

Day 12 Friday 12th February: God in the Town



...seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper. Jeremiah 29 v 7.

As we near the end of our retreat we take the opportunity to look outwards. We have spent some time reflecting on nature so today we think about prayer in an urban setting: I invite you to walk into St Helens town centre - in your imagination.

Find a comfortable place to be

Say a prayer of invitation

- You can close your eyes and imagine or you might like to record your prayer by writing or drawing
- Or maybe you are using the audio whilst walking

God in the City: Adapted by Loyola Hall from Anthony de Mello SJ Sadhana - a way to God

Imagine that you are sitting high up maybe on the side of a hill, overlooking St Helens. It is night.

Take a few moments to get in touch with what it is like being there, in the darkness, looking out over the city and its lights.

As you sit there someone comes up to you and says, with absolute conviction: "If you go down into the town tonight, you will find God." They say it in a way that you know that it's true.

What do you feel like when you hear these words?
What passes through your heart and mind as you listen to them?

And so you get up and begin to go down the hill into the town. You enter its outskirts, and then move further in towards the centre. You are moving through streets and open areas, past buildings and across roads. *(don't be literal about your route see what places come to mind)*

How do you go about looking for God? Where do you search for him? Do you involve anyone else in your seeking, ask anyone for help? Or do you search alone?

Take all the time you need to look into all the places where you think and feel that God might be. What are the kinds of places you look at? Who are the kind of people you are searching among? Are there any places or people you find yourself avoiding?

Eventually you find God, and again, you cannot doubt that it is God whom you have found. Where did you make your discovery? What is this God you have found like? Where, and with whom, does he choose to be found?

Spend a little time there in the presence of the God who is to be found in your town, speaking to him "as one friend speaks to another" about what your search was like. Take time to listen out for anything which God particularly wishes to communicate to you through this prayer-exercise.

When you are ready, let your attention return to the room you are in, but be aware that you can return to that place in the town at any time, and meet God there again.

Bring the prayer to a close and give thanks.