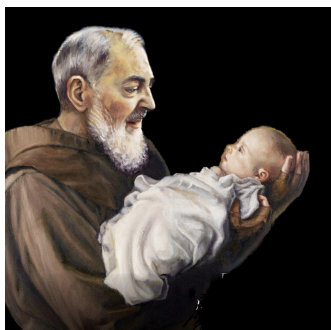




TASTE Reflection Questions
12 March 2026

Lenten Holy Hour

Fr. Benjamin Bralove

Pray, Hope, and Don't Worry. ~ Padre Pio



1. ENTERING THE PRAYER EXPERIENCE

- As you prayed through these Gospel scenes, which scene stayed with you the most and why?
- Did imagining yourself inside the Gospel story change the way you experienced the Scripture? How?

2. THE TEMPTATION IN THE DESERT – [Matthew 4:1–11](#)

- What stood out to you most about Jesus' response to temptation in this scene?
- When you placed yourself in the desert with Jesus, what did you notice or feel most strongly?
- In a spiritual battle, what helps you rely more on Christ's strength rather than your own when facing temptation?

3. THE WOMAN WITH THE HEMORRHAGE – [Mark 5:25–34](#)

- If you imagined yourself as the woman, what might she have been feeling when she reached out to touch Jesus?
- Jesus tells her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well." What do you think this reveals about faith and healing?
- Where in your life do you most need the courage to reach out to Jesus in faith?

4. MARY ANOINTING JESUS' FEET – [John 12:1–8](#)

- What do you think motivated Mary to perform such a generous and extravagant gesture for Jesus?
- Why do you think Judas reacted the way he did?
- What does that contrast between Mary and Judas reveal about different ways people respond to Jesus?
- What might it look like in our own lives to love Jesus as freely and generously as Mary did?

5. THE CRUCIFIXION – [John 19:25–27](#)

- When you imagined yourself at the foot of the cross, what emotions or thoughts arose for you?
- Jesus gives His mother to the beloved disciple and the disciple to His mother.
What does this moment reveal about Mary's role for us as believers?
- What does the crucifixion scene teach us about the depth of Christ's love for us?

6. CLOSING REFLECTION

- After reflecting on all four scenes together, what do you sense the Lord might be saying to you personally through this prayer experience?

The Ignatian Method of Prayer — Fr. Bralove's Holy Hour used a contemplative method of prayer from the spirituality of Ignatius of Loyola. This approach invites us to engage our imagination while reflecting on Sacred Scripture so that we may enter more deeply into the Gospel. The method unfolds in several movements. First, the passage of Scripture is read slowly and deliberately, allowing us to notice which words or moments touch our hearts in a particular way. Next comes what Ignatius calls the "composition of place," where we carefully imagine the physical setting of the Gospel scene. Every detail can help deepen prayer: the sights, sounds, smells, the landscape, and the atmosphere. We then ask the Lord to place us within the scene, either as any of the people described in the Gospel or as an observer standing nearby. From there we interact with the scene through prayer—listening to the words of Jesus, noticing the reactions of others, and allowing the Holy Spirit to move our hearts. Before each meditation, we ask the Lord for a particular grace we hope to receive. Each scene concludes with a "colloquy," a simple and personal conversation with Jesus, like two friends speaking together. At times this dialogue may also be directed to the Father or to Mary, but always in a spirit of intimacy & trust.

First Scene: The Temptation of Jesus in the Desert — Matthew 4:1-11 — The first meditation reflects on the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness from the Gospel according to Matthew. After fasting for forty days and nights, Jesus is tempted by the devil three times. The tempter challenges Him: 1) to turn stones into bread, 2) to throw Himself down from the temple so that angels might save Him, and finally 3) to worship Satan in exchange for all the kingdoms of the world. Each time, Jesus responds with the authority of Scripture, affirming that one must trust & feed on the Word of God, not put Him to a test, and worship & serve God alone. In prayer, we imagine the stark desert environment: the heat of the sun, the dryness of the air, the wind blowing across barren ground, and the exhaustion that comes from long fasting. We reflect on Christ's hunger and suffering while listening to His words of faithfulness to the Father. As the scene concludes, we bring our own struggles and temptations to Jesus in prayer, remembering that during the season of Lent, we are engaged in spiritual battle. This meditation invites us to trust not in our own strength, but in Christ's victory – asking Him for humility, perseverance, and confidence in His grace.

Second Scene: The Woman with the Hemorrhage — Mark 5:25-34 — The second meditation draws from the Gospel according to Mark and recounts the story of the woman who had suffered from hemorrhaging for twelve years. After enduring many failed treatments and spending all she had, she approaches Jesus in faith, believing that even touching His garment will heal her. As the crowd presses around Him, she reaches forward and touches Him, and immediately she is healed. Jesus perceives that power has gone forth from Him and asks who touched Him. When the woman comes forward in fear and trembling, He speaks words of reassurance: "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace." In this Ignatian meditation, we imagine the crowded scene—the noise, movement, and excitement of people gathering around Jesus. We may place ourselves anywhere in the story: as the suffering woman, as a disciple walking beside Jesus, or as someone in the crowd hoping to witness a miracle. Through this imaginative prayer, we experience the woman's desperation, courage, and hope, and we reflect on the healing power of faith. The meditation concludes with a conversation with Jesus, offering Him our personal needs and asking for the grace of deeper trust in His mercy.

Third Scene: Mary Anoints the Feet of Jesus at Bethany — John 12:1-8 — The third meditation moves to the Gospel according to John and takes place in Bethany shortly before Jesus' Passion. Jesus is sharing a meal with His friends Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, along with the disciples. During the meal, Mary takes a jar of expensive perfume made of pure nard and anoints the feet of Jesus, wiping them with her hair so that the fragrance fills the entire house. Judas Iscariot criticizes the act as wasteful, arguing that the perfume could have been sold and the money given to the poor. Jesus defends Mary, explaining that her gesture prepares Him for His burial. In prayer, we imagine the interior of the home: the furniture, the lamps or fading evening light, the sounds & smells of a shared meal, and the precious jar of perfume waiting to be opened. We watch Mary's bold act of love and devotion and notice the reactions of those present. The scene invites us to reflect on generous love for Christ & the contrast between sincere devotion and selfish criticism. We may speak with Jesus, Mary, Lazarus, or others present, asking the Lord how we are called to love and honor Him more fully.

Fourth Scene: The Crucifixion — John 19:25-27 — The final meditation centers on the crucifixion of Jesus, again from the Gospel of John. Standing near the cross are His mother, the beloved disciple, and several faithful women, including Mary Magdalene. As Jesus looks upon His mother and the disciple whom He loves, He entrusts them to one another, saying, "Woman, behold your son," and to the disciple, "Behold your mother." In this meditation, we imagine the sorrowful scene at Golgotha: the darkening sky, the rough wood of the cross stained with blood, soldiers mocking and casting lots, and the small group of faithful followers grieving nearby. We may place ourselves near the cross, perhaps comforting Mary or gazing upon Christ in His suffering. Through this contemplation, we enter more deeply into the mystery of Christ's Passion and recognize the gift of Mary as mother to all believers. We have a final conversation with Jesus.

Final Colloquy and Conclusion — As we conclude our Holy Hour, we reflect on the four Gospel scenes and consider what touched our hearts most deeply, what graces we received, and what the Lord may be saying to us personally. We thank God for the gift of Christ in the Eucharist and with a series of blessings praising God, His holy name, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all the saints. We close with a hymn of praise, offering honor and worship to God for the mystery of redemption made present in the Eucharist.