

Retreat in Daily Life 2022

Wholeness



Retreat in Daily Life 2022: 5 weeks on Wholeness

If you agree to join in, you are promising to spend about 20-30 minutes a day in prayer, listening to God. You will be allocated a prayer partner with whom you will be able to meet once a week. You should spend 40 minutes to an hour together, listening to each other's experiences.

Your commitment during these 6 weeks is to set aside time to pray each day. During this time you may like to do one or more of these things:

- Spend a few minutes focusing on the presence of God
- Read and reflect on the chosen passage of Scripture
- Talk to God about your real feelings, your real needs
- Listen quietly noting anything you sense God may be showing you.
- Write or draw in your journal
- Walk, sing, light a candle or sit in silence
- Experiment with a new way of praying

Our commitment to you over the next 6 weeks is:

- to arrange a prayer partner for you to journey with
- to give you contact details of someone to reflect any difficulties you may have, if you need further help
- to pray for you

Don't make the 20- 30 minutes a punishment - if you miss one, don't beat yourself up! The following instructions are really suggestions: do what you think is good for you, as long as you listen to God and don't talk to Him.

Suggestions for using the 20- 30 minutes

- Find a good time where you can be quiet for 20-30 minutes, no interruptions, no noise.
- Have a notebook and pencil handy.
- Sit comfortably with your feet on the floor and your back supported.

- Make sure you have 30 spare minutes, and don't keep looking at the clock.
- Relax (you can do this by tensing and letting go of muscles throughout your body).

Step One:

- Spend 5- 10 minutes going over your day (or the previous day). Think about the people you met and the things you did. Where did you feel furthest from God? Why? Where did you feel nearest to God? Why?
- Think about what that teaches you about your relationship with Him. (We will be focusing on this in Week 1)

Step Two: Spend 5- 10 minutes going into silence:

- Relax again
- Listen to your breathing
- You might find it helpful to concentrate by saying words or phrases: You could say the "Jesus" prayer: *"Jesus, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner"* (or any other version of that).
- Or find another word - "Jesus" or "Peace". When you are focused on breathing and on the words, stop saying the words and let yourself go into silence.
- You may find that other thoughts intrude: in which case, go back to step 2 and focus again.
- See what happens. It may be silence or you may hear words.
- Sometimes this is a really easy and productive exercise. At other times it's really hard. Persevere with it!

Step Three:

- Spend 10 minutes (or the rest of the time) doing the exercise we have suggested for the week.
- Write down what you have learned in a journal: this may not be every day, just as it happens.

This is only a suggested outline. If the “silence” takes up the whole time, then fine. If you find yourself spending longer, even better!

WEEK ONE (March 2nd – Ash Wednesday)

Our relationship with God: who do you think God is for you?

This week we are beginning by using a version of the Examen which St Ignatius Loyola began.

Each day (potentially before you go to bed) take the 20-30 minutes and ask yourself: *Where was I closest to God today? Why might that be?*

Then ask: *Where was I furthest from God? Why might that be?*

You might then like to use the following verses to meditate on, and keep notes about your feelings:

**Genesis 1:31-2:3; Psalm 8:3-9; Psalm 130; Isaiah 54:10; John 3:15-17; Ephesians 3:14-19;
Colossians 1:15-29; 1 John 3:16; Hebrews 1:2-4.**

Before you end this week, reflect on what you believe about God, and your relationship with Him.

WEEK TWO (March 9th)

Healing for ourselves – God our healer

We have spent a week thinking about where we are with God. Now let us consider what He might want to change, or to heal in us. You might like to meditate on the following scriptures (or choose your own):

**Deuteronomy 31:7-8, Isaiah 40:9-11, Matthew 10:29-31 & 11:28, Philippians 4:6-7,
Hebrews 12:1-2, Hebrews 13:5.**

WEEK THREE (March 16th)

Healing for others as individuals: Jesus the Healer

Read a passage a day. 1. Imagine yourself to be present in the story. 2. Reflect on how you think and feel about the people involved. 3. Consider in silence what God might be saying to you in terms of your offering Jesus' healing to others.

Luke 4:38-39 – Wednesday March 16th

Mark 2:1-12 – Thursday March 17th

Mark 10:46-52 – Friday March 18th

Luke 8:42-48 – Saturday March 19th

Mark 7:31-37 – Sunday March 20th

Matthew 17:14-20 – Monday March 21st

Luke 7:11-17 – Tuesday March 22nd

WEEK FOUR (March 23rd)

Wholeness for Church community - how we live as one

You may wish to consider these verses in the light of the local church, or the wider church (nationally or worldwide), meditating on 1 verse a day.

1 John 4:11-12 - *Dear Friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.*

What does loving 'one another' look like for you?

Matthew 5:23 - *Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.*

What role does forgiveness play within the church community?

Romans 12:4-5 - *For just as each of us have one body with many parts and organs, and these parts do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each part belongs to all the others.*

How do we respect and value those who are different to us?

Romans 12:6-8 - *We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if*

it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

Take few minutes to explore your gifting and consider how it can be used within the church community

1 Corinthians 1:10 - *I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you; but that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought.*

Consider the things that unite us as Christians.

Galatians 5:22 – 23 - *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.*

How do these qualities help build up church life? Is there a characteristic that you would like to ask God for more of?

Week FIVE (March 30th)

Wholeness for the world; Caring and restoring God's creation

Genesis 1:26-31 (The Message)

*God spoke: "Let us make human beings in our image, make them reflecting our nature So they can be responsible for the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, the cattle, And, yes, Earth itself, and every animal that moves on the face of Earth."
God created human beings; he created them godlike,
Reflecting God's nature.*

He created them male and female.

God blessed them:

"Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Earth! Take charge!

Be responsible for fish in the sea and birds in the air, for every living thing that moves on the face of Earth."

Then God said, "I've given you every sort of seed-bearing plant on Earth

And every kind of fruit-bearing tree, given them to you for food.

To all animals and all birds, everything that moves and breathes,

I give whatever grows out of the ground for food."

And there it was.

God looked over everything he had made; it was so good, so very good!

It was evening, it was morning—

1. We are called to be "responsible" for the whole of God's creation. What might that mean to you?

If you are able, go for a walk in the countryside (or garden) and think about all the elements that make up the planet.

2. The earth is a “dynamic system with many intricate and complex processes and cycles.”

Make a list of all of earth’s resources that you use every day. To see what impact you have on the planet you could discover your “carbon footprint” – search for ‘Carbon Footprint WWF’ or follow: <https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/>

3. The health of our planet is being threatened by human action.

What would “wholeness” look like in creation? - you may want to read Psalm 104 for inspiration.

4. We are created in God’s image and that includes having a wonderful creative nature.

Make a list of all the ways in which you could live more sustainably.

“Your Kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven”

WEEK SIX (April 6th)

Healing for ourselves – Reflection on Psalm 139

The psalm is divided into separate sections for daily use, but you might like to consider it as a whole and reflect on it during the week.

Ps 139:1-6 - How do you feel about the Psalmist’s view of how intimately God knows you?

Ps 139:7-10 - Does this express a need to escape from God? If so, why?

Ps 139:11-12 - Think of other places where God’s power is said to extend everywhere.

Ps 139:13-16 - This is sometimes described as “The midwife’s Psalm”. Do you think it means we have no free will?

Ps 139:17-18 - Is this how you respond to what the Psalmist has said?

Ps 139:19-22 - The part we usually omit! How does this make you feel?

Ps 139:23-24 – (and re-read the whole Psalm.) How has your understanding of God changed after a week of walking with Psalm 139?

END OF REFLECTION (April 13th – Holy Week)

Healing for ourselves: Where do we go from here?

Look over any notes you have written, and consider what you have learned, and what you want to do with what you have learned as we move into Holy Week.