



NOVENA

Nine days of prayer

Welcome to the Novena

Ascension is the day when we remember Jesus' return to heaven after his resurrection, and Pentecost is when we celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Jesus' disciples - often known as the 'birthday of the Church'. The nine days between these two key celebrations offer us an opportunity for prayer and reflection as we long for that gift of the Holy Spirit for ourselves and our communities.

In this in-between time, we invite you to pray with us "Thy Kingdom Come" - that the Holy Spirit would come and bless and challenge us to witness to God's life-changing work.

When we came to prepare this year's Novena, we felt drawn to Jesus' Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's Gospel. As we explored deeper in and around the Sermon, we found so many passages that speak of God's love and care for even the smallest details of our lives - and of the ways in which Jesus challenges our attitudes, priorities and perceptions.

This little booklet is your invitation to explore for yourself, through art and prayer, this dual message of love and challenge. As you do, know that you are part of the global Thy Kingdom Come family, seeking God's transformation for yourself and those you meet. Join with us as we pray together "Come Holy Spirit: Thy Kingdom Come" - and may our waiting and praying open our hearts afresh to God's possibilities.

The Novena Team

Canterbury 2019

How to use these Pocket Prayers each day

LOOK at these images. Let them reveal new angles of insight into the love and challenge of Jesus' teaching.

WAIT prayerfully for the Holy Spirit. Pause and breathe, creating a space into which God can speak.

READ the Bible text, allow it to enliven your heart, stir your soul and spark your imagination.

LISTEN for insight through idea or image, through recollection or curiosity. Let that Word dwell within you, as you listen for yourself and your community.

RESPOND to the prompting of the Word, with an action that leads to life-giving change.

Let the words of the collect gather up and bless these moments of prayerful waiting upon God, so that his kingdom might be seen more fully in you.



Day 1 - Friday: Praise

LOOK... and be curious.

WAIT... with prayerful expectation.

Come Holy Spirit: Thy Kingdom Come.

READ... the text with an open mind.

You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

(Matthew 5:13-16)

LISTEN... for a word with a willing heart.

RESPOND... with prayer and action.

O God the source of all light,
May we bring salt and light to your world,
drawing out your presence in the everyday.
As we offer you our lives,
shape us as disciples,
that we may reveal your goodness
and reflect your light.
In Jesus' name,
Amen.



Day 2 - Saturday: Thanks

LOOK... and be curious.

WAIT... with prayerful expectation.

Come Holy Spirit: Thy Kingdom Come.

READ... the text with an open mind.

And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you - you of little faith?

(Matthew 6:28-30)

LISTEN... for a word with a willing heart.

RESPOND... with prayer and action.

O God of all creation
before whom all the flowers of the field bow down,
as with gratitude we recognise
your provision and possibility for all on earth,
clothe us in your humble beauty
and draw us to the new simplicity
that Jesus reveals within us.
In Jesus' name,
Amen.



Day 3 - Sunday: Sorry

LOOK... and be curious.

WAIT... with prayerful expectation.

Come Holy Spirit: Thy Kingdom Come.

READ... the text with an open mind.

So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.

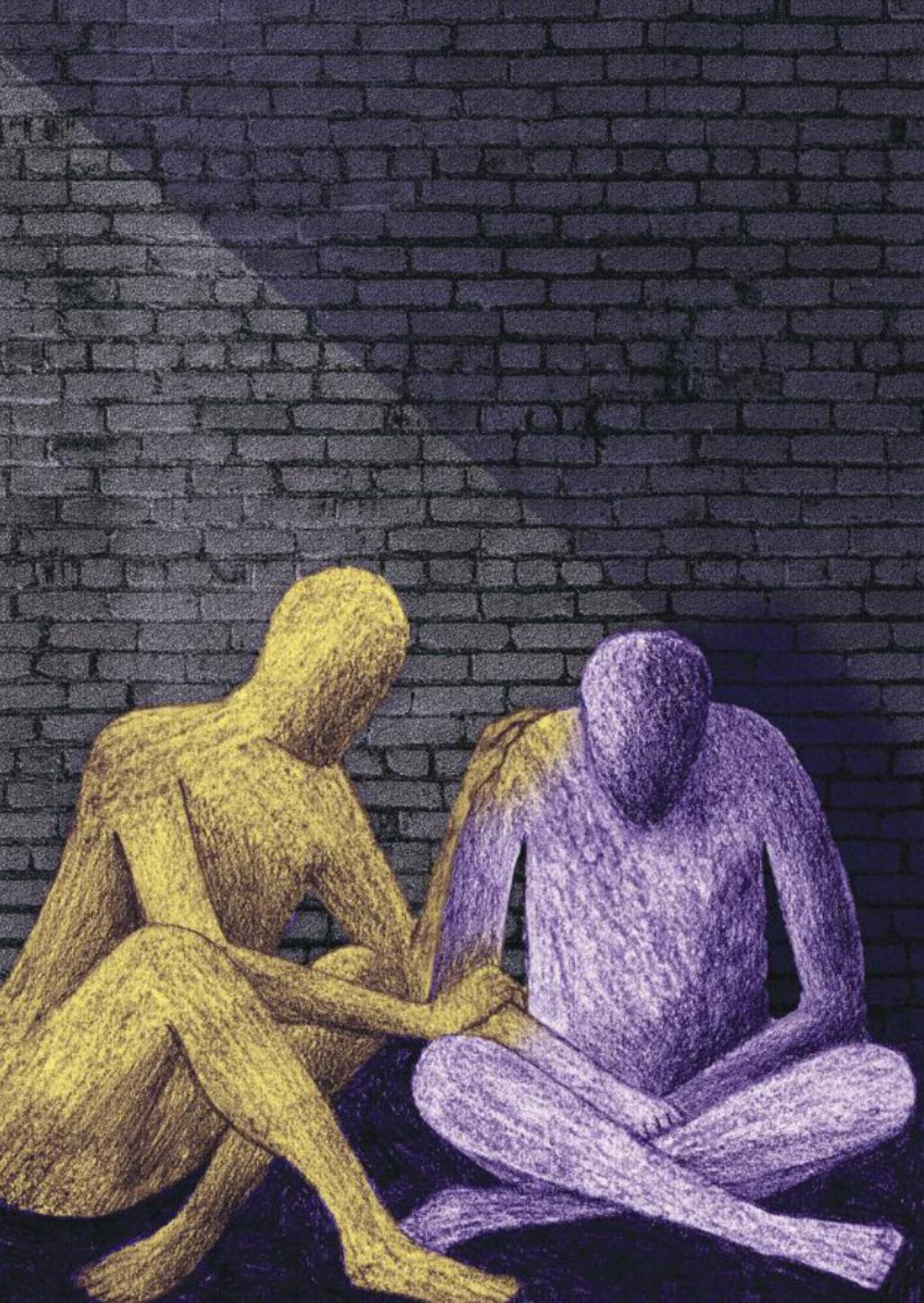
(Matthew 5:23-24)

LISTEN... for a word with a willing heart.

RESPOND... with prayer and action.

O God of wholeness and hope,
healer of broken hearts and homes and communities,
impel us towards one another in acts of peace,
teach us to recognise and reconcile our conflicts
and to show forth your Kingdom.

In Jesus' name,
Amen.



Day 4 - Monday: Offer

LOOK... and be curious.

WAIT... with prayerful expectation.

Come Holy Spirit: Thy Kingdom Come.

READ... the text with an open mind.

You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you.

(Matthew 5:38-42)

LISTEN... for a word with a willing heart.

RESPOND... with prayer and action.

O God of all we are and have,
in the face of oppression
help us to release to you
all that which holds us back
to give up gladly all that we carry,
not resisting, not refusing -
even walking the second mile
for the pure pleasure of seeing it go.
In Jesus' name,
Amen.



Day 5 - Tuesday: Pray for

LOOK... and be curious.

WAIT... with prayerful expectation.

Come Holy Spirit: Thy Kingdom Come.

READ... the text with an open mind.

You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous.

(Matthew 5:43-45)

LISTEN... for a word with a willing heart.

RESPOND... with prayer and action.

O God, who in Jesus gave us an example
of how to embrace pain and opposition,
as we enjoy both sun and rain
from our common humanity help us
to pray intently for the redeeming and blessing
of our blue and green planet.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.



Day 6 - Wednesday: Help

LOOK... and be curious.

WAIT... with prayerful expectation.

Come Holy Spirit: Thy Kingdom Come.

READ... the text with an open mind.

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

(Matthew 11:28-30)

LISTEN... for a word with a willing heart.

RESPOND... with prayer and action.

O God of the shared burden through the tiring day,
our anxieties and cares make it difficult
for us to recognise the companionship of your Son.
Help us to welcome his offer of exchange
and place his light and loving words
where they can bring relief.
In Jesus' name,
Amen.



Day 7 - Thursday: Adore

LOOK... and be curious.

WAIT... with prayerful expectation.

Come Holy Spirit: Thy Kingdom Come.

READ... the text with an open mind.

When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

(Matthew 2:10-12)

LISTEN... for a word with a willing heart.

RESPOND... with prayer and action.

O God of star and stable,
of wealth and poverty, darkness and light,
we travel across a divided world to come to you;
in time of turmoil may we find hope,
do our homage, and find our gifts welcomed,
gently extended to the world you love.
In Jesus' name,
Amen.



Day 8 - Friday: Celebrate

LOOK... and be curious.

WAIT... with prayerful expectation.

Come Holy Spirit: Thy Kingdom Come.

READ... the text with an open mind.

So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”

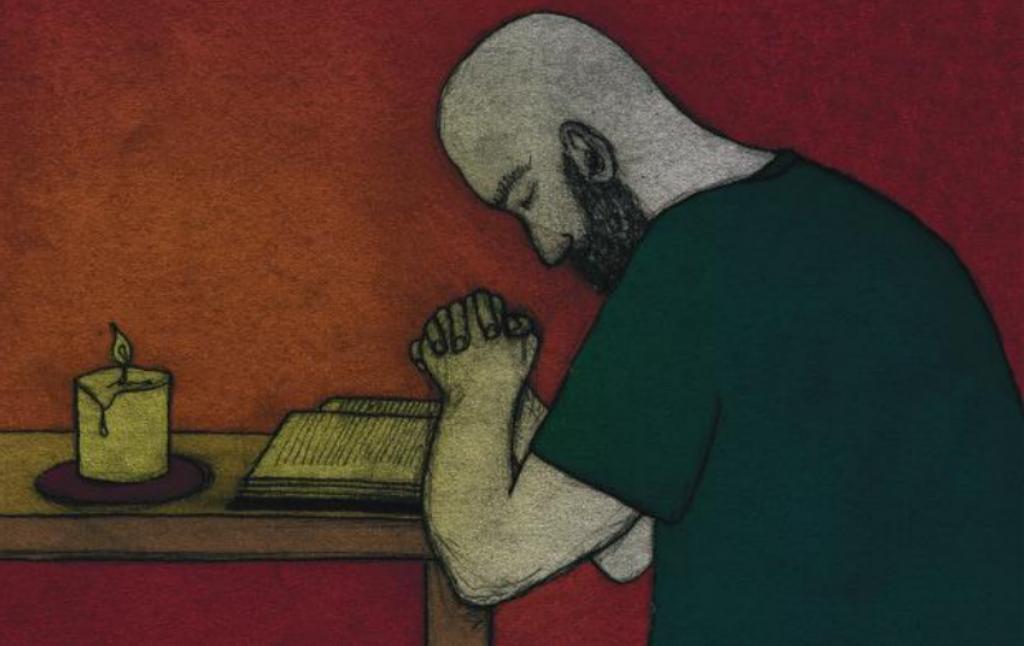
(Matthew 28:8-10)

LISTEN... for a word with a willing heart.

RESPOND... with prayer and action.

O God of the resurrection morning,
may we know what it is to joyfully meet this mystery
and face our fears of the unknown.
Give flight to our feet, as we run to share this news
and meet you in every place.

In Jesus' name,
Amen.



Day 9 - Saturday: Silence

LOOK... and be curious.

WAIT... with prayerful expectation.

Come Holy Spirit: Thy Kingdom Come.

READ... the text with an open mind.

And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ‘When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

(Matthew 6: 5-8)

LISTEN... for a word with a willing heart.

RESPOND... with prayer and action.

O God of peace,
in the quiet room and the few words,
you know the deep needs of our hearts
and the ache of our longing.
In the silence sit with us
until we know we are heard
and can confidently make our reply.
In Jesus' name,
Amen.



Meet the artist: Celia Hyland

After studying fine art and specialising in digital manipulation and photography, Celia worked in Christian publishing for a decade. Alongside her illustration and design work, she is also an established textile artist and painter. Her illustrations are created using textured layers, pencil, crayon and digital colouring.

Celia lives in Rochester, Kent with her husband and two daughters.

www.celiahyland.co.uk

These pocket prayers are provided to help you pray daily, whenever and wherever you can, between Ascension and Pentecost. You will be joining individuals, groups, schools, churches and deaneries praying together throughout Kent, the UK and the world.

Pray expecting the Holy Spirit to empower us in new ways; wait for a renewing experience of God's strengthening to us and our Christian communities.

Additional prayer resources, including Daily Waiting liturgies with reflections, can be found at:

www.canterburydiocese.org/novena

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