

DAILY WAITING

NINE DAYS OF PRAYER 2021



CHANGED LIVES → CHANGING LIVES

DAY 9 SILENCE

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

Job mourns with his friends

¹¹ Now when Job's three friends heard of all these troubles that had come upon him, each of them set out from his home—Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They met together to go and console and comfort him. ¹² When they saw him from a distance, they did not recognize him, and they raised their voices and wept aloud; they tore their robes and threw dust in the air upon their heads. ¹³ They sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great.
(Job 2:11-13, NRSV)

REFLECTING

Wherever you are reading or listening to this, whether indoors or out in the open air, take a moment to calm yourself and listen to the sounds around you ...

...[*Time for silence*]

Chances are, there will be routine hums, clicks or clunks and rumbles of a radio, lawn-mowers, buses or trains. In Job's time, there would have been the women in the tents clanking bowls and talking quietly about Job's troubles, and outside, the sounds of oxen, mules and a camel or two. (What noise does a camel make?)

As Job stays still and silent, sitting among the ashes, mourning his family, three friends come 'to console and comfort him'. Then, for seven days and nights, 'no-one spoke a word to him', as Job suffered in silence. We say people 'suffer in silence' when they are stoic or courageous – or ignored. But this was a caring silence, holy moments of mourning. Consolation does not require pious words.

Passivity and waiting have a central place during mourning, but they are also positive experiences in contemplation, necessary in seasons of growth.

Returning for the last time to Herbert's poem, 'The Flower', he writes:

... flowers depart
to see their mother root, when they have blown;
Where they together
All the hard weather,
Dead to the world, keep house unknown.

The silence of a bulb over-wintering deep in the soil is a secret mystery of revival. Just as the bulb waits for spring, we have been waiting for the wind of the Spirit to blow us into new life. But until that time is ripe, let us pause in silence, and watch and pray ...

[*Time for silence*]

PSALM

5 For God alone my soul waits in silence,
for my hope is from him.
6 He alone is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.
7 On God rests my deliverance and my honour;
my mighty rock, my refuge is in God.
8 Trust in him at all times, O people;
pour out your heart before him;
God is a refuge for us. Selah
(Psalm 62:5-8, 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

God our Refuge and our Haven,
In silence, we stand before you;

In silence, we contemplate our Rock and our Salvation.
In silence, we consider the mysteries of your grace,
And share in 'the silence of eternity, interpreted by love',
Displayed in the person of Jesus, your Son, our Lord.
Amen.

We meet your Word in stillness too deep for speech;
(Pause)

Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We express our thanks for friends who sit with us in silence;
(Pause)

Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We offer you silent prayers for those desperate for deliverance;
(Pause)

Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We bear before you the more than three million people in the world who have lost their lives in this pandemic;

(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 unshakeable trust in times of distress.**

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with unshakeable faith in times of crisis.**

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with unshakeable hope in times of new beginnings.**

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with yourself.**



Diocese of Canterbury

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