

Lee Abbey Retreat

A simple guide to a short time of prayer

These are general guidelines but they may offer a structure for preparing for, and responding to, these retreat reflections. Please adapt them as helpful to you.

The golden rule: 'Pray as you can, not as you can't. Take yourself as you find yourself and start from there'. Life is often hectic and time to pray is short.

Most of us need help to settle and become still. Here is a suggestion for 10 -15 minutes praying.

A place and a posture.

Choose somewhere comfortable but alert. Sitting, kneeling or standing? Would a visual focus help – a candle, picture, cross, a view from a window?

As natural as breathing.

As you sit quietly become aware of your breathing and then deepen it slightly and let it find a natural rhythm.

Now as you breathe in take in the words: 'Lord Jesus Christ'.

Imagine him coming like fresh life into the depths of your life.

As you breathe out complete the prayer with the words: 'have mercy on my (us)'

We are receiving the love of God who comes to us as we are ... and who then lovingly clears out the clutter and confusion of our lives and makes space for us to be with him.

Pray this prayer for a few minutes on the rhythm of your breathing.

An act of acceptance and offering

Quietly reflect on the 'world' you have brought with you to prayer – its moods, problems, joys, relationships. In the quiet you may already be aware of them pressing for attention. Do not push them away or fight them. Instead gather them up as if you hold them in your hands and offer them to the loving care of God.

Receiving God's Word

This is a good place to listen to a retreat reflection.

Take some time to use the prayer suggestions as you find helpful.

Praying for others

A suggestion for praying using your hands.

Hands cupped (as if holding something in them) – gather to God in offering, petition and thanksgiving the events of the past day or week *Silence is kept*

Hands reaching out (as if showing God the world around us) – naming places and people and situations. *Silence is kept*

Hands reaching up – as if in longing and welcome – we express our hope in God that he still comes to save and transform. *Silence is kept*

Closing

Pray 'The Grace' or just quietly bow in worship and thanks.