

We Pray Together

Confident that Jesus is our loving brother who cares for us, we offer our prayers:

For our pilgrim Church in every land

R/. May it be filled, guided and governed by your Holy Spirit.

For the religious leaders of the world

R/. Come with your unfailing help and give them your strength in their ministry.

For missionaries throughout the world

R/. Bless their work that all people may know the light of Christ.

For all who suffer

R/. Comfort and strengthen them and keep us attentive to their needs.

For Our Community of Faith

R/. May we always be fearless witnesses through our words and actions to your loving presence with us.

We take a moment to bring our own prayers...

Our Father...

Closing Prayer

Almighty God, we bless you for giving your Son to be the example of Your love for us here on earth. Grant that we who are strengthened by his risen presence may follow him in our daily life and always be examples of his compassionate love to all. May your Spirit strengthen us. This we ask in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

And may the Lord bless us and keep us forever in His love, ***In the name of the Father...***



Praying the Scriptures

Listen to the Word

Ecumenical Bible Week 2022 – 5th to 12th June



Welcome & Introduction to the scripture passage

Centring Prayer - We invite the Lord

Opening Prayer God, the living word, we ask that we may be aware of the power of your word speaking in our lives. As we gather to explore this word for ourselves and each other we do so in an atmosphere of openness and respect for all gathered here and for your presence among us. AMEN

Read the Bible passage gently and slowly several times. (We will read the scripture a few times during this prayer with a break for silence in between allowing the Word to settle in our hearts)

Remember the passage itself is not as important as the savouring of each portion of the reading, constantly listening for the "still, small voice" of a word or phrase that somehow speaks to you.

Acts 10:44-48

The Gentiles Receive the Holy Spirit

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all those who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had accompanied Peter were greatly astonished that the gift of the Holy

Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, “No one can withhold the water for these people to be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?” So he gave orders to have them baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay for several days.

After a short pause - The text is read a second time – possibly from a different translation or in a different language

As you are listening ask yourself:

Is there anything about this passage that I do not understand? Is there anything that I find confusing or would like explained?

After some silence ask your question simply and briefly and allow the group to respond briefly.

Reflect on the text of the passage and think about how it applies to one's own life. This is considered to be a very personal reading of the Scripture and very personal application.



Ask yourself the question –

What word or phrase catches my attention?

As you recognize a word, phrase, or idea, focus your attention on that word, repeating it to yourself silently allowing the word of God to sink deep into your heart.

Each person has an opportunity to share that word or phrase without comment or embellishment.

Respond to the passage by opening the heart to God. This is not primarily an intellectual exercise, but is thought to be more of the beginning of a conversation with God.



The text is read again. This time, focus your attention on how the word, phrase, or idea speaks to your life today.

Ask yourself:

What does it mean for me today? How is Christ, the Word, speaking to me about my life through this word, phrase, or idea? What challenge is being set before you?

A few questions for personal reflection

- *How do I live my faith in Jesus: alone or in community?*
- *Has my participation in the community led me to sometimes experience the light and the strength of the Holy Spirit?*
- *What about the passage surprises you? Can you identify with the courage of Peter?*
- *The Holy Spirit, it seems, does not recognize all the same boundaries we do. How inclusive is the practice of our faith?*
- *Where do I see the Spirit at work in my life, in my community, in my world?*

You are now invited to share briefly.

Listening to God. This is a freeing of oneself from one's own thoughts, both mundane and holy, and hearing God talk to us. Opening the mind, heart, and soul to the influence of God.



We read the text again. This time, focus on what God is calling you to do or become. Experiencing God's presence changes us. It calls us to something—

During this final reading ask yourself the question –

What is God calling you to do or to be as a result of this experience? What challenge is the Gospel putting to you today?

After a period of silence, you are now invited to share and discuss with the group your thoughts, maybe confronting everyday problems and maybe offering concrete solutions that YOU can begin to do.

Allow the group wisdom, experience and the Holy Spirit to grow and deepen your understanding.