

PRAYING

We wait upon the Holy Spirit to gift us with renewing grace.

Oh God of invitation,
as we stand at the door,
as we ask the hard questions,
as we search you out,
may we sense you already at work
preparing a feast of answers,
drawing us over the threshold
and satisfying all our hungers.
Amen.

We meet your Word in the humility of asking.
(Pause) Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We express our thanks that you hear our voice and provide for our needs.
(Pause) Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We offer you our hopes and our dreams in prayer.
(Pause) Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We bear before you all those whose needs are greater than our own.
(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 honesty to know ourselves.**
Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with faith to see prayers answered.**
Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with listening hearts and giving hands.**
Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with yourself.**



DAILY WAITING

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 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.

CHANGED LIVES @ CHANGING LIVES



NINE DAYS OF PRAYER 2018

**DAY 5: PRAY FOR
Tuesday 15 May**

LISTENING

Matthew 7:7-12

“Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for bread, will give a stone? Or if the child asks for a fish, will give a snake? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

REFLECTING

(The image for this text can be found in the Novena booklet or on www.canterburydiocese.org/novena)

“Ask, and it will be given you,” in Jesus’ words prayer seems like the simplest thing in the world. We don’t need to struggle with lengthy devotions—just ask, search, knock, and God will do all the rest.

But just because prayer is simple doesn’t mean that it is easy. After all, asking can be one of the hardest things we can do. Perhaps we don’t like admitting that we need to ask anybody for anything: we can look after ourselves. Perhaps we are not really sure what we want or need in our own hearts. Perhaps we are embarrassed by our needs and are hesitant even to mention them before God.

So prayer challenges us to be honest with ourselves, and face up to our neediness, confident in the knowledge that we have a Father in heaven, who will listen to us and not laugh at us, who gives generously.

There’s another challenge here as well, as we ask ourselves, “does everyone really receive what they ask for at God’s hand?” And that challenging voice comes across in Jesus’ story. If you ask for bread, will you get a stone? If you pray for a fish, will you get a snake? These are pointed examples, they reflect the disappointment and anger of the human spirit that has been praying, and serving, and struggling, and loving, and still seems to just keep getting stones and meeting snakes.

So prayer needs faith at its beginning and its ending. Faith in a loving, listening God, is required when we dare to ask, when we dare to speak of our deepest desires and needs in his presence. Faith is needed too when we look at our lives and see how God has been at work in them, discovering sometimes that what at first seemed to be a snake might in fact have been a fish, and what we took for a stone, might have been the daily bread that kept us going.

There is one final challenge here too. Jesus is asking us to consider how much we, who know God’s generosity in our own lives, share that generosity with others. How ready are we to truly listen to what others want and need? How ready are we to give what we have to provide others with bread and fish through kind words and sacrificial deeds?

As time allows, share your insights with one another.

A Song of Pilgrimage:

- 1 While I was still young, ♦
I sought Wisdom openly in my prayer.
- 2 Before the temple I asked for her, ♦
and I will search for her until the end.
- 3 From the first blossom to the ripening grape, ♦
my heart delighted in her.
- 5 I inclined my ear a little and received her, ♦
I found for myself much instruction.
- 6 I made progress in Wisdom; ♦
to the One who sent her, I will give glory.
- 8 With her, I gained understanding from the first, ♦
therefore will I never be forsaken.
- 9 My heart was stirred to seek her, ♦
with my tongue will I sing God’s praise.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be forever. Amen.**