

## Putting Roots Down: An Invitation to Pray over 14 Days



### Jeremiah 17 v7

**... blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord,  
whose confidence is in him.  
They will be like a tree planted by the water  
that sends out its roots by the stream.  
It does not fear when heat comes;  
its leaves are always green.  
It has no worries in a year of drought  
and never fails to bear fruit."**

#### Invitation:

You are invited to join a 14 day cycle of prayer. Whether you have 5, 15 or 55 minutes each day - why not commit to spending some regular time in prayer over the next two weeks. You can join our Whats App group to share your highs and lows, your reflections and inspiration. We will be learning about different ways to pray. Some things may be familiar or completely new to you - be prepared to take some risks!

These 14 days will take us up to the beginning of Lent. You might like to carry on using some of these prayer practices during this season as we journey toward Easter.

#### How to Pray:

Each day you will be given some direction and choices about how to pray. ***Italics:*** Any information in italics is supplementary - you don't need to read this to understand the instruction.

**Reference to other information:** Sometimes a reference will be given to further information - www... only follow this link if you have time please don't allow the information to distract you from your time of prayer!

**Keep practicing:** I would encourage you to try all the exercises suggested. You will prefer some things more than others - this journey is about you finding out ways to pray. Take risks and try some new things, do persist and practice, but if something does not work for you don't give up, try again or try the next thing!

**Good Enough:** Do what you can manage and enjoy what you are doing!! This is not a course - you don't pass or fail! We are playing with prayer and exploring new things to discover God. If after the 14 days you have found one thing that works for you or five things - it will have been worth it! **Go at your own pace:** don't worry if you miss a day or get behind - do go at your own pace. You will end up slightly out of synch with the Whats App group - but that doesn't matter - what is most important is developing your own pattern of prayer.

#### Plan for Week One:

1. Preparing the ground: Getting ready and review of the day.
2. Be Still: Silence
3. Noticing a burning bush: Imagine
4. Hazelnut & Sugar Cube : Noticing
5. Finger labyrinth: Stay
6. Morning review:
7. Repeat and re-experience

**Recordings available on website: [www.standrewsdentonsgreen.org](http://www.standrewsdentonsgreen.org)**

## Day One: Monday 1st February: Preparing the ground



*Before you sow seeds or plant you first prepare the ground and find the most fruitful place for your new growth. We know that Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray - where will you go to pray?*

- 1. Think through how you will pray each day (1-5)**
- 2. Take some time to consider your hopes and dreams (6)**
- 3. At the end of the day use a review of the day, an examen (7) - use the written framework A on page 3 or one of the website recordings.**

In preparation for the morning get the Irish prayer 'The Deer's Cry' ready for the morning (B page 4 or recording on website). Say it slowly and out loud.

**Now**, take some time to think about your options and what you are going to do over the next 14 days. Why not jot your thoughts down on paper and make a covenant (an agreement)?

### 1. How long?

Think about how much time you can commit to spending each day in prayer - *try to be realistic about what you can manage - depending on your commitments you may have different amounts of time each day.*

### 2. When?

When is the best time to pray? Can you stop at the same time each day? When might your household be quiet? Maybe you can get up earlier? Can you make a little bit of time at the end of each day to review?

### 3. Where?

Where is the best place for you to pray - can you use the same space or

will it be best to use different spaces? Maybe praying outdoors is an option? If you are going to be seated where would be comfortable?

### 4. Gather:

You don't need anything to come to God in prayer - just you! Some people do like to mark their prayer space with a candle, a symbol or a picture - what works best for you? If you like to respond creatively you might want to use a camera or gather some paper and drawing materials. If you find it hard to sit still you might want to have something handy to fidget eg: a loop of string, a ball, a finger labyrinth (Google it!) . A clock or a timer app on your phone might be helpful. I will be encouraging you to spend time in silence but maybe sometimes you will need some quiet background music? Maybe you have a journal or notebook you could use to record your journey? **Gather what you need.** Sometimes it helps to place what you need in a box ready for your prayer times.

### 5. Distractions?

What are the things that might get in the way of you meeting with God each day? Try to address any potential issues - *will you need to turn your phone to silent so that you are not interrupted by notifications etc, do your household need to know that you will not be available for a short time etc.*

### 6. Hopes and Dreams

Take some time to think about what your hopes and dreams are for these 14 days. What are you hoping for?

*Ignatius of Loyola encourages us to name the grace that we are seeking. It might help to identify what you desire and to ask God for it both at the beginning of this journey and at the beginning of each prayer time. For example the grace could be: deeper relationship, healing, repentance, gratitude for God's gifts, truth, justice, sorrow for sin or compassion. God already knows our desires - trying to name our desire helps to identify it for us and work out if it is what God wants for us:*

<https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/asking-for-grace-to-want-the-grace/>

### 7 Examen

Finally today see if you can find time to use a review of the day known as an examen. It would be good if you could aim to do this review each day. See sheet A or use a recording from the website: [www.standrewsdentonsgreen.org](http://www.standrewsdentonsgreen.org)

## A. Examen: A review of the day

### A pattern for night prayer.

*This is a simple prayer to help review the day in the presence of God. Set some time aside for thankful reflection on where God is present in your everyday life.*

*There are five steps and it can take up to 15-20 minutes.*



**Step 1: Be Still:** Take a moment to stop,

Become still and focussed. Let your breathing help you to relax as you notice its gentle rhythm as you breathe in and out.

**Step 2: Ask God to be with you:**

Ask God to guide your thoughts and feelings so that you might see God's presence in your life. Enter the prayer with an attitude of gratitude recognising that all that you are and all that you have comes from God.

**Step 3: Review the day:**

Now begin to recall the day, where were you at the beginning of the day, what was happening, think about how the day unfolded,

where were you, did you encounter anyone, what was happening? Let your memory drift over your afternoon and evening. Recalling events, people and places. Gently notice whatever catches your attention. There is no need to work hard at recalling every moment - let what will emerge.

**Step 4: Give thanks and ask for God's light:**

As you recall your day become aware of how you were feeling at different times. On the whole has it been a good day or one in which you have struggled. In particular where do you notice times of life, or light, or energy? What gifts have you received today? Relish these and give thanks to God.

And if there have been difficult times notice these too, take them to God for Him to send his light and warmth into them.

Where have you known the God of life today?

Speak to God "as one friend speaks to another" about what you have noticed in the prayer.

**Step 5: Look toward the day to come**

As this day comes to an end and as you look forward is there anything that you want to ask of God for the coming days?

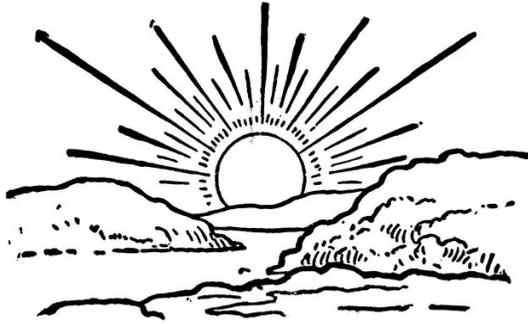
**Amen**

**Also available as recordings on our website.**

## **B. The Deer's Cry:**

An 8th Century Irish prayer for the morning

*One legend is that St Patrick was being pursued. He and his company were singing this prayer of protection. Those wishing him harm saw only a herd of deer pass by! Deer are well known for their ability to conceal themselves! Patrick and his company were protected.*



### **I arise today**

Through the strength of heaven;

Light of sun, Radiance of moon,

Splendour of fire, Speed of lightning,

Swiftness of the wind, Depth of the sea,

Stability of earth, Firmness of the rock.

### **I arise today**

Through God's strength to pilot me;

God's might to uphold me,

God's wisdom to guide me,

God's eye to look before me,

God's ear to hear me,

God's word to speak for me

God's hand to guard me,

God's way to lie before me,

God's shield to protect me

*Christ shield me today Against wounding*

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,

Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,

Christ on my right, Christ on my left,

Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,

Christ when I arise, Christ to shield me.

Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me.

### **I arise today.**

Through the mighty strength of the Lord of creation. **Amen**

***Also available as a recording on our website.***