

AUGUST 2020

CONNECTING WITH SPIRIT

AN ONLINE MINI-RETREAT.



RETREAT MATERIAL

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THE 'WHY' OF THIS RETREAT



The purpose of this retreat is to create a time and space for prayer & reflection. It is so easy to 'forget' or lose the rhythm in our relationship with God. At times it is therefore necessary to 'jump start' or reinvigorate, recommit or just reaffirm our commitment to our relationship. Often it is our disconnection that can fuel our thoughts of being distant from his love and care.

HOW DO I PREPARE FOR THIS RETREAT?

Making preparations to commence your mini-retreat is important to set the tone for yourself. We ask that you:

- **CARVE OUT TIME** | Setting aside a time to complete the prayer, reading or exercise will ensure that you feel the full benefit of this mini-retreat. A regular time will help you remember to complete the day's journey.
- **WRITING MATERIAL** | Get a journal, note book or pad to jot down inspirations, prayers and insights you receive.
- **INVITE GOD** | Commence each session by inviting God into your day.
- **SACRED SPACE** | Find a comfortable, quiet place to connect to God and yourself. This space will be your sacred space. Placing an item such as a candle, crucifix, picture, statue or rosary beads will remind you that this space is sacred.

DAY 1 REFLECTION FOCUS

“Everything is related, and we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for each of his creatures

POPE FRANCIS, LAUDATO SI'

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DAY 1 | CONNECTING

starting the journey to connection...

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells the frightened disciples "Courage! It is I! Do not be afraid." he then asks Peter to "Come". Peter walks on water to Jesus but becomes afraid when the wind picks up and calls out to Jesus to save him.

How many times do we do the same? Breaking our connection to Jesus when the wind picks up? Today we reflect on starting our journey. Connecting back to the source of all - the Alpha and Omega of our world and of our life.

NOTE: Today's Gospel can be found in the Appendix of this document.

EXERCISES

If you have not already done so, prepare your sacred space for the journey ahead. Collect a note book and pen and settle into your sacred space.

In your journal/notebook, take some time to pen a prayer of petition for a grace or gift from God for these seven (7) days of our retreat.

Quieten your mind and heart and pray the prayer you have created. Invite God on this journey with you and know He will not refuse.

Conclude with your favourite prayer.

DAY 2 REFLECTION FOCUS

“Accustom yourself continually to make many acts of love, for they enkindle and melt the soul.”

”

“It is of great importance, when we begin to practise prayer, not to let ourselves be frightened by our own thoughts.”

”

ST TERESA OF AVILA

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DAY 2 | ROUTINE

to start each day...

Some of us spend the first moments of our day scrolling our news feed or social media accounts. We may get up to have breakfast, get ready, go to work or school or do the 100 things on our 'to do' list. All the while forgetting to say even a simple prayer.

Today we focus on St Teresa of Avila's advice to embed prayer into our life. Today we make the commitment to spend time in prayer - even the shortest time.

EXERCISES

Settle into your sacred space and open your notebook.

Quieten your heart and mind and recite the prayer you wrote on Day 1, inviting God into your day.

Sit for a few moments and reflect on the quotes of St Teresa. Write any impressions or thoughts you are inspired to remember in your notebook.

Make the commitment to yourself to give your self this small gift. Then recite your favourite prayer in conclusion. You could perhaps make a prayer tracker like the one below.

PRAYER TRACKER

M	T	W	TH	F	S	SU
●	●	●	●	●	●	●

07

DAY 3 REFLECTION FOCUS

“*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.*”

Isaiah 55:8-9

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DAY 3 | PERSPECTIVE

setting our Perspective to God's perspective...

So many times we hold firm on a perspective when this perspective is unhelpful. Today we are invited to engage in a new, broader perspective - that of God.

St Teresa of Calcutta is famous for saying:

"I used to believe that prayer changes things. But now I know that prayer changes us, and we change things".

Taking God's perspective is perhaps as hard and as simple as letting our prayers change us so that we can affect changes in our world.

EXCERCISES

Settle into your sacred space and open your notebook.

Quieten your heart and mind and recite the prayer you wrote on Day 1, inviting God into your day.

Sit for a few moments and reflect on the scripture quote in today's reflection. Also allow the quote from St Teresa of Calcutta stir your soul. Write any impressions or thoughts you are inspired to remember in your notebook.

Reflect on anything in your heart that you may wish to bring to God in Prayer. Pray your favourite prayer, bringing God into your day.

DAY 4 REFLECTION FOCUS



Thus says the Lord:

Oh, come to the water all you who are thirsty; though you have no money, come!

Buy corn without money, and eat, and, at no cost, wine and milk. Why spend money on what is not bread, your wages on what fails to satisfy? Listen, listen to me and you will have good things to eat and rich food to enjoy. Pay attention, come to me; listen, and your soul will live. With you I will make an everlasting covenant out of the favours promised to David.



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DAY 4 | TAKING CARE

taking the time to care...

We often look for peace in all the wrong places or try to find quick fixes or short lasting relief. The result may release the tension for a short time but the pressure builds as quickly as it was released. No real solution is found. Today we are invited to recognise the true source of peace - Jesus.

EXERCISES

Settle into your sacred space and open your notebook.

Quieten your heart and mind and recite the prayer you wrote on Day 1, inviting God into your day.

Sit for a few moments and reflect on the scripture quote in today's reflection.

Reveal to God and Jesus your own place of suffering. The areas in your life where hurt, disappointment or anguish lie. Instead of numbing your emotions, express them to God. Do not worry he already knows but needs you to be open to share your feelings with Him.

Pray your favourite prayer, bringing God into your day.

During the day do something that nurtures your body, mind and/or spirit. It could be as simple as preparing a nourishing meal for yourself or spending time outdoors. Know that by taking care and connecting with God in all you do, you nurture your relationship.

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DAY 5 REFLECTION FOCUS

“*Be still and
know that I
am God.*”

Psalm 46:10

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DAY 5 | RELAXATION

relaxing in the Lord...

Breath is life. Without breath there is no life. This breath also provides the body, mind and spirit with great force. Today we allow the gift of breath to relax and center us.

Imagine the breath as a dance between you and God. Breath is a gift of life into your entire body and your entire being. We will use 'box breathing' to connect and relax in the Lord.

NOTE: The diagram on how to box breathe is below.

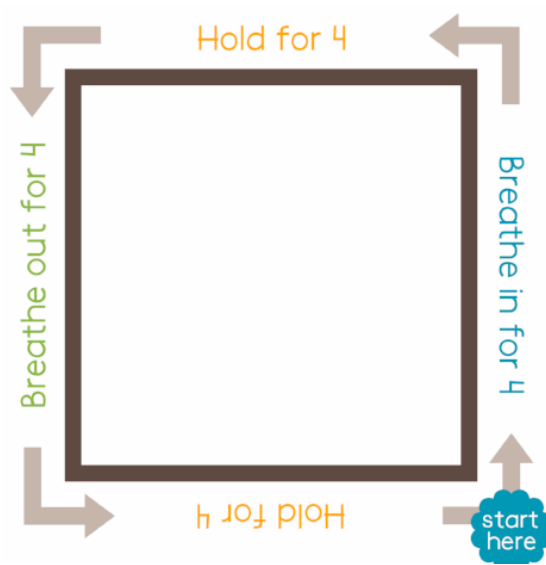
EXERCISES

Settle into your sacred space and open your notebook.

Quieten your heart and mind and recite the prayer you wrote on Day 1, inviting God into your day.

Invite the Holy Spirit to come and guide you on this journey - do not resist, just allow the Holy Spirit's gift to enter. Simply breathe and feel the joy of each life giving breath.

Pray your favourite prayer, bringing God into your day.



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DAY 6 REFLECTION FOCUS

“*We have what we seek. We do not have to rush after it. It was there all the time. And if we give it time, it will make itself known.*”

THOMAS MERTON

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DAY 6 | RECONNECTING

revisit the Lord in the way you feel moved to...

Today spend time revisiting one or all of the days you would like to. This can be days you missed or you felt were left incomplete. Let the exercises speak to you in a new or deeper way. Let it's lesson be made known.

EXERCISES

Settle into your sacred space and open your notebook.

Quieten your heart and mind and recite the prayer you wrote on Day 1, inviting God into your day.

Sit for a few moments and reflect on the Thomas Merton quote in today's reflection.

Speak to God silently or on paper and when you are done, thank God as you would a dear friend.

Pray your favourite prayer, bringing God into your day.

15**DAY 7 REFLECTION FOCUS**

“*And let them first pray together, that so they may associate in peace.*”

— St. Benedict of Nursia,

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DAY 7 | CELEBRATE

We celebrate the end of our retreat with Mass.

Join us for Mass on YouTube and then join with other Parishioners for an online cuppa after Mass (BYO Cuppa & biscuit).

NOTE: Remember to contact the Parish by Friday to get the special zoom login.

EXERCISES

Settle into your sacred space and open your notebook.

Quieten your heart and mind and recite the prayer you wrote on Day 1, inviting God into your day.

Sit for a few moments and commence this week's Parish Mass on YouTube [Channel name - Parish Melton]

At 10.30am Log into zoom for a quick cuppa after Mass!

Bringing God into your day - today & everyday.

GOSPEL READING DAY 1:

A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW - MT 14:22-36

When Jesus heard of the death of John the Baptist, he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side while he would send the crowds away. After sending the crowds away he went up into the hills by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, while the boat, by now far out on the lake, was battling with a heavy sea, for there was a head-wind. In the fourth watch of the night he went towards them, walking on the lake, and when the disciples saw him on the lake they were terrified. 'It is a ghost' they said, and cried out in fear. But at once Jesus called out to them, saying, 'Courage! It is I! Do not be afraid.' It was Peter who answered. 'Lord', he said 'if it is you, tell me to come to you across the water.' 'Come' said Jesus. Then Peter got out of the boat and started walking towards Jesus across the water, but as soon as he felt the force of the wind, he took fright and began to sink. 'Lord! Save me!' he cried. Jesus put out his hand at once and held him. 'Man of little faith,' he said 'why did you doubt?' And as they got into the boat the wind dropped. The men in the boat bowed down before him and said, 'Truly, you are the Son of God.' Having made the crossing, they came to land at Gennesaret. When the local people recognised him they spread the news through the whole neighbourhood and took all that were sick to him, begging him just to let them touch the fringe of his cloak. And all those who touched it were completely cured.