

Inspiring Prayer at Home

Our sisters and brothers in Christ are all around us and getting together for prayer can be a great way to connect – a time to share our concerns and our joys with others and with God. It is a joy each day to see who will ‘pop-up’ for praying the Wigston Benefice Daily Office and I know it has been helpful to people who have tried it. It has prompted us to think more broadly about our prayer lives and here are just a few comments from three of our regulars who join in with the zoom prayers:

‘When I come to the end of each day, I write down three things to praise God for. It’s a routine I have adopted now for a number of years, and I find it really helpful and particularly so during ‘Lockdown’. When days have felt dark it’s been particularly important to focus on God’s blessings. That robin who perched on the bin outside my kitchen window when I was doing the washing up. The neighbour who stopped and waved to me through that same closed window. The kindness of a friend’s son prepared to do my shopping for me. Thank you God!’ *Isobel*

‘Zoom prayers with Wigston Benefice sustained that sense of Christian family in me and I felt Holy Spirit is working even in this atypical way of corporate prayer.’ *Michal*

‘Prayer has been my daily sustenance during lockdown. I have created a praying routine each morning as I walk my dog and have been thanking God for his wonders: the joy of spring flowers blossoming; the amazing weather that has accompanied us during this difficult time and more. I arrive home just in time to join the Wigston church community with morning prayer on Zoom. It feels like a family praying together. It nourishes me and prepares me for the day ahead.’ *Vivienne*

Our experiences are all individual and yet there are similarities – God meets us where our individual needs are and each one of us recognises that through prayer, we become more appreciative, thankful for the glimpses of glory in our day.

When we are on our own, we can still be with one another in prayer and this can be a wonderful time to explore different ways of praying. I find having times of silent prayer helpful, particularly when I need to feel at peace. Silent prayer works surprisingly well on-line but has been spiritually nourishing generations before us, before all this technology was around! If you think exploring contemplative prayer could be something that you would like to try, you could contact a friend and arrange a time to pray in this way at the same time and maybe catch up by phone afterwards, if you wish to share your experience. It can be helpful to capture things that seemed significant at the time so have a pen and notebook to hand before you begin. A Prayer Journal - a special book, is such a blessing for you to look back over and see how God has been working through your life. Perhaps you can even take some time to create a special place in your home where you can enjoy going to for your prayer times.

Where might your Prayer Chair be in your home? You may want a special chair for your quiet times and another space set up if you are praying on-line. Take some time to think about what might work best for you and get started!

If you would like to try some silent prayer – even five or ten minutes (set an alarm) in silence is a good start and if you are not sure how to begin, here are some tips:

- Go to your space and minimise distractions
- Take some calming breaths, then set your alarm
- Remember God's presence and ask God to guide you.
- If you are aware of something in particular that you need that day to help you pray, ask God – for wisdom, hope, a sense of calm, whatever it is
- Then allow God to minister to you.
- Allow some time at the end for a prayer of thanks and to jot down anything that felt significant that you may want to come back to

If you would like to have some accompaniment on your prayer journey, you may want to think about exploring some resources and having some spiritual direction and you can ask the clergy to find out more about prayer resources and Spiritual Directors in the Diocese.

In the Wigston Benefice, Zoom Morning Prayer starts at 9am and Evening Prayer at 5pm and they usually last for about 20mins. If you would like to give it a go, just get in touch with Fr Chris: revchrisjohnson.wbs@gmail.com it would be lovely to see you!