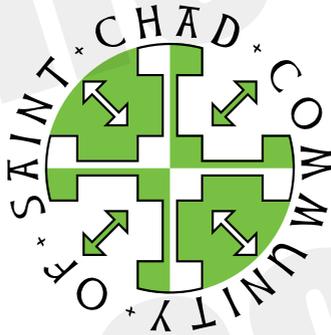


THE COMMUNITY OF SAINT CHAD



Drawing inspiration from the life of St Chad, the 7th century missionary bishop of Lichfield, the Community of Saint Chad is an expression of modern-day monasticism. It has a geographically dispersed membership united by a common commitment to a spiritual lifestyle shaped by five *Rhythms of Grace*, and by participation in a *Spiritual Companion Group*.

The Community of Saint Chad welcomes any Christian who longs to grow in depth of discipleship and who is prepared to journey with others in a quest of a life-changing faith.

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The Five Rhythms of Grace

The term, *Rhythms of Grace*, is taken from Eugene Peterson's paraphrase of Matthew 11:28:

"Walk with me and work with me – watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace."

It is used here to denote a series of aspirational statements that, when embraced, will nurture spiritual growth and foster Christian discipleship.

Rhythm One

By God's grace, I will seek to be transformed into the likeness of Christ.

Rhythm Two

By God's grace, I will be open to the presence, guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.

Rhythm Three

By God's grace, I will set aside time for prayer, worship and spiritual reading.

Rhythm Four

By God's grace, I will endeavour to be a gracious presence in the world, serving others and working for justice in human relationships and social structures.

Rhythm Five

By God's grace, I will sensitively share my faith with others and support God's mission both locally and globally.

The five Rhythms are not rules that dictate how people behave, but rather a starting point for a process of self-examination that can help us to see what we need to do to grow as disciples of Christ.

Each member of the community is responsible for working through the implications of the five Rhythms of Grace. However, the following suggestions are offered as examples:

Rhythm One

- Resolve to speak and act positively.
- Focus your thoughts on what is right, pure, lovely and admirable. (Phil 4:8)
- Try to be honest in all you say and do.
- Do a 'covet' check on your life.

Rhythm Two

- Ask the Holy Spirit to be present and active in your life.
- Before you read the Bible, pray that the Holy Spirit will make the words come to life.
- Look at the spiritual gifts listed in Romans 12:6-8 and 1 Corinthians 12:8-11. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal what new gifts you might receive.
- Read Galatians 5:22-23. Are there any of the fruits that you need God to help you develop?

Rhythm Three

- Take part in corporate worship at least once a week.
- Pray for at least ten minutes each day.
- Meditate on a verse of scripture and be attentive to what God might be saying to you.
- Read a passage from the Bible each day.
- Use a Bible commentary or study notes to help you understand and apply what you are reading.
- Read a Christian book or watch a DVD, that will encourage, inspire or challenge you.

Rhythm Four

- Undertake acts of generosity without being asked.
- Get involved in a community initiative that will help others.
- Firmly but graciously oppose inequality and injustice when you encounter it.
- If a confrontation is necessary, approach it with grace and truth

Rhythm Five

- Ask God to give you the courage to share your faith.
- Look for opportunities to explain what you believe to close friends or relatives.
- Get to know your neighbours better. Consider inviting them to church.
- Think of ways in which you or your church can present the 'good news' in an attractive way.
- Get involved in a world-mission initiative. Offer prayerful, practical or financial support.

The Community of Saint Chad wants you to know that the *Rhythms of Grace* owe much to the Renovaré model of spiritual formation, as outlined in *A Spiritual Formation Workbook*, Revised Edition, by J. B. Smith and L. Graybeal, Harper Collins, 1999. We gratefully acknowledge our indebtedness to their work.



Spiritual Companion Groups

Spiritual Companion Groups give structure to our dispersed community. They consist of a small number of people (usually 2-5 members) who commit themselves, on an annual basis, to meet regularly to encourage and support each other in their desire to become deeply rooted in God and to grow in spiritual maturity.

What happens when the group meets?

Before the meeting members are encouraged to read prayerfully through the Rhythms of Grace and reflect on these questions:

- Which *Rhythm* has particularly brought you life?
- Which *Rhythm* have you struggled with?
- Is there anything you need to change in order to follow the *Rhythms* more faithfully?
- In what ways have the *Rhythms* enabled you to love God and to know God loves you?

The questions are used as a focus during the meeting, when we suggest each person spends up to 15 minutes sharing their experience. They should not be interrupted. When they finish other group members may ask 'open' questions that focus on the one who has shared, not on the experience of the one asking the questions. The keynote here is support and encouragement, but it is possible that this will sometimes include an element of challenge. It is usual at the end of each meeting for each member to choose some specific task to work at in the weeks leading up to the next meeting.

Commitment and confidentiality

These are crucial elements. Each meeting should be arranged at a time when every member can be present, unless some emergency occurs to prevent them. What is said at the Group meeting must remain totally confidential to the members of the Group.

How often do groups meet?

Most Groups meet monthly, although some choose to meet more often, particularly in the early days of a Group's existence.

Will it be ongoing?

Many people prefer to join a Group with agreed beginning and ending dates. Having an ending date gives those who need to leave the Group a comfortable way of doing so. Usually the Group will want to continue, perhaps with the addition of some new member whose presence is acceptable to the remaining members. At least once a year the Group will review its progress and agree the way forward.

Who should lead?

The simplest way is to share the leadership role equally around the group. During the meeting the leader will ensure that the members stay on task and that everyone has an equal opportunity for sharing.

Where should the meeting take place?

A key factor when choosing the venue is the provision of uninterrupted space.

Resources

The Community of Saint Chad offers a number of resources which we hope you will find helpful. Some are in this booklet, others are in preparation.

Praying

Whilst we recognise that people pray in a variety of ways, we have developed liturgies for morning and evening prayer. We also offer a number of short guides. These include: 'Prayerful Reading of Scripture' (Lectio Divina), 'Imaginative Engagement with Gospel Stories' (Ignatian Contemplation), 'A Way into Silence' (the Jesus Prayer), 'Reviewing Your Day' (the Examen).

Reading the Bible

There are many resources that might help you to read the Bible in a meaningful way. We have produced a short guide which offers advice, together with a simplified lectionary (available on request) which suggests Bible readings for each day.

Examining Your Conscience

Our method of reconciliation, or confession, is available for members to use, either privately or with a spiritual director.

Spiritual Companionship

The primary vehicle for spiritual companionship is the *Spiritual Companion Group*. However, some members will also choose to meet with an independent mentor. Please contact the Diocesan Spirituality Team if you need any assistance.

Spiritual Reading

Every three months one of our members will recommend a book that you might find helpful. The recommendation will include a short review and a study guide that can be used by individuals or groups.

Undertaking a Pilgrimage or Retreat

The Community of Saint Chad aspires to organise at least one pilgrimage and a number of retreats each year, and will advise members of other opportunities as they arise.

Family of St Chad

The Community is committed to developing resources that will connect with children and young people.



SUNDAY MORNING

LISTEN

Sit comfortably, away from distractions.
Listen to the sounds around you, and acknowledge them.
Deepen your breathing.

Focus on God.
Offer your thanks and praise.
Ask God to guide and direct your day.

REFLECT

When it seems appropriate, read the passage(s) of scripture set for the day.

Reflect on what you have read.

Give God time to speak to you.

Ask: what can I learn from this passage about God's grace and how to live as a follower of Christ?

PRAY

Loving God,
I pray for your church
in its variety and richness
throughout the world.

Bless the work of all
who share in the proclamation
of the good news
of your kingdom.

Bless all your people,
and all your flock.
Give your peace,
your help,
your love
to us your servants,
the sheep of your fold,
that we may be united
in the bond of peace and love,
one body and one spirit,
in one hope of our calling.
Liturgy of St. Mark (2nd century)

This morning I pray for:
My family and friends
Those with whom I work
Those who rely on me

I pray for those in need
The sick
The lonely
The unloved

I pray for those who are struggling to find a job
Those who are in financial difficulty
Those whose relationships are in turmoil

I pray for...
(any other needs)

Grant us grace, O Father,
not to pass by suffering or joy without eyes to see.
Give us understanding and sympathy,
and guard us from selfishness,
that we may enter into
the joys and sufferings of others.
Use us to gladden and strengthen
those who are weak and suffering;
that by our lives
we may help others to believe
and serve you,
and shed forth your light
which is the light of life.

H.R.L (Dick) Shepphard (1880-1937)

CONCLUDE

Be with us, Lord, as we seek to follow in the footsteps of your servant Chad, whose humility and prayerfulness attracted so many to your kingdom. Let our lives, like his, reflect the light of Christ and the hope of faith. In the name of your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen**

SUNDAY EVENING

LISTEN

Focus on God.

Quietly express your adoration and praise.

Focus on yourself.

Commit to God all that has happened during the day.

Offer God your thanks and praise for the good things; confess the mistakes you have made and receive his forgiveness.

As you breathe out,
imagine letting go of any negative emotions or memories.

As you breathe in,
imagine letting in the gentle breeze of God's Spirit: all that is honourable, just, pure, pleasing and good.

Breathe out.

Breathe in.

Be still.

REFLECT

When it seems appropriate, read the passage(s) of scripture set for the day.

Reflect on what you have read.

Give God time to speak to you.

Ask: what can I learn from this passage about God's grace and how to live as a follower of Christ?

PRAY

Loving God, you have called me to live by faith,
in obedience to your will,
so that I might have life in all its fullness.
Help me to love you with all my heart,
to mature as a disciple of Christ,
and to grow in the gifts and fruits of your Spirit.

O Lord God, destroy and root out
whatever the adversary plants in me,
that with my sins destroyed
you may sow understanding and good work
in my mouth and heart;
so that in act and in truth
I may serve only you
and know how to fulfil
the commandments of Christ
and to seek yourself.

Columbanus (c.550-615)

This evening I pray for:
My own needs ...
The needs of others
The needs of people throughout the world

I also pray for...
(any other needs)

God be in my head
and in my understanding;
God be in my eyes
and in my looking;
God be in my mouth
and in my speaking;
God be in my heart
and in my thinking;
God be at my end
and at my departing.

The Book of Hours (16th century)

CONCLUDE

Be with us, Lord, as we seek to follow in the footsteps of your servant Chad, whose humility and prayerfulness attracted so many to your kingdom. Let our lives, like his, reflect the light of Christ and the hope of faith. In the name of your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen**



MONDAY MORNING

LISTEN

Sit comfortably, away from distractions.
Listen to the sounds around you, and acknowledge them.
Deepen your breathing.

Focus on God.
Offer your thanks and praise.
Ask God to guide and direct your day.

REFLECT

When it seems appropriate, read the passage(s) of scripture set for the day.

Reflect on what you have read.

Give God time to speak to you.

Ask: what can I learn from this passage about God's grace and how to live as a follower of Christ?

PRAY

Loving God, thank you for bringing me safely
to the beginning of this new day.

Be with me as I go about my daily tasks.

Stay with me when I come close to temptation.

Stand before me when I feel weary.

Be at my side when difficult things are asked of me.

Be a bright flame before me,
a guiding star above me,
a smooth path beneath me,
a kindly shepherd behind me,
today and evermore.

Columba (521-597)

This morning I pray for:
My family and friends
Those with whom I work
Those who rely on me

I pray for those in need
The sick
The lonely
The unloved

I pray for those who are struggling to find a job
Those who are in financial difficulty
Those whose relationships are in turmoil

I pray for...
(*any other needs*)

Grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and the wisdom to know the difference.
Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971)

CONCLUDE

Be with us, Lord, as we seek to follow in the footsteps of your servant Chad, whose humility and prayerfulness attracted so many to your kingdom. Let our lives, like his, reflect the light of Christ and the hope of faith. In the name of your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen**

MONDAY EVENING

LISTEN

Focus on God.

Quietly express your adoration and praise.

Focus on yourself.

Commit to God all that has happened during the day.

Offer God your thanks and praise for the good things; confess the mistakes you have made and receive his forgiveness.

As you breathe out,
imagine letting go of any negative emotions or memories.

As you breathe in,
imagine letting in the gentle breeze of God's Spirit: all that is honourable, just, pure, pleasing and good.

Breathe out.

Breathe in.

Be still.

REFLECT

When it seems appropriate, read the passage(s) of scripture set for the day.

Reflect on what you have read.

Give God time to speak to you.

Ask: what can I learn from this passage about God's grace and how to live as a follower of Christ?

PRAY

Loving God,
you know what is in me.
You know my strengths and weaknesses,
my hopes and fears.

Lead me from death to life,
from falsehood to truth,
from uncertainty to trust,
from turmoil to peace.

Write your blessed name,
O Lord, upon my heart,
there to remain so indelibly engraved,
that no prosperity,
no adversity shall ever move me from your love.
Be to me a strong tower of defence,
a comforter in tribulation,
a deliverer in distress,
a very present help in trouble
and a guide to heaven
through the many temptations
and dangers of this life.

Thomas à Kempis (c.1380-1471)

This evening I pray for:
My own needs ...
The needs of others
The needs of people throughout the world

I also pray for...
(any other needs)

Save the afflicted;
have mercy on the lowly;
raise the fallen;
appear to the needy;
restore the wanderers;
feed the hungry;
ransom our prisoners;
raise the sick;
comfort the faint-hearted.

Clement of Rome (1st century)

CONCLUDE

Be with us, Lord, as we seek to follow in the footsteps of your servant Chad, whose humility and prayerfulness attracted so many to your kingdom. Let our lives, like his, reflect the light of Christ and the hope of faith. In the name of your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen**



TUESDAY MORNING

LISTEN

Sit comfortably, away from distractions.

Listen to the sounds around you, and acknowledge them.

Deepen your breathing.

Focus on God.

Offer your thanks and praise.

Ask God to guide and direct your day.

REFLECT

When it seems appropriate, read the passage(s) of scripture set for the day.

Reflect on what you have read.

Give God time to speak to you.

Ask: what can I learn from this passage about God's grace and how to live as a follower of Christ?

PRAY

Loving God, I offer you today,
my thoughts, words and actions.

Help me to heed the promptings of your Spirit,
to recognize your Son in those I encounter,
and to be a witness for your kingdom.

Help me to share your healing touch,
your words of encouragement,
your smile of friendship,
your helping hand.

Give me, O Lord, firm faith,
unwavering hope, perfect love.

Pour into my heart the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and spiritual strength,
the spirit of knowledge and true godliness,
and the spirit of your holy fear.

Alcuin (735-804)

This morning I pray for:
My family and friends
Those with whom I work
Those who rely on me

I pray for those in need
The sick
The lonely
The unloved

I pray for those who are struggling to find a job
Those who are in financial difficulty
Those whose relationships are in turmoil
I pray for... (*any other needs*)

Be within me to strengthen me,
without me to preserve,
over me to shelter,
beneath to support,
before me to direct,
behind me to bring back,
round about me to fortify.
Lancelot Andrews (1555-1626)

CONCLUDE

Be with us, Lord, as we seek to follow in the footsteps of your servant Chad, whose humility and prayerfulness attracted so many to your kingdom. Let our lives, like his, reflect the light of Christ and the hope of faith. In the name of your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen**

TUESDAY EVENING

LISTEN

Focus on God.

Quietly express your adoration and praise.

Focus on yourself.

Commit to God all that has happened during the day.

Offer God your thanks and praise for the good things; confess the mistakes you have made and receive his forgiveness.

As you breathe out,
imagine letting go of any negative emotions or memories.

As you breathe in,
imagine letting in the gentle breeze of God's Spirit: all that is honourable, just, pure, pleasing and good.

Breathe out.

Breathe in.

Be still.

REFLECT

When it seems appropriate, read the passage(s) of scripture set for the day.

Reflect on what you have read.

Give God time to speak to you.

Ask: what can I learn from this passage about God's grace and how to live as a follower of Christ?

PRAY

Loving God,
forgive me if I have hurt, or failed, or disappointed
anyone today.

Forgive me if I have said, or done, or thought,
unworthy things.

I ask you to:

sustain me in the way of truth,
guide me in the path of peace,
and infuse me with the values of your kingdom.

Give me, O Lord, a steadfast heart which no unworthy affection
may drag downwards.

Give me an unconquered heart which no tribulation can wear
out.

Give me an upright heart which no unworthy purpose may
tempt aside.

Bestow upon me also, O Lord my God,
understanding to know you,
diligence to seek you,
wisdom to find you,
and a faithfulness that may finally embrace you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Thomas Aquinas (c.1225-74)

This evening I pray for:

My own needs ...

The needs of others

The needs of people throughout the world

I also pray for...
(any other needs)

Light eternal, shine in my heart,
power eternal, deliver me from evil:
wisdom eternal, scatter the darkness of my ignorance.
Grant that I may ever seek your face,
with all my heart and soul and strength;
and, in your infinite mercy,
bring me at last to your holy presence,
where I shall behold your glory
and possess your promised joys.

Alcuin (735-804)

CONCLUDE

Be with us, Lord, as we seek to follow in the footsteps of your servant Chad, whose humility and prayerfulness attracted so many to your kingdom. Let our lives, like his, reflect the light of Christ and the hope of faith. In the name of your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen**



WEDNESDAY MORNING

LISTEN

Sit comfortably, away from distractions.
Listen to the sounds around you, and acknowledge them.
Deepen your breathing.

Focus on God.
Offer your thanks and praise.
Ask God to guide and direct your day.

REFLECT

When it seems appropriate, read the passage(s) of scripture set for the day.

Reflect on what you have read.

Give God time to speak to you.

Ask: what can I learn from this passage about God's grace and how to live as a follower of Christ?

PRAY

Loving God,
I offer myself to you:
my mind – to imagine the possibilities of your kingdom;
my eyes – to see the needs of others;
my ears – to hear the cries of the world;
my voice – to share your Good News;
my hands – to work in your service;
my feet – to walk the path set before me;
my heart – to love you above all things.

Grant me to know that which is worth knowing,
to love that which is worth loving,
to praise that which can bear with praise,
to hate what in your sight is unworthy,
to prize what to you is precious,
and, above all, to search out and to do
what is well-pleasing unto you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Thomas à Kempis (c.1380-1471)

This morning I pray for:
My family and friends
Those with whom I work
Those who rely on me

I pray for those in need
The sick
The lonely
The unloved

I pray for those who are struggling to find a job
Those who are in financial difficulty
Those whose relationships are in turmoil

I pray for...
(any other needs)

O God, you are the light of the minds that know you,
the life of the souls that love you,
and the strength of the wills that serve you:
help me to know you that I may truly love you,
and so to love you that I may fully serve you,
whom to serve is perfect freedom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Augustine of Hippo (354-430)

CONCLUDE

Be with us, Lord, as we seek to follow in the footsteps of your servant Chad, whose humility and prayerfulness attracted so many to your kingdom. Let our lives, like his, reflect the light of Christ and the hope of faith. In the name of your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen**

WEDNESDAY EVENING

LISTEN

Focus on God.

Quietly express your adoration and praise.

Focus on yourself.

Commit to God all that has happened during the day.

Offer God your thanks and praise for the good things; confess the mistakes you have made and receive his forgiveness.

As you breathe out,
imagine letting go of any negative emotions or memories.

As you breathe in,
imagine letting in the gentle breeze of God's Spirit: all that is honourable, just, pure, pleasing and good.

Breathe out.

Breathe in.

Be still.

REFLECT

When it seems appropriate, read the passage(s) of scripture set for the day.

Reflect on what you have read.

Give God time to speak to you.

Ask: what can I learn from this passage about God's grace and how to live as a follower of Christ?

PRAY

Loving God,
help me to dream of love
in a world that often speaks of hate;
to dream of hope
in a world that often speaks of despair.

Teach me to seek you,
and as I seek you,
show yourself to me,
for I cannot seek you
unless you show me how,
and I will never find you
unless you show yourself to me.
Let me seek you by desiring you,
and desire you by seeking you;
let me find you by loving you,
and love you in finding you.
Anselm (1033-1109)

This evening I pray for:
My own needs ...
The needs of others
The needs of people throughout the world

I also pray for...
(any other needs)

Breathe in me, that I may think what is holy.
Move me, that I may do what is holy.
Attract me, that I may love what is holy.
Strengthen me, that I may guard what is holy.
Guard me, that I may keep what is holy.
Augustine of Hippo (354-430)

CONCLUDE

Be with us, Lord, as we seek to follow in the footsteps of your servant Chad, whose humility and prayerfulness attracted so many to your kingdom. Let our lives, like his, reflect the light of Christ and the hope of faith. In the name of your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen**



THURSDAY MORNING

LISTEN

Sit comfortably, away from distractions.
Listen to the sounds around you, and acknowledge them.
Deepen your breathing.

Focus on God.
Offer your thanks and praise.
Ask God to guide and direct your day.

REFLECT

When it seems appropriate, read the passage(s) of scripture set for the day.

Reflect on what you have read.

Give God time to speak to you.

Ask: what can I learn from this passage about God's grace and how to live as a follower of Christ?

PRAY

Loving God,
help me to be,
in everything I do and say,
an instrument of grace
and a witness to your Kingdom.

May I be no one's enemy,
and may I be the friend of that which is eternal and abides.
May I never quarrel with those nearest me:
and if I do, may I be reconciled quickly.
May I love, seek, and attain only that which is good.
May I wish for all people's happiness and envy none.
May I never rejoice in the ill-fortune of one who has
wronged me.
When I have done or said what is wrong,
may I never wait for the rebuke of others,
but always rebuke myself until I make amends.
May I win no victory that harms either me or my opponent.
May I reconcile friends who are angry with one another.
May I, to the extent of my power,
give all needful help to my friends and all who are in want.
May I never fail a friend who is in danger.
When visiting those in grief may I be able by gentle and
healing words,
to soften their pain.
May I respect myself.
May I always keep tame that which rages within me.
May I accustom myself to be gentle,
and never be angry with people because of circumstances.
May I never discuss who is wicked and what wicked things
he has done,
but know good people and follow in their footsteps.
Eusebius (3rd century)

This morning I pray for:
My family and friends
Those with whom I work
Those who rely on me

I pray for those in need
The sick
The lonely
The unloved

I pray for those who are struggling to find a job
Those who are in financial difficulty
Those whose relationships are in turmoil

I pray for...
(any other needs)

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love,
Where there is injury, pardon
Where there is doubt, faith,
Where there is despair, hope,
Where there is darkness, light,
Where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much
seek to be consoled as to console,
not so much to be understood as to understand,
not so much to be loved, as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
it is in dying that we awake to eternal life.
Sometimes attributed to Francis of Assisi (1182-1226)

CONCLUDE

Be with us, Lord, as we seek to follow in the footsteps of your servant Chad, whose humility and prayerfulness attracted so many to your kingdom. Let our lives, like his, reflect the light of Christ and the hope of faith. In the name of your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen**

THURSDAY EVENING

LISTEN

Focus on God.

Quietly express your adoration and praise.

Focus on yourself.

Commit to God all that has happened during the day.

Offer God your thanks and praise for the good things; confess the mistakes you have made and receive his forgiveness.

As you breathe out,
imagine letting go of any negative emotions or memories.

As you breathe in,
imagine letting in the gentle breeze of God's Spirit: all that is honourable, just, pure, pleasing and good.

Breathe out.

Breathe in.

Be still.

REFLECT

When it seems appropriate, read the passage(s) of scripture set for the day.

Reflect on what you have read.

Give God time to speak to you.

Ask: what can I learn from this passage about God's grace and how to live as a follower of Christ?

PRAY

Loving God,
help me to share your words of life
with my family,
friends, neighbours,
and colleagues.

Help me to speak of
holiness;
righteousness;
freedom;
and compassion.

Give me the opportunity
to talk about healing;
comfort;
acceptance;
and forgiveness.

Grant, O God,
that I may speak so boldly
and so lovingly
that the greatness of Christ
may shine out clearly in my person,
through the indwelling of your Holy Spirit.

Donald Coggan (1909-2000)

This evening I pray for:
My own needs ...
The needs of others ...
The needs of people throughout the world ...

I also pray for...
(any other needs)

Lighten our darkness,
we beseech thee, O Lord;
and by thy great mercy
defend us from all perils
and dangers of this night;
for the love of thy only Son,
our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Book of Common Prayer (origin c. 5th century)

CONCLUDE

Be with us, Lord, as we seek to follow in the footsteps of your servant Chad, whose humility and prayerfulness attracted so many to your kingdom. Let our lives, like his, reflect the light of Christ and the hope of faith. In the name of your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen**



FRIDAY MORNING

LISTEN

Sit comfortably, away from distractions.
Listen to the sounds around you, and acknowledge them.
Deepen your breathing.

Focus on God.
Offer your thanks and praise.
Ask God to guide and direct your day.

REFLECT

When it seems appropriate, read the passage(s) of scripture set for the day.

Reflect on what you have read.

Give God time to speak to you.

Ask: what can I learn from this passage about God's grace and how to live as a follower of Christ?

PRAY

Loving God,
infinite and majestic:
beyond time,
space,
and our deepest thought.

Give me wisdom to perceive you,
intellect to understand you,
diligence to seek you,
patience to wait for you,
eyes to behold you,
a heart to meditate upon you

and a life to proclaim you,
through the power of the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Benedict (480-543)

This morning I pray for:
My family and friends
Those with whom I work
Those who rely on me

I pray for those in need
The sick
The lonely
The unloved

I pray for those who are struggling to find a job
Those who are in financial difficulty
Those whose relationships are in turmoil

I pray for...*(any other needs)*

Spirit of God, with your holy breath
you cleanse the hearts and minds of your people;
you comfort them when they are in sorrow,
you lead them when they wander from the way,
you kindle them when they are cold,
you knit them together when they are at variance,
and you enrich them with many and various gifts.
We beseech you daily to increase
those gifts which you have entrusted to us;
that with your light before us and within us
we may pass through this world
without stumbling and without straying.
Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536)

CONCLUDE

Be with us, Lord, as we seek to follow in the footsteps of your servant Chad, whose humility and prayerfulness attracted so many to your kingdom. Let our lives, like his, reflect the light of Christ and the hope of faith. In the name of your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen**

FRIDAY EVENING

LISTEN

Focus on God.

Quietly express your adoration and praise.

Focus on yourself.

Commit to God all that has happened during the day.

Offer God your thanks and praise for the good things; confess the mistakes you have made and receive his forgiveness.

As you breathe out,
imagine letting go of any negative emotions or memories.

As you breathe in,
imagine letting in the gentle breeze of God's Spirit: all that is honourable, just, pure, pleasing and good.

Breathe out.

Breathe in.

Be still.

REFLECT

When it seems appropriate, read the passage(s) of scripture set for the day.

Reflect on what you have read.

Give God time to speak to you.

Ask: what can I learn from this passage about God's grace and how to live as a follower of Christ?

PRAY

Loving God
forgive me for those times
when I have been so self-obsessed
that I have been less compassionate
than I should have been.
Help me to remember
that there are many
who are not as fortunate as I am.

When I have food,
help me to remember the hungry;
when I have work,
help me to remember the jobless;
when I have a home,
help me to remember those who have no home at all;
when I am without pain,
help me to remember those who suffer,
and remembering,
help me to destroy my complacency;
bestir my compassion,
and be concerned enough to help;
by word and deed,
those who cry out for what we take for granted.
Samuel F. Pugh (1850-1922)

This evening I pray for:
My own needs ...
The needs of others
The needs of people throughout the world

I also pray for...
(any other needs)

Watch, dear Lord,
with those who wake or weep tonight,
and let your angels protect those who sleep.
Tend the sick. Refresh the weary.
Sustain the dying. Calm the suffering.
Pity the distressed.
We ask this for your love's sake.
Augustine of Hippo (354-430)

CONCLUDE

Be with us, Lord, as we seek to follow in the footsteps of your servant Chad, whose humility and prayerfulness attracted so many to your kingdom. Let our lives, like his, reflect the light of Christ and the hope of faith. In the name of your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen**



SATURDAY MORNING

LISTEN

Sit comfortably, away from distractions.
Listen to the sounds around you, and acknowledge them.
Deepen your breathing.

Focus on God.
Offer your thanks and praise.
Ask God to guide and direct your day.

REFLECT

When it seems appropriate, read the passage(s) of scripture set for the day.

Reflect on what you have read.

Give God time to speak to you.

Ask: what can I learn from this passage about God's grace and how to live as a follower of Christ?

PRAY

Loving God,
give me courage to face the things
which make me afraid,
and strength to overcome temptation.

Turn that which is evil in me into good
and that which is good into that which is better;
turn my mourning into joy,
my wandering feet into the right path,
my ignorance into knowledge of your truth,
my lukewarmness into zeal,
my fear into love,

all my material good into a spiritual gift,
all my earthly desires into heavenly,
all that is transient into that which lasts forever.
Thomas à Kempis (c.1380-1471)

This morning I pray for:
My family and friends
Those with whom I work
Those who rely on me

I pray for those in need
The sick
The lonely
The unloved

I pray for those who are struggling to find a job
Those who are in financial difficulty
Those whose relationships are in turmoil

I pray for...
(any other needs)

Grant me the spirit of love
which does not want to be rewarded,
honoured or esteemed,
but only to become the blessing and happiness
of everything that wants it;
love which is the very joy of life,
and your own goodness and truth within the soul.
William Law (1686-1761)

CONCLUDE

Be with us, Lord, as we seek to follow in the footsteps of your servant Chad, whose humility and prayerfulness attracted so many to your kingdom. Let our lives, like his, reflect the light of Christ and the hope of faith. In the name of your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen**

SATURDAY EVENING

LISTEN

Focus on God.

Quietly express your adoration and praise.

Focus on yourself.

Commit to God all that has happened during the day.

Offer God your thanks and praise for the good things; confess the mistakes you have made and receive his forgiveness.

As you breathe out,
imagine letting go of any negative emotions or memories.

As you breathe in,
imagine letting in the gentle breeze of God's Spirit: all that is honourable, just, pure, pleasing and good.

Breathe out.

Breathe in.

Be still.

REFLECT

When it seems appropriate, read the passage(s) of scripture set for the day.

Reflect on what you have read.

Give God time to speak to you.

Ask: what can I learn from this passage about God's grace and how to live as a follower of Christ?

PRAY

Loving God,
source of life and hope,
help me not to be distracted
by shallow or temporal things.

Grant me, to rest in you above every creature,
above all health and beauty,
above all glory and honour,
above all power and dignity,
above all knowledge and subtlety,
above all riches and arts,
above all joy and exultation,
above all fame and praise,
above all sweetness and consolation,
above all hope and promise,
above all merit and desire,
above all gifts and presents
which you are able to bestow or shower upon me,
above all joy and gladness
which the mind is capable of receiving and feeling;
finally, above angels and archangels,
and above all the heavenly host.
Thomas à Kempis (c.1380-1471)

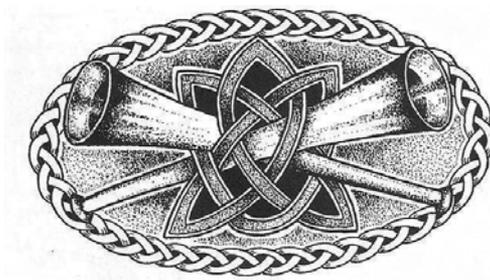
This evening I pray for:
My own needs ...
The needs of others
The needs of people throughout the world

I also pray for...
(any other needs)

God of love, whose compassion never fails;
I bring before you the troubles
and perils of people and nations,
the sighing of prisoners and captives,
the sorrow of the bereaved,
the necessities of strangers,
the helplessness of the weak,
the despondency of the weary,
the failing powers of the aged.
O Lord, draw near to each;
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Anselm (1033-1109)

CONCLUDE

Be with us, Lord, as we seek to follow in the footsteps of your servant Chad, whose humility and prayerfulness attracted so many to your kingdom. Let our lives, like his, reflect the light of Christ and the hope of faith. In the name of your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen**



Prayerful Reading of Scripture

This ancient practice, sometimes called ‘Lectio Divina’ or ‘Sacred Reading,’ has been practised by Benedictine monks for almost fifteen hundred years.

It begins with a time of relaxation, where you make yourself comfortable and attempt to clear your mind of mundane thoughts or cares. Some Christians find it helpful to focus on their breathing for a few moments. Others have a simple prayer word or phrase that they gently recite in order to quieten their mind.

Once you begin, there are four phases of prayer which you can move between freely as the Holy Spirit guides:

Read

Read the Bible passage gently and slowly several times. Imagine it as a long awaited love letter. Savour each verse or portion. Listen for the “still small voice” that speaks to you through a word or phrase.

Reflect

Think about the word or phrase for a few minutes. Let it sink in slowly and deeply. Try to identify what it might be saying to you at this moment in your life, what it might be offering to you, what it might be demanding of you.

Express

When you feel ready, openly and honestly share with God the thoughts that have arisen during your time of reflection. This may lead you into a time of thanksgiving, petition, intercession, lament, or praise.

Rest

Allow yourself to rest quietly with God.

Imaginative Engagement with the Gospel Stories

This method of praying was developed in the sixteenth century by the founder of the Jesuits, Ignatius of Loyola. It asks you to imagine that you are part of the Gospel Story that you are reading:

Prepare

Sit in a comfortable chair, in a quiet place, where you will not be distracted. Relax. Open your hands on your lap and ask God to begin to open your heart and imagination.

Read

Choose a story. Read it once or twice.

Imagine

Imagine the scene as if you were standing there. Use your senses. Watch, listen, taste, smell, and feel what is happening around you.

Observe

Who else is there? What can you hear? What can you smell?
What is the mood?

Interact

Allow the event to unfold. Begin to interact with other people, especially Jesus.

Receive

Be attentive to what God is saying. Allow him to speak through your thoughts and emotions.

Conclude

Offer the experience to God. This may lead you into a time of thanksgiving, petition, intercession, lament or praise.



A Way into Silence

The Jesus prayer has been used since the fifth century, and is widely practiced in the Eastern Orthodox Church.

It has a number of variations:

- Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.
- Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me, a sinner.
- Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me.
- Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me.
- Lord, have mercy.

The words are based on several passages in the New Testament:

- The cry of the blind man sitting at the side of the road near Jericho, *“Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me.”* (Luke 18:38)
- The ten lepers who *“called to him, ‘Jesus, Master, take pity on us.’”* (Luke 17:13)
- The request of the tax collector, *“God, be merciful to me, a sinner.”* (Luke 18:14)
- John’s recognition that: *“if we say we have no sin in us, we are deceiving ourselves and refusing to admit the truth.”* (1 John 1:8)
- Paul’s instruction to *“pray without ceasing.”* (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

The prayer is short enough that it can be repeated at many points in the day. However, it can also be used as a focus for extended meditation:

Prepare

Sit in a comfortable chair, in a quiet place, where you will not be distracted.

Relax.

Imagine that Jesus is seated in the chair across from you.

Pray

Quietly repeat the prayer.

If it helps, co-ordinate the words with your breathing.

Allow yourself to settle into a rhythm.

Let the process of repetition lead you into what St. Teresa of Avila called “the prayer of quiet,” where words become superfluous.

If you become distracted, ask God to calm the storms within.

Re-focus on the words of the prayer.

If one particular matter disturbs you repeatedly, ask God if it has something to teach you.

Receive

Be attentive, throughout, to what God is saying.

Conclude

When the time of prayer naturally draws to an end, offer the experience to God. This may lead you into a period of thanksgiving, petition, intercession, lament or praise.

Reviewing Your Day

More than four hundred years ago Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus (The Jesuits), suggested a pattern of prayer that could help people to detect God's presence in the events of each day and to discern God's direction for the future.

This pattern, traditionally known as 'the Examen', takes about fifteen minutes and is structured as follows:

Remind yourself that you are in the presence of God

- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you to remember what has happened during the day with clarity and understanding.

Begin to review your day

- Notice the details; the context of what happened; how you acted; your motives; your feelings.
- Focus on the good things: the events or conversations that encouraged, stretched or empowered you.
- Recall those times when you were not at your best.

Pay attention to your emotions

- Ignatius believed that we can detect the presence of the Holy Spirit in the movements of our emotions.
- What did you feel during the day? Elation? Resentment? Compassion? Anger? Confidence? What is God saying through these feelings?

- God may show you ways in which you fell short. Acknowledge what you are shown, offer it to God, then look deeply for other implications of what occurred. Does a feeling of frustration, for example, mean that God wants you to consider a new direction in some area of your life? Does your concern about a friend mean that you should reach out to that person in some way?

Ask the Holy Spirit to direct you to one feature of the day

- It may involve a feeling: positive or negative.
- It might be a significant encounter with another person.
- It could be a vivid moment of pleasure or peace.
- Perhaps it will be something that seems rather insignificant.
- Consider it; pray about it; and ask God to speak to you through it.

Begin to look towards tomorrow

- Pay attention to the feelings that surface as you consider what might happen.
- How do you feel? Are you apprehensive or full of anticipation?
- Allow your feelings to turn into prayer.
- Seek God's guidance. Ask him for help and understanding. Pray for hope, protection or wisdom.

Reading the Bible

There are a number of practical steps that you can take to get the most out of the Bible:

Choose the right translation

There are many translations available. Some are relatively easy to read, others are more demanding. Look at several and find the translation that suits you best.

Consider the time and place

Find a regular time and place where you can have some uninterrupted space.

Relax

Whether it's a steaming cup of coffee, or a comfortable chair by the window, it is often helpful to associate your time reading the Bible with another favourite activity.

Establish a reading plan

Reading plans that suggest a passage of the Bible for each day, plus a comment to help you understand and apply it, are available from several Christian publishers. Scripture Union and Bible Reading Fellowship are the best known, and their materials can be purchased from any Christian bookshop. Alternatively you can order from their websites.

If you would like to read systematically through a whole book of the Bible, the study guides written by Tom Wright or William Barclay are particularly helpful.

Another option is the simplified Common Lectionary provided by the Community.

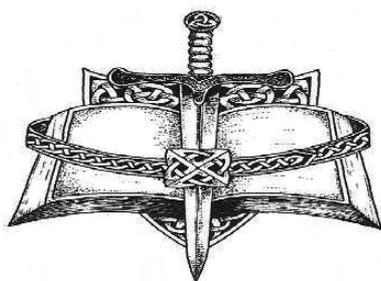
Whatever you choose, try to allow enough time to reflect on what you are reading, and ask:

- How can I apply what I have learned to my life?
- Is there an example to follow?
- Are there actions that I should take or avoid?
- Do I need to confess something to God?
- Is there a promise to claim?

Consistency really does pay dividends

Everyone who reads the Bible will, at times, find it difficult to understand. This is because we are reading an ancient text. On those occasions, try to wrestle with the readings, and take into account the fact that you may come away from the experience, not so much with answers but with better questions - which can then be shared with other members of your companion group.

The important thing is that you start reading the Bible and stick with it!



Examining Your Conscience

Introduction

When you examine your conscience you are looking for more than a list of rules that you have broken. You are seeking to look deeper into yourself, into your very being, and to ask, in the light of God's word, how can I be transformed into the likeness of Christ, and become more receptive to the presence, guidance and power of the Holy Spirit?

For many people the process of examination begins with the question: What have I done or not done? This requires honesty. But you should not dwell on this question too long.

The important question is the one that follows: Why do I act as I do? Are there habits that I have developed which cause me to behave in this way? Are there situations that I need to distance myself from, or people who tend to lead me astray? Are there aspects of my lifestyle which seem to invite trouble?

It is when you begin to understand why you behave as you do, that you can avoid making the same mistakes again, and can move more fruitfully to the third question: How can I begin to co-operate with the Holy Spirit?

Try to remember these three questions as you undertake the following examination of your conscience.

Preparation

Spend some time in quiet prayer.

If it feels appropriate, reflect on one or more of the following scriptures. You will find that God's word both convicts and also offers hope of His love and mercy:

Psalm 107:13-14

You were in serious trouble, but you prayed to the LORD, he rescued you. He brought you out of the deepest darkness and broke your chains.

Psalm 139:23-24

Look deep into my heart, God, find out everything I am thinking. Don't let me follow evil ways, but lead me in the way that time has proven true.

Isaiah 1:16-18

Wash yourselves clean. Stop doing wrong and learn to live right. See that justice is done. Defend widows and orphans and help those in need. I, the LORD, invite you to come and talk it over. Your sins are scarlet red, but they will be whiter than snow or wool.

Joel 2:12-14

The LORD said: It isn't too late. You can still return to me with all your heart. Start crying and mourning! Go without eating. Don't rip your clothes to show your sorrow. Instead, turn back to me with broken hearts. I am merciful, kind, and caring. I don't easily lose my temper, and I don't like to punish. I am the LORD your God. Perhaps I will change my mind and treat you with mercy.

Micah 7:18-19

Our God, no one is like you. We are all that is left of your chosen people, and you freely forgive our sin and guilt. You don't stay angry forever; you're glad to have pity and pleased to be merciful.

Luke 15:4-7

If any of you has a hundred sheep, and one of them gets lost, what will you do? Won't you leave the ninety-nine in the field and go look for the lost sheep until you find it? And when you find it, you will be so glad that you will put it on your shoulder and carry it home. Then you will call in your friends and neighbours and say, "Let's celebrate! I've found my lost sheep." Jesus said, "In the same way there is more happiness in heaven because of one sinner who turns to God than over ninety-nine good people who don't need to."

Romans 8:1

If you belong to Christ Jesus, you won't be punished.

Reflection

Look at the following exchange between Jesus and one of the teachers of the law. It is recorded in Mark 12:28-31:

One of the teachers of the Law of Moses came up while Jesus and the Sadducees were arguing. When he heard Jesus give a good answer, he asked him, "What is the most important commandment?" Jesus answered, "The most important one says: 'People of Israel, you have only one Lord and God. You must love him with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.' The second most important commandment says: 'Love others as much as you love yourself.' No other commandment is more important than these."

In this passage, Jesus suggests that all of the commandments can be summed up as follows:

- Love God
- Love your neighbour
- Love yourself

Use each of these as a heading to guide your confession.

Love God

- Does God seem distant at the moment?
- Do you pray regularly?
- Do you read the Bible and try to understand what it means?
- Do you allow the teachings of Jesus to shape the way that you live your life?
- Are you conscious of the promptings of the Holy Spirit?

Love your neighbour

- Do you contribute to the happiness of your family or detract from it?
- Are you a good parent?
- Have you kept your marriage vows?
- Do you encourage people or do you tend to use them?
- Are there some people that you refuse to forgive?
- Are you generous?
- Do you set a good example at work?
- Do you really care about other people, or are you just interested in your friends?

Love yourself

- Have you done anything that makes you feel ashamed?
- Do you abuse your body by eating or drinking too much?
- Would people say that you are proud and boastful?
- Are you sometimes closed-minded?
- Do you sometimes get bogged down by disappointment and self-pity?
- Are you truthful in your words and actions?

Prayer

If it seems helpful, use the following prayer to bring each memory of hurt or failure to God:

Loving God,
the Bible, tells me
that if I confess my sins
you are faithful and just
and will forgive my sins
and cleanse me from all unrighteousness.
(1 John 1:9)

Claiming those promises, I confess...

I ask you to forgive me,
heal any memories of hurt or failure
and draw me closer to you. **Amen**

At the end of your confession, you may also like to say the Community of Saint Chad prayer:

Be with us as we seek to follow in the footsteps of your servant Chad, whose humility and prayerfulness attracted so many to your kingdom. Let our lives, like his, reflect the light of Christ and the hope of faith. In the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen**

Undertaking a Pilgrimage or Retreat

A pilgrimage is a journey which is undertaken in order to help you to develop as a person of faith. Your destination might be a mountain top, a desert place, a cave, or an ancient religious site, but your intention whilst planning and undertaking the pilgrimage is always the same: to give yourself the time and space to encounter God.

As a Community, we aspire to organise at least one pilgrimage and a number of retreats each year, and will advise our members of other opportunities as they arise.

There are many types of pilgrimages and retreats to consider. Some Christians like to combine a pilgrimage or retreat with a holiday. Others prefer to find a place that will offer a quiet space for regeneration, relaxation and refreshment. Some like to include a physical activity, such as walking or climbing.

You can find information about the different types of pilgrimages and retreats on the internet. You might also find that a local church is organising a pilgrimage or retreat in the near future.



Membership

The Community of Saint Chad welcomes members from all Christian traditions. Members are encouraged to attend our service of celebration and commitment, held annually at Lichfield Cathedral on the Saturday nearest to St Chad's Day (March 2nd).

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Second Edition

Text by Revd. Dr. Barry Wilson and Professor John Lloyd

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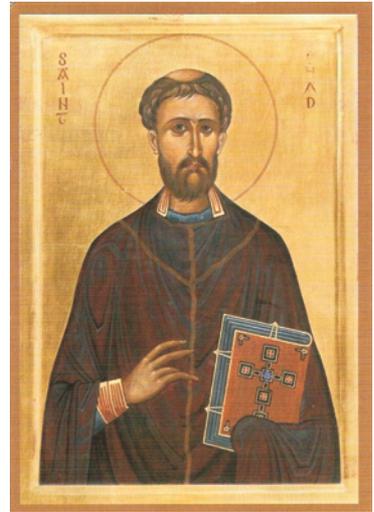
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SAINT CHAD

Biographical Note

Chad was a pupil of Aidan, who had established Christianity within Northumbria during the reign of King Oswald (634–42). In 664 Chad succeeded his brother as Abbot of Lastingham in the North York Moors. Later that same year King Oswy of Northumbria decided to consecrate Chad as his bishop. This was a somewhat irregular move, as the designated Bishop of Northumbria, Wilfrid, had travelled to France to be consecrated but was an exceptionally long time returning. Eventually Oswy tired of the delay and consecrated Chad. On his eventual return to Northumbria, Wilfrid discovered that another bishop had been consecrated in his place. When Archbishop Theodore visited the region in 669 and remarked upon the irregularity of the situation, Chad voluntarily gave up his position and returned to Lastingham. Impressed by the humility of Chad, Theodore made him Bishop of Mercia. Chad fixed his residence at Lichfield, and oversaw the formation of Lichfield as an ecclesiastical centre. He died from the plague in 672. *Bede described Chad's ministry as following in the pattern of Aidan, travelling from town to town, preaching and praying zealously among the people he served.*



(John H Darch and Stuart K Burns: *Saints on Earth: A biographical companion to Common Worship*, CHP 2004. ISBN 0-7151-4036-1). Text and photograph by permission of the Dean of Lichfield Cathedral. Photograph by R J L Smith of a representation of Saint Chad by Aidan Hart.



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to your kingdom.

Let our lives, like his,
reflect the light of Christ
and the hope of faith.

In the name of your Son
Jesus CHRIST, our Lord.

