

DAILY WAITING

NINE DAYS OF PRAYER 2021



CHANGED LIVES → CHANGING LIVES

DAY 7: ADORE

Jesus ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father (Acts 1:4).

(This service is for use by individuals or groups and can be adapted to suit your context. Hymns, worship songs and additional prayers may be added as you wish. Italic text is intended as an instruction, plain text is to be read by a leader, bold text is to be read together.)

GATHERING

As you begin your time of prayer, take a moment of silence to remember and delight in the promise of the Holy Spirit Jesus gives to all his disciples.

Read the following from John 14 together:

I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever - the Spirit of truth... On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

Make a sign of being present to God and one another – light a candle, open a Bible, share the peace...

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your people

And kindle in us the fire of your love.

Come, Holy Spirit, be with us as we pray

And leave us not as orphans.

Come, Holy Spirit, renew us in body, mind and spirit

And send us out to be your presence in your world.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your people

And kindle in us the fire of your love.

Optional hymn or worship song.

LISTENING

Anna's story

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day.

³⁸ At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

(Luke 2:36-38, NRSV)

REFLECTING

'Oh, isn't s/he adorable!' we say, when we meet a new-born for the very first time – it slips off the tongue so naturally. But the adoration we are thinking about here is a multiplication of that emotion, one that combines worship with delight.

Anna had lived as a widow for probably fifty years, and for many of those years she was rooted and planted in the Temple in Jerusalem. The Temple was where the Ark of the Covenant abided, the Temple was where Anna lived; it was her abode, where she fasted and prayed by day and by night, constantly worshipping God. And when the moment came that Mary and Joseph brought the baby Jesus to the Temple, her worship of God blossomed into unbounded joy. At the moment when praise turns into adoration, 'peace will come ...; it will not be day or night as we know it, but everlasting light, boundless glory, abiding peace, and sure rest' (Thomas a Kempis). Which one of us would not long to be in Anna's shoes?

After all her waiting, there came for Anna this outpouring of adoration. The Temple had always been her dwelling place, always near the altar, where her spiritual senses joined together in harmony, receiving God's glory. Her joy could not be contained and she shared her song with all who stopped and wondered at this old woman whose face was shining with love and faith.

Picture Anna, living the simplest of lives, one that not many of us could accept. But her discipline, practice and sacrifice, her abiding and waiting all met at this moment of epiphany, and her delight was unrestrained.

We cannot all live our lives forever 'near your altar', but we can ask ourselves where is our 'thin place', the place of holiness where we feel as if we are in boundless abiding with God. Let us cultivate such a place and the discipline to return to it frequently – if only in our memory, mind's eye and imagination – a place where we too may participate in the showing forth of God. 'Thou hast a garden for us/where to bide,' George Herbert wrote in 'The Flower'. Surely that is where 'peace will come.'

PSALM

- 1 How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts!
- 2 My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the LORD;
my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God.
- 3 Even the sparrow finds a home,
and the swallow a nest for herself,
where she may lay her young,
at your altars, O LORD of hosts, my King and my God.
- 4 Happy are those who live in your house,
ever singing your praise.
- 10 For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
than live in the tents of wickedness.
- 11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield;
he bestows favour and honour.
No good thing does the LORD withhold
from those who walk uprightly.
- 12 O LORD of hosts, happy is everyone who trusts in you.
(Psalm 84:1-4, 10-12, NRSV)

**Glory to the Father and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now
And shall be for ever.
Amen.**

PRAYING

Oh God, Sublime and Glorious, come and inhabit our hearts.
Startle us with your glory;
abide with us through good and ill.
Bless us with rest in your arms,
and wonder in your boundless presence.
Amen.

We meet your Word through constant prayer and worship;
(Pause)
Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**
We express our thanks that your glory is revealed to the simple and steadfast;
(Pause)
Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**
We offer you our voice to witness to your presence;
(Pause)
Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**
We bear before you those without a home, a hope or a purpose;
(Pause)
Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We wait upon the work of your Spirit as we say the Lord's Prayer together:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
Now and for ever.
Amen.**

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with understanding of our life's purpose.**
Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with eager anticipation of your appearance.**
Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with discipline in fasting and prayer.**
Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with yourself.**



Diocese of Canterbury
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