Practising Prayer

In September and October, we have enjoyed a series of talks on Prayer. Here are some "take-aways" of ways of praying you might like to explore.

Lectio Divina

The practice follows four core stages:

1. Lectio (**Read**): Read a short scripture passage slowly and carefully, ideally out loud, several times.
   Listen for a specific word or phrase that catches your attention.
2. Meditatio (**Reflect**): Ponder the word or phrase in silence.
   Consider how this specific text speaks to your life, heart, or current circumstances today.
3. Oratio (**Respond/Pray**): Open your heart to converse directly with God.
   Express your thoughts, struggles, or gratitude inspired by what you just read.
4. Contemplatio (**Rest/Contemplate**): Sit quietly and rest in God's presence.
   Let go of your own words and simply experience stillness before Him.

The Daily Examen (short version)

1. **Pause & Thank**: Take a deep breath to ground yourself.
   Bring to mind two specific things that went well today (even small moments) and give thanks for them.
2. **Track Your Energy**: Scan your day and identify your highest point (what gave you life, peace, or energy?) and your lowest point (what drained you or felt heavy?).
3. **Look Ahead**: Think about what is coming up next or tomorrow. Identify one specific moment where you will need patience, focus, or strength, and ask for the grace to handle it well.

Lament

The third talk in our series on Prayer was called "Lament". It invited us to spend time with God facing the difficult stuff in our lives, finding words for deep feelings and telling God how awful things have been.
Have a look at the sermon and see what speaks to you

Prayer using our Bodies

- "How beautiful on the mountains are the **feet** of those who bring Good News" [Isa 52.7]. Where will your feet take you? With whom will you share the Good News?
- God does not want us to be a stiff-necked people [2 Chron 30.8]. Bend your **neck** in prayer and in submission to the King of Kings.
- Open your **hands**, palms up, to receive from God.
- Clench your **fists**, and remember the anger, violence and hatred in the world. And then open them to release your anger and receive God's peace for your own life and for people around the world.
- Clasp one **hand** with your other hand. Remember God's comfort and compassion for yourself as well as for all his children.
- "Taste and see that the Lord is good" [Ps 34.8]. Use your **voice** to pray and praise. And on other occasions, chose to be silent.

While the adults considered how to use their bodies in prayer, the children explored some fun activities to aid their prayers. One of these was to draw or write in sand things which are upsetting or for which they are sorry. We can then ask God to help with these issues, and to remind us that God will indeed deal with our concerns, we can smooth over the sand to remove the words and pictures. Parents can help their children use this at home.



In a similar fashion, one can write on the beach at the edge of the water and then let the waves wash away our drawings. Works for adults as well as children!



