

PRAYER IN A BUSY LIFE

SPIRITUALITY SERIES





“Seven times a day do I praise you.” Psalm 119:164

FIND YOUR RHYTHM

It's a big step to move from praying when you think of it to committing to praying every day. People are different: for some a daily commitment is like a straitjacket, for others it's a helpful framework.

If God is drawing you to spend more time with him, listen to that drawing, but also listen to the other voices inside you. It's all right to claim some time to rest and relax.

Some people like to talk to God in the car going to work, or while walking the dog. If you're a morning person, getting up before the rest of the household and standing at the window with a cup of tea can be a moment for God.

Where is a moment in your own day that you could use for a quiet five minutes? If it works with your daily rhythm you will be more likely to keep to your commitment to praying every day.

Later you may want to expand your prayer time to include Bible reading and perhaps a regular form of words.

START RIGHT

Even if you only have five minutes, take a minute to arrive in the moment. Take some deep breaths and let go what's on your mind. Remind yourself that you are in God's presence and that you can speak with trust and confidence. Then you can be ready to say what you want to say. When you have finished, thank God for being there and listening with love.

HELP AND SUPPORT

Some people only like to use spontaneous words in their prayer. Others like to use prayers written by other people – you can buy books of prayers, and there is a selection in the leaflet ‘Some basic prayers’. Some like to write lists of names to remind them who they want to pray for regularly: it might be family, people who are sick, people in war zones or suffering from natural disasters.

The leaflet Toolbox for Prayer (on the diocese website) offers suggestions for ways to pray.

Remind yourself that you are in God's presence and that you can speak with trust and confidence.

MULTIMEDIA PRAYER

Prayer is more than asking for things. Listening to music, looking at an ikon or other kind of painting,

or reading a poem, all can be an experience of prayer if it makes you aware of God. If you feel your heart is overflowing, share it with God; you don't need words.

DAILY PRAYER AND SPECIAL TIMES

If you pray every day, now and again you will want a more special experience of prayer. You might spend a longer time with God, or do something you don't normally do. Light a candle, find a church or a beautiful landscape to pray in, sing out loud or pray with your body by swimming or running, being conscious of the presence of God.

If you can, go on retreat in a place dedicated to prayer, with others praying around you and a guide to

talk to. It's an invaluable way to deepen your experience of God.

A FRAMEWORK FOR DAILY PRAYER

- Arrive in the moment and turn to God
- Read a psalm
- Read 10-20 verses of the New Testament
- A short silence to reflect
- Talk to God
- The Lord's Prayer and the Grace (below)

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore. Amen.



LEARNING TO BE STILL

A separate leaflet has more on praying in stillness.

This stilling exercise is useful before any form of prayer you choose to use.

Sit

in a relaxed and comfortable way, if possible with a straight back. This allows your breathing to flow smoothly.

Pay attention

to your body. Notice what's there, especially any tensions. Don't push them away, just be aware of them.

Pay attention

to your breathing; don't slow it down or speed it up, just notice the air flowing gently in and out. This is God's gift of the breath of life to you. Breathe in love and peace, and breathe out anything that gets in the way and makes you tense or angry.

If you are distracted

by outside sounds or thoughts in your mind, accept that they're there and return your attention gently to your breathing.

When you are ready,

finish the stilling exercise by thanking God for this moment before you move to your other prayers.

YOUR BODY SHARES IN YOUR PRAYER WHEN:

you have a special
place to sit for prayer

you fold your hands in
prayer

you make the sign of
the cross

you kneel or stand
looking up to heaven

you light a candle or
an incense stick

you taste the bread
and wine at
communion

you raise your hands to
praise

you bow your head to
be humble

you weep for joy or
sorrow

— and at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow.



Daily Prayer

Daily Prayer is the official app to help you follow Morning, Evening and Night Prayer, wherever you are.

For every day of the year, it presents the three services in full and include Bible readings (NRSV translation), psalms, canticles and seasonal variations.

It allows you to:

- Access Morning, Evening and Night Prayer for yesterday, today and a month ahead
- Listen to full audio of Morning and Evening Prayer (Contemporary Services)
- Switch between Contemporary and Traditional formats with one click
- Find details of Feast Days, Festivals and Commemorations from the Common Worship Calendar
- Read Bible passages in full (NRSV translation) without the need for a separate Bible app

