

DAILY WAITING

NINE DAYS OF PRAYER 2024



CHANGED LIVES



CHANGING LIVES

DAY 5 – THE GOD WHO WALKS WITH US

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. The reflection is taken from the Thy Kingdom Come 2024 Novena booklet by Bishop Anthony Poggo, Secretary General of the Anglican Communion).

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

'Then I turned to see whose voice it was that spoke to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands I saw one like the Son of Man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash across His chest. His head and His hair were white as white wool, white as snow; His eyes were like a flame of fire, His feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. In His right hand He held seven stars, and from his mouth came a sharp, two-edged sword, and His face was like the sun shining with full force.' (Revelation 1:12-16, NRSV)

REFLECTING

'Is it really you?' We might say that when we meet up with someone we haven't seen for years. They look different somehow. They are wearing different clothes, perhaps they have lost or put on weight, maybe they have changed their hairstyle, but there is a familiarity about them that makes us certain it really is them.

However, for John, he had no doubt that it was Jesus who was speaking to him, the one who has broken into his exile, his memories, his loneliness, his faith and hope.

There is so much that is different in this amazing, glorious figure he sees. Old Testament images come to his mind as the person comes into focus. The long robe and gold sash around the chest would bring to mind the robes of the High Priest and point to Jesus as the one who died for us on that first Good Friday, and who truly is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. The white hair and flaming fire come from the picture of Almighty God in Daniel chapter 7.

There is no doubt that the one who speaks does so with the character and authority of the Lord of all things. Of course, the language of Daniel 7 has been there from the start of today's reading in the phrase 'One like the Son of Man'. John sees the victorious Lord of the Old Testament who is also his best friend from the Gospels. The Son of Man is how Jesus often spoke of himself. Imagine: you look around on hearing the voice of God and find your closest friend looking at you.

A friend who walked with you by the shores of Lake Galilee and through the streets of Jerusalem. A friend who knew how to party at a wedding in the village of Cana and who had seen all His disciples run away in terror from the garden of Gethsemane. This friend has feet 'refined in a furnace'. The phrase speaks of Jesus' humanity just as the rest of the picture points to His deity.

This same friend of John wants to be our dearest friend too. He offers to walk with us. The Son of God who was born in a stable, who fled as a refugee, who earned His living as a carpenter; the one who loved the leper, had supper with the tax collector, befriended the sex worker and fed the hungry. This same Jesus continues to offer us a hand of friendship.

Pray that your five people will know more of the Jesus who really understands what it is to walk in our shoes.

PSALM 25: 1-15 (NRSV)

1 To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

2 O my God, in you I trust;

do not let me be put to shame; do not let my enemies exult over me.

3 Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;

let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

4 Make me to know your ways, O Lord;

teach me your paths.

5 Lead me in your truth and teach me,

for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long.

6 Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love,

for they have been from of old.

7 Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions;

according to your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of your goodness, O

Lord!

- 8 Good and upright is the Lord;
therefore he instructs sinners in the way.
- 9 He leads the humble in what is right
and teaches the humble his way.
- 10 All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness,
for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.
- 11 For your name's sake, O Lord,
pardon my guilt, for it is great.
- 12 Who are they who fear the Lord?
He will teach them the way that they should choose.
- 13 They will abide in prosperity,
and their children shall possess the land.
- 14 The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him,
and he makes his covenant known to them.
- 15 My eyes are ever toward the Lord,
for he will pluck my feet out of the net.

**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

Silence is kept for several minutes, to allow people to pray for the 5 people they have chosen to pray for throughout the Novena. It may be appropriate to invite people to speak those names aloud if they wish to.

ABBA, Father,

Your Son, Jesus Christ, was lifted up to the realms of glory to call us back to you. He prays for us when we are too confused and empty to pray for ourselves. He sends your Creator Spirit, in the fire of love,
To empower your pilgrim people everywhere
And to renew the earth. Amen.

(Prayer written by Canon Dr Christopher Dent - PTO Clergy in the Sandwich Deanery and Chaplain at Canterbury Cathedral)

We meet your word with wondering hearts, amazed at the friendship you offer us.

(Pause) Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We give you thanks for the friends and family who journey through life with us.

(Pause)

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

We offer to you our prayers for those who grieve for lost loved-ones.

(Pause)

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

We bear before you all whose feet are weary from wandering the world to find safety and home.

(Pause) Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We wait upon the work of your Spirit as we say the Lord's Prayer together...

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with compassion for those displaced by poverty and war.**

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with open hearts to form new friendships.**

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

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



Diocese of Canterbury
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