

## Resources

**Books, Websites and Training Days**  
to help you with your prayer journey

### Books

- 'Prayers for the Journey' James Fitzpatrick OMI, prayers for each week of the year, pub. SPCK
- 'Living Stones' by Susan Sayers based on Revised Common Lectionary, uses cycle of the church year, pub. Kevin Mahew
- 'The rhythm of life' by David Adam, celtic daily prayer, pub. SPCK
- Reflections for Daily Prayer – daily reflections based on a reading from the Lectionary and the collect for the day. [www.chbookshop.co.uk](http://www.chbookshop.co.uk)
- The Things He Carried: A Journey to the Cross - Meditations for Lent and Holy Week. Stephen Cottrell. [www.chbookshop.co.uk](http://www.chbookshop.co.uk)

### Websites

- [www.pray-as-you-go.org](http://www.pray-as-you-go.org)  
Daily prayer for your mp3 player from the British Jesuits. Play or download from the website or subscribe to free podcasts.
- [web.ukonline.co.uk/paradigm](http://web.ukonline.co.uk/paradigm)  
Online labyrinth. Provides a mixture of rituals and visuals, of contemplative words and contemporary ambient music, of symbols and media to help guide the spiritual traveller.
- [www.rejesus.co.uk/site/category/interactive](http://www.rejesus.co.uk/site/category/interactive)  
A site to help people begin thinking about the relevance of Jesus in the 21st Century and includes interactive prayers. Aimed at people who have little previous knowledge of Jesus and the Christian faith.
- [www.embody.co.uk](http://www.embody.co.uk)  
Large resources for prayer and life coaching.
- [www.experientialworship.com](http://www.experientialworship.com)  
Large collection of prayer resources for heart, mind, body and soul.
- [www.streetbrand.com](http://www.streetbrand.com)  
A Christian youth culture magazine, STREETBRAND is a resource for Christian teenagers which includes downloadable Christian music podcasts, Bible studies and lifestyle tips.

### Training days

- SUMMER EXPLORING PRAYER – 2nd & 11th July 2009
  - SUMMER QUIET DAYS FOR MEN at Glasshampton Monastery
- Details from Andrea Stevens at the Diocesan Office – 0121 426 0400

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## Bishop's Lent Prayer Leaflet

# Love to pray ...



Poverty can be measured in various ways. In 2009 many are much worse off financially but some are still over-occupied not just in earning a living but also with family and voluntary commitments.

This reminds us that money is not the only resource we need. Perhaps time is almost as essential. So many of us have lived without spare time for so many years that we have been dulled to the deficit it causes in our lives. Sometimes the awareness of the time crisis hits the deadlines. Family mealtimes have disappeared, people no longer join clubs, unions and churches and people in the UK work some of the longest hours in Europe, we are told by the media.

So why does the way we treat time matter? Many of us will have been taught that idleness is a sin and time is a gift from God that should not be wasted. In his second letter to the Thessolonians, chapter 3, the apostle Paul urges people to find work, earn a living and stop meddling in each other's lives. But if our lives are so full of work, meetings, television and even church activities, when do we have time for those relationships which really make our life worth living.

I often hear couples saying they rarely have time to talk to each other – except for diary meetings to make sure children are collected, babysitters booked and their meetings don't clash. Conversation is so enriching yet is often snatched and hurried, functional rather than creative. What about our conversations with God? So many of us are keen to see our churches, families, schools, communities and our worlds changed to reflect the love of God and his wonderful compassion for all he has created. But what about ourselves? When do we give time for God to transform us?

Mother Theresa put it like this: "Love to pray – feel often during the day the need for prayer and take trouble to pray. Prayer enlarges the heart until it is capable of containing God's gift of himself. Ask and seek, and your heart will grow big enough to receive him and keep him as your own."

May you receive the Gift of God this Lent.

+ David Urquhart, Bishop of Birmingham

... pray to love

## Praying regularly

Regular prayer is a central part of what it means to be a Christian. Religious communities are built on a rhythm of prayer that gives a structure to their life together. Clergy, readers and all who minister in the Church of England commit themselves to pray each day, to take part in the Eucharist regularly and to make time for the praise and worship of God in public and private.

One thing I love about the Church of England is that not only does it have a Christian presence in every community but it also provides prayer and suggestions for Bible reading for every day. We call this prayer a collect – it collects the thoughts of the season and daily Bible readings set in the Lectionary. Within our own tradition we have all we need to pray and read our Bible every day, following the calendar of the church year through feasting and fasting, praise and penitence and Saints Days and seasonal patterns.

I would urge you to make time every day to read your Bible thoughtfully and prayerfully, open to the possibility that God's Holy Spirit may speak to you, comfort you or challenge you. Try to take time afterwards to listen to what God might be whispering into your soul, helping you reassess your priorities and giving shape to the fragments of your life. Then spend time praying for the people and places that concern you. In the presence of God just remember them, offering them to God who is the source of grace, mercy, peace, healing and joy.

This Lent I want us to attempt to pray as regularly as those who have been called throughout history and across the world to live in Christian monastic communities. Most monastic orders meet for prayer seven times a day and I will try and stop seven times every day to spend some moments or minutes in the presence of God. It would be great if you could join me so God can begin to transform his church here in Birmingham and lead us deeper into the knowledge of his love.

+ David

## Some ideas to help you pray regularly

- Start and end the day with prayer. In the evening you might like to think over the day that has passed and see which parts have brought you closer to God and which has taken you further from his loving presence. The prayerful reflection comes from the Ignatian tradition and is called the examen.
- Use photographs spread out on the floor or in a slideshow to review your relationships, priorities and possibilities.
- Fast from some of the things that distract you from prayer such as the TV, late-night e-mails or computer games.
- Link prayer with regular parts of your routine such as driving to and from work, walking the dog, a bus journey or doing the ironing.
- Create a space for prayer in your home – I have heard of people using the shed, the garage or the understairs cupboard. You could put in some paintings, photographs, icons and a Bible to help you pray.
- If you can manage, book some time out to pray. You might like to go for a walk in the country, visit a local retreat centre or organise a quiet day with a church group.



• *Introduce Grace to your mealtimes. If you pray before each meal you should soon get into the pattern of praying regularly.*