

DAILY WAITING

PRAYING

Oh God of the mountain top,
how often we think it is you
hurling rocks and scorching earth.
How often we misunderstand you.
May we not fear the silent place,
but come out of the darkness to meet you
and stand in the face of your question to us,
'What are you doing here?' **Amen.**

We meet your word in what is left unsaid.
(Pause) Come Holy Spirit. **Thy Kingdom Come.**
We express our thanks that you find us when we hide.
(Pause) Come Holy Spirit. **Thy Kingdom Come.**
We offer to return to your level path.
(Pause) Come Holy Spirit. **Thy Kingdom Come.**
We bear before you our fears and failures, trusting that this is not
the end.
(Pause) Come Holy Spirit. **Thy Kingdom Come.**

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

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 signs along the way.**

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us times set aside for silence.**

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with second chances.**

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



Diocese of Canterbury
CHANGED LIVES ⊕ CHANGING LIVES

CHANGED LIVES ⊕ CHANGING LIVES



NINE DAYS OF PRAYER 2020

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.

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.

DAY 9: SILENCE

LISTENING

He said, 'Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.' Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?' (1 Kings 19:11-13)

REFLECTING

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

Elijah was very much a man of action, given to dramatic gestures. He hurried about here and there, mixing with monarchs and arguing with prophets. Not a quiet person at all. But when we meet him here, he's at the end of his tether, and has escaped to Horeb, running from both Jezebel and God. Just when he'd reached the high point of his success – when he'd defeated the gods of Baal by bringing down fire to prove his Lord's power, his mission had descended into chaos, and his life was threatened. This is why he's hiding in this cave, a safe but sterile place in which nothing takes root or flourishes, and light cannot penetrate. This is not a holy man on retreat.

The silence Elijah first experiences inside the cave is fearful, an absence of noise, and leaves him unmoored, surfing on waves of worry. He has yet to experience an invitation to truly listen, for only when the turbulence subsides does he reach the still depths filled by the silences of God. Then Elijah, anchored by silence, leaves the cave and meets God as a positive presence that sustains and energises him to face the piercing question 'What are you doing here?' Pause, and take a moment of silence; ask yourself, when do I hide in a cave? I too may be feeling 'stop the world, I want to get off'. Perhaps I've run

away from God, finding the challenge too difficult, and retreated, or blocked the opportunity for silence with pointless activity. So, on the brink of Pentecost, in the midst of pandemic, we hold our collective breath and wait for God's sheer silence to turn us in the right direction. Let us ask ourselves – as individuals, as church communities, as dioceses, the compelling question '*What are we doing here?*'

As time allows, share your insights with one another.

A Song of Entreaty

- 1 Hear my prayer, O Lord;
give ear to my supplications in your faithfulness;
answer me in your righteousness.
- 2 Do not enter into judgment with your servant,
for no one living is righteous before you.
- 3 For the enemy has pursued me,
crushing my life to the ground,
making me sit in darkness like those long dead.
- 4 Therefore my spirit faints within me;
my heart within me is appalled.
- 5 I remember the days of old,
I think about all your deeds,
I meditate on the works of your hands.
- 6 I stretch out my hands to you;
my soul thirsts for you like a parched land.
- 7 Answer me quickly, O Lord;
my spirit fails.
Do not hide your face from me,
or I shall be like those who go down to the Pit.
- 8 Let me hear of your steadfast love in the morning,
for in you I put my trust.

Psalm 143 v 1 to 8

**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.**