

The Benefice of Heyside and Royton

His Story - Our Story

A pilgrimage around the streets of the parishes of
St Mark's Heyside and St Anne's Royton



Sunday 18th July-
Sunday 15th August

Looking back at Week One

Thank you to everyone for your support and prayers as I set out on this pilgrimage of prayer around our two parishes of St Mark's Heyside and St Anne's Royton. It was been good to be joined in prayer by people following on Facebook and Twitter and by people coming along and joining in the walking. Thanks to John Corbishley, Lorraine Brookes, Sylvia Coppock, Ann Hayward and Keith Hayward, Linda Ashton, Revd Brian Hartley, Revd Dougie Oates and Judith Buckley for joining me over the first week. It was also fantastic to be joined by neighbouring parish priests, Mthr Katy Cunliffe at Holy Trinity Shaw, The Revd Denise Owen at St Thomas' Moorside and Fr Graham Hollowood at St James' Barry Street and we also walked to the border St Stephen and All Martyr Oldham – all bordering with St Mark's parish. Thank you to all who have interacted on social media – please continue to do so and tell your friends!

Looking forward to Week Two

Week 2 will begin at St Anne's Royton and will take in the area where the two parishes meet, Royal Oldham Hospital, areas that border with St Mark's Chadderton, St Matthew's Chadderton and St Paul's Royton, Holy Trinity Coldhurst – all in St Anne's parish.

SPONSORED WALK

Huge thank you to those who have sponsored the walk! My hope for the pilgrimage is that over this month there will be a wave of prayer for these parishes, that I will get to know the parishes, the people who live, worship and work here and that we might raise money for our two churches, St Mark's and St Anne's and for Dr Kershaw's Hospice. Please do share this pilgrimage with family, friends and neighbours and encourage them to donate. Please give as generously as you are able.

You can give on

St Mark's A Church Near You Page <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/15990/> or

St Anne's A Church Near You Page <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/15992/>

You are also able to pledge sponsorship on the sheets in church if you prefer not to give online. You can also pay £2 and guess how many miles I will walk to win a prize!

Join us on this journey of the heart around the parishes, support us financially if you are able and pray for our churches as we make this pilgrimage and for me and those who join with me as we take on this physical as well as spiritual challenge! Click [here](#) to watch a video about the pilgrimage presented by Revd Liz.

Prayers and blessings Revd Liz

His Story Our Story Pilgrimage Prayer

His Story - Our Story
A Pilgrimage of Prayer around the streets of the Benefice of Heyside and Royton
18th July to 15th August

Be by my side Creator God,
every step I take
Be before me Saviour God,
every step I take
Be behind me Merciful God,
every step I take
Be within me Strengthening God
every step I take . Amen.

Prayer: Mary Fleeson of Lindisfarne Scriptorium
To follow the pilgrimage on social media
Like on Facebook The Benefice of Heyside and Royton (@StMarkStAnne) and follow on Twitter @StMarkStAnne

Day 8 Sun 25th July: Start at St Anne's church. James' the Apostle

2nd Week and Day 8 2nd week and Day 8 of #HisStoryOurStory pilgrimage starting at St Anne's, with Barbara and Revd Ray Morris as fellow pilgrims. We prayed the pilgrimage prayer before walking down Shaw Rd where we prayed for staff and residents and their families at Oakland's Residential home.



Turning off Shaw Rd & down Edge Lane street praying for all the businesses on Parkside Industrial Estate. More new housing being built in the parish- praying for the builders and for those who will live here. The mill dominating the skyline will soon be gone, changing the landscape. Made me think of the hymn- Through all the changing scenes of life, in trouble and in joy, the praises of my God shall still my heart and tongue employ.



Moving from industrial to green space and along a path less travelled, with "Sherpa" Ray Morris leading the way and clearing the path to find Rosebay Close and parishioner Peter. Praying for Peter, all who live here and all involved in the discernment process, for spiritual directors, Diocesan Directors of Ordinands and all who have difficult decisions to make.

The path made me think of the Robert Frost poem we learnt at Blue Coat - The Road Not Taken

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.



Back on Shaw Rd on #HisStoryOurStory, with St Anne's appearing over the hill. Praying for those who work at the Angel Inn. Beautiful front garden filled with flowers and bees! On rough ground by the side of the road, raspberries are ripening- fruitfulness in unexpected places.



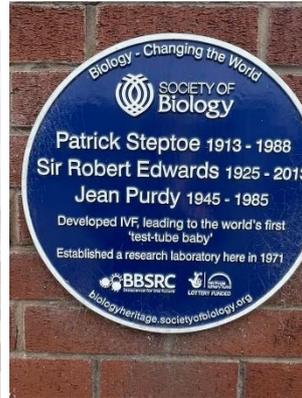
Walking along the streets off the bottom of Turf Lane. praying for all who live here. Jack the Labrador came to greet us, expecting dog treats off his friend Barbara- he was not disappointed! Barbara returned home- thankful for her companionship. Good to have conversations with folk in gardens- praying for Janine who worships at Trinity Methodist church.



On #HisStoryOurStory we met Daniel, Revd Ray's grandson & the Monty Don of Royton! He proudly showed me the garden he planted and cared for and named every single plant! During lockdown he weeded neighbours gardens and gave them sunflowers for their own gardens. Prayers for Daniel, his family & all that live here.

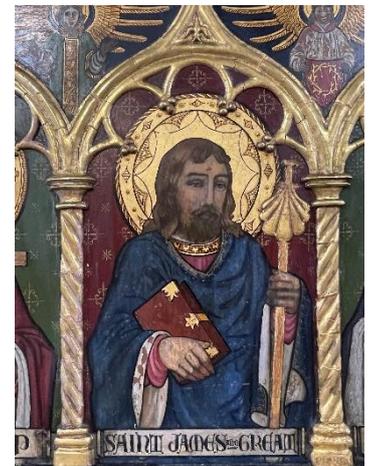


Discovering beautiful pathways to walk along on #HisStoryOurStory. Praying for all staff and patients at Dr.Kershaw's Hospice. Giving thanks for the beacon of light it is in this community. Today is the 43rd birthday of the first "test tube baby" Louise Brown, commemorated on the plaque below.



St James

James, often called 'the Great', was a Galilean fisherman who, with his brother John, was one of the first apostles called by Jesus to follow him. The two brothers were with Jesus at his Transfiguration and with him again in the garden of Gethsemane. They annoyed the other followers of Jesus by asking to sit one on his left and the other on his right when he came into his glory and they were present for the appearances of Christ after the resurrection. James was put to death by the sword on the order of Herod Agrippa, who hoped in vain that, by disposing of the Christian leaders, he could stem the flow of those hearing the good news and becoming followers in the Way. James' martyrdom is believed to have taken place in the year 44. The picture is from the reredos at St Anne's – notice the shell he is carrying.



The Collect

Merciful God, whose holy apostle Saint James, leaving his father and all that he had, was obedient to the calling of your Son Jesus Christ and followed him even to death: help us, forsaking the false attractions of the world, to be ready at all times to answer your call without delay; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

The legend

According to ancient legend, the Iberian Peninsula formed part of the lands where the Apostle Saint James preached Christianity. After he was beheaded in 44 AD, tradition says that his disciples took the body of the saint by boat to Galicia, one of the Spanish lands he preached in. The difficult times during the early years of Christianity and the fact that most of the northern part of the peninsula was sparsely populated would have meant that the exact location of the burial site would have fallen into oblivion. However, around the year 820 remains were found which were attributed by the ecclesiastic and civil authorities to be those of Saint James the Greater. This event, which took place in remote Galician woodland, would give rise to the founding of the present day city of Santiago de Compostela.

Santiago became the attractive goal of a pilgrimage that would, over the centuries, lead pilgrims from all walks of life and via the most diverse itineraries, to the tomb of the only apostle of Jesus, along with Saint Peter in Rome, who is buried on European soil.

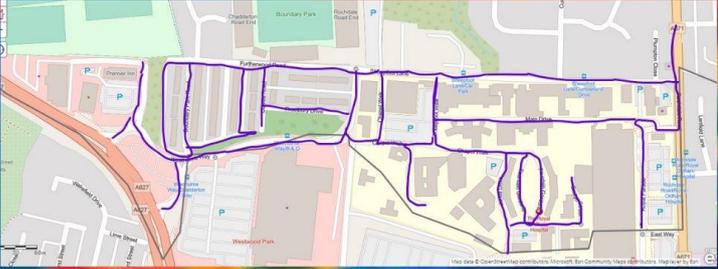
This iconic shell symbol represents the different routes of the Camino de Santiago coming together in one place, the city of Santiago de Compostela. It is also used as a waymarker along the routes to show walkers and pilgrims that they are on the right path (the shell serving as an arrow), helping everyone who walks the route stay on the right path.

Day 9 Monday 26th July: Start at Holy Trinity Coldhurst Anne and Joachim.

Day 9 of #HisStoryOurStory began at Holy Trinity Coldhurst with The Revd David Austin. Praying for David and his two churches, Holy Trinity and St Stephen and All Martyrs Oldham. Praying for Holy Trinity congregation as they face the difficult prospect of closure- prayers for wise discernment.

His Story - Our Story

A Pilgrimage of Prayer
around the streets of the Benefice of Heyside and Royton 18th July to 15th August
Day 9 & Day 10
Sheepfoot Lane
Royal Oldham Hospital
Chapel Walk Fountain Gardens
Step toe Drive Main Drive
Bridge Street Janus Drive
Sheepfoot Walk Royal Parade Topside
Westhume Way
Furtherwood Road Boundary Drive
Colville Road Prestbury Drive
Kenwood Road
Boundary Park Road
Chadderton Way Clayton Green



To follow the pilgrimage on social media
Like on Facebook  The Benefice of Heyside and Royton (@StMarkStAnne)
and follow on Twitter  @StMarkStAnne



#HisStoryOurStory pilgrimage took in Royal Oldham Hospital. Giving thanks for the NHS, for all doctors, nurses and all other healthcare professionals and admin staff working here and all they have done these past months: Praying for strength, hope and peace for them.





A warm welcome at Maggie's Oldham from Norma and the offer of a cool drink. Great to learn more about Maggie's from Trish, the Centre Head and Laura Centre Fundraising Manager. An amazing, invaluable space for patients with cancer and their families to receive holistic support. Praying for all staff, volunteers & all who use the service. A wonderful view of St Anne's!



On #HisStoryOurStory praying in Dexter's Memorial Garden, a special place for families who have lost a baby at any stage of pregnancy and after birth. Praying for all grieving for the loss of a baby. Praying for all the midwives and all Special Care Baby Unit staff at Royal Oldham hospital.



In the chapel on #HisStoryOurStory pilgrimage praying for all the chaplains at Royal Oldham and Kathryn Carmyllie, lead chaplain- giving thanks for their ministry. Walking round every road of the hospital, praying for all patients here that they may know peace.



Walked out of the hospital grounds down Featherstall Road North and down Chadderton Way back towards the bottom of the hospital. Praying for our neighbouring parish, St Mark's Chadderton and Fr Stephen Smith, their parish priest.



Walking past B&Q and the Premier Inn and Clayton Green pub. Praying for those in retail & hospitality as restrictions ease. Thankful for companionship of The Revd David Austin on #HisStoryOurStory today. Sore feet mean I'll walk the last bit of today's route at 9.30am tomorrow morning along Furtherwood Road and surrounding roads.



St Anne and St Joachim. Today the church remembers St Anne and St Joachim the parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In the proto-gospel of James, written in the middle of the second century, the parents of Mary the mother of Jesus are named as Anne and Joachim. The story appears to be based heavily on that of Hannah, the mother of Samuel. The Church maintains their feast day both to emphasise God's plan from the beginning to send his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem fallen humanity; and also to show God's faithfulness in keeping his covenant with all generations.

The Church of St Anne in Jerusalem stands next to the Pools of Bethesda at the start of the Via Dolorosa. People come here to venerate. Since Crusader times this is believed to have been the site of The Blessed Virgin Mary's childhood home. The church has incredible acoustics and when people sing the sound reverberates around the basilica and is breathtakingly beautiful. It has been said that when a choir sings in the church "Heaven begins to ring". Since 1878, it has been administered by the Missionaries of Africa, a catholic order, commonly called "The White Fathers", for the colour of their robes. Fr Peter (pictured) often greets pilgrims at the church.



Day 10 Tuesday 27th July: Start at Boundary Park



Yesterday on #HisStoryOurStory there were some streets left to walk so my pilgrim companion today was Winnie as we walked and prayed those final streets down Furtherwood Rd and all the streets off it down by Oldham Athletic Football Club. Praying for the players and staff. The map is shown under Day 9.

On #HisStoryOurStory pilgrimage walking down Furthwood Rd, Boundary Dr, Colville Rd, Prestbury Dr, Kenwood Rd, Boundary Park Rd and Johnstone Close. Praying for all the residents. Winnie takes notice of every smell and everything she sees- praying for attentiveness like hers.



We met with Ian and Turner as we walked. Ian and his wife Anne have had a long association with Guide Dogs UK, volunteering. Giving thanks for the invaluable work they've done over the years. Winnie made a new friend!



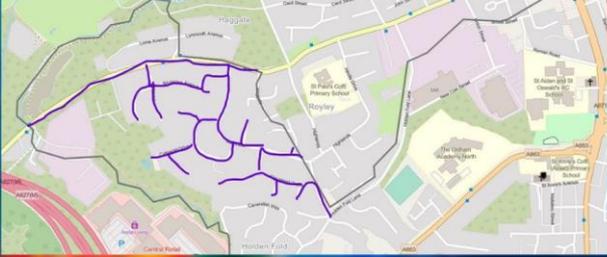
Walking down towards Broadway to where the pilgrimage will begin tomorrow at the top of Netherhey Lane. Meeting up with more dog walkers- giving thanks for open green spaces in our community. Praying for Oldham Athletic in the Community and all the work they do within the community, particularly with young people.



Day 11 Wed 28th July: Start at Netherhey Lane

His Story - Our Story
A Pilgrimage of Prayer
around the streets of the Benefice of Heyside and Royton 18th July to 15th August
Day 11

Netherhey Lane	Holderness Drive
Lineholme	Farholme
Holme Crescent	Cambrian Drive
Cleveland Grove	Mendip Close
Lea View	Malvern Close
Royley Crescent	Cheviot Avenue
Alpine Drive	Cotswold Drive
Dorchester Drive	Marlwood Way
Haggate	Birchinlee Avenue
Stottfield	Lynton Avenue
Lorne Avenue	Hamilton Avenue
	Middleton Road



To follow the pilgrimage on social media
Like on Facebook  The Benefice of Heyside and Royton (@StMarkStAnne)
and follow on Twitter  @StMarkStAnne



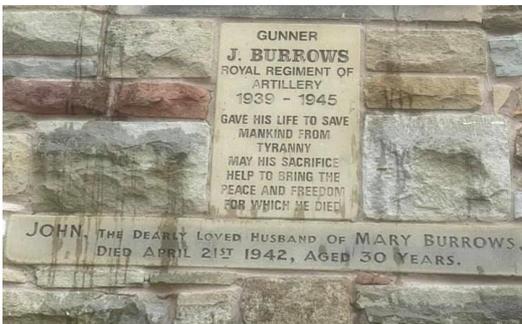
Great to walk with Fr Graham Hollowood today again on [#HisStoryOurStory](#) as we walked down through St Anne's parish with St Matthew's parish on one side and St Paul's Royton on the other. Praying for Revd David Penny who would have been joining us, but for having to isolate.

The clouds darkened then the heavens opened as we walked along every street and curl-de-sac of this route. Praying for all who live here. Good to see Russell from St Anne's as we walked. Praying for Russell, Michelle & their family. A slight break in the

clouds up ahead. The pictures are getting blurry because of the rain on the lens!



Interesting to find a memorial built in a garden wall. Praying for the Burrows family. Discovered a beautiful, large pond at the end of Alpine Drive—we didn't find any ducks even though it's the weather for them! A beautiful oasis of calm and beauty as the thunder and lightening began.



Reflections on the road as the rain continues. Prayers for all who live in the shelters accommodation. Praying for all who work at The Haggate Pub and for the staff, residents and their families of all at Royley House Care Home. Fantastic view of Oldham Athletic.



Amazing steam train on someone's drive! Down near the border with St Matthew's Chadderton, off Middleton Rd. Praying for all at St Matthew's. Huge thanks to Fr Graham Hollowood for his companionship on the way. Last week's walk was brilliant sunshine and 30°, today's walk was torrential rain and thunder storm! Two extremes of weather. Prayers for all at St Paul's Royton.



Day 12 Thursday 29th July: Start at St Mark's Church Mary, Martha & Lazarus

His Story - Our Story

A Pilgrimage of Prayer
around the streets of the Benefice of Heyside and Royton 18th July to 15th August

Day 12

Turf Lane	Daniel Street
Thomas Street	Cornish Way
Penryn Avenue	Penthorpe Drive
Helston Drive	Devenport Crescent
Liskeard Avenue	Polperro Close
Heyside Avenue	Bodmin Close
Clifton Crescent	St Ives Way
Fitton Street	Lily Street
Bude Place	



To follow the pilgrimage on social media

Like on Facebook The Benefice of Heyside and Royton (@StMarkStAnne)

and follow on Twitter @StMarkStAnne



Another damp start to Day 12 of #HisStoryOurStory pilgrimage. Great to be joined by John, Faye, Daniel, Brenda and Alex. Remembering Mary, Martha and Lazarus, companions of Jesus, we prayed the world may come to know the depths of His wisdom, the wonder of His compassion and His power to bring life out of death.



Daniel, our budding gardener found Daniel St! Across the way, amazing wildflowers blooming- thanks to Oldham Council grounds maintenance. We walked along Turf Lane into Booth's garden Centre and Newbank garden centre. Praying for all who work there- giving thanks for their skill. During lockdown we have learnt to appreciate our gardens more- giving

thanks for the joy watching plants grow and bloom brings.



Great to be joined by Revd Brian Hartley and his wife Sheila as we walked round streets named after places in Cornwall! Playing for all who live here. Good to find out more about the history of the area. The Lion Mill dominates the skyline and can be seen from every street. Praying for all the businesses based there and all who work there. A beautiful flowering yucca.



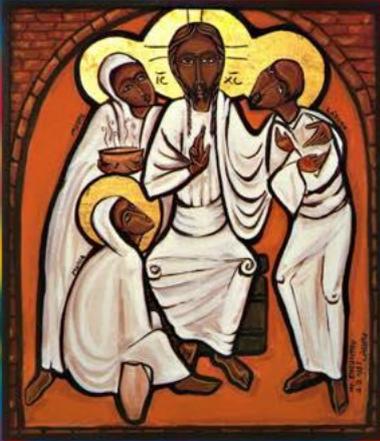
Palm trees against the grey skies! I've discovered there are an awful lot of palm trees in Heyside and Royton! The rain will be a blessing for the beautiful gardens. Praying #HisStoryOurStory pilgrimage may bear much fruit, like the young apple tree. Thankful for the company of fellow pilgrims and the beautiful flowers all around that brightened the day. Thankful for the green spaces around used by the community- praying for all who use them.



Mary, Martha and Lazarus

His Story - Our Story
A Pilgrimage of Prayer
around the streets of the Benefice of Heyside and Royton 18th July to 15th August

Mary, Martha and Lazarus
God our Father,
whose Son enjoyed the love of his friends,
Mary, Martha and Lazarus,
in learning, argument and hospitality:
may we so rejoice in your love
that the world may come to know
the depths of your wisdom, the wonder of your compassion,
and your power to bring life out of death;
through the merits of Jesus Christ, our friend and brother,
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.



To follow the pilgrimage on social media
Like on Facebook  The Benefice of Heyside and Royton (@St MarkStAnne)
and follow on Twitter  @StMarkStAnne

The gospels describe how Mary, Martha and their brother Lazarus gave Jesus hospitality in their home at Bethany outside Jerusalem. Jesus is said to have loved all three. After Lazarus' death, he wept and was moved by the sisters' grief to bring Lazarus back from the dead. Martha recognised Jesus as the Messiah, while Mary anointed his feet and, on another occasion, was commended by Jesus for her attentiveness to his teaching while Martha served. From this, Mary is traditionally taken to be an example of the contemplative life and Martha an example of the active spiritual life.

One of my favourite paintings which was influential in my discernment to the priesthood is Christ in the House of Martha and Mary by Johannes Vermeer – a copy is on the next page. It resides in the National Gallery of Scotland in Edinburgh and every time I visit my son Danny, I go and visit the painting, and spend time in prayer with it.

I first came across the painting many years ago when I was on a prayer course at Katherine House in Salford and we were invited to pray with this painting. As I spent time contemplating the picture I loved the connection between the three people, the bread and the table and I was drawn to the open door in the background. I found myself wanting to know what lay behind it, where it would take me. Later that year I was on an Open Door Retreat and this painting and the story of Mary and Martha were important to me during those 9 weeks and it was then I finally admitted to myself I was feeling called by God to ordained ministry. I knew I had to leave that comfortable and cosy scene behind and see what was beyond that open door and see where it would lead.

Why not take some time to pray with this picture, using a way of prayer called Visio Divina -or use your favourite painting and see where you are drawn in the picture and spend some time praying and discerning what God may be trying to tell you.



Seeing with the Eyes of the Heart

I know that some people have enjoyed seeing some of the pictures that I have taken on this pilgrimage – someone commented that they didn't realise how green it was around here! Many may also have wondered "how can she be praying if she is taking photos all the time?!" The photographs are part of the prayer, and they are a way for me of taking notice of what is around me, a way of focusing, a way of framing what I see, a way of reflecting on what is going on for me as I notice what I have included in a photo and what I have left out, a way of entering into a prayer of contemplation and a way of journaling my prayer.

I recently read a book by Christine Valters Paintner called "Eyes of the Heart – photography as a Christian Contemplative Practice." She begins with a sentence of scripture "May the eyes of your heart be enlightened." Ephesians 1:18

Christine describes how for her photography has been a way to see more deeply but that when she embraced monastic spirituality as a Benedictine oblate (someone who though not a nun or monk have individually affiliated themselves with a monastic community and lives by the rule of that monastic order in their lives.) she began to see photography as a way to slow down and gaze deeply, noticing things she missed in her rushed life. For her the camera provided "an encounter with an eternal moment – that place in which I was able to suddenly become so present to what I was gazing upon that I lost track of time, allowed eternity to break in. It became a tool for deeper vision, supporting and enlivening contemplative seeing." (pg 2, Eyes of the Heart Christine Valters Painter; Sorin Books). This is my experience too. Some abridged extracts from the book are below.

Learning the Art of Visio Divina

Why not try going for a contemplative awareness walk around where we live or on your favourite walk with a camera or your camera phone.

- Begin your walk with a prayer – perhaps the pilgrimage prayer. Contemplative walking doesn't necessarily mean walking slowly but slow down enough to see what is around you, notice the detail of things – the many shades of the flowers, the texture of bark on the trees, architectural details on

houses and even patterns on manhole covers. You aren't looking for something beautiful and you mustn't worry about how good a photographer you are – you are trying to be present to the moment, to life as it is and respond to the call of the world to your heart, and in the process you will discover beauty.

- Each contemplative photographic journey will be like a mini-pilgrimage. We don't have to travel far away to have a transformative experience, monastic wisdom tells us that the sacred is right here, right now, and if we can't see it before us, travelling around the world won't change things. Ignatian spirituality encourages us to find God in all things.

- If you go on a contemplative walk and take some pictures, a few days later choose one of your pictures to pray with using a process of Visio Divina – Sacred Seeing. This way of prayer uses an adaptation of the four movements of Lectio Divina to a prayer of “gazing”.

- Just as in Lectio Divina, a way of prayer were we read a bible passage slowly a number of times and listen out for a word or phrase that calls to us in that moment, with Visio Divina we notice which of our images is stirring a response in us, or calling for more time for us to dwell with it. You can print out the picture or view it on your tablet or computer. This will be like the sacred text for your time of prayer.

- As you would with any time of prayer, spend some time in preparation, light a candle, perhaps spend some time noticing your breathing, don't alter it just become aware of your breathing. Each time you breathe in, breathe in the love of God, as you breathe out, breathe out all that is getting in the way of you and God. Feel yourself being filled with the love of God. As you slowly descend from your head to your heart open your eyes and cast a gentle gaze upon your photo with the eyes of your heart. Take a few moments to allow your eyes to wander over the whole landscape of the image, exploring the shapes, colours, contours, details and symbols. Allow yourself to become present to the details of the image.

- Gradually notice if there is a place on the photo where your eye is being invited to rest. Don't think this through too much. Notice where you are being drawn to and where you are avoiding.

- What is it that is calling to you on the image? Is it a colour, a symbol a person or an expression. Take a few moments to simply be present to this in a gentle way.

- Begin to allow this place on the photo to unfold in your imagination. You might want to close your eyes again and notice what memories, images, and feelings are stirred within you. Allow space within yourself for these to emerge, simply noticing your experience and being present to what is stirring. Rest here for a few moments without judgement.

- Slowly begin to notice if an invitation begins to emerge from these memories, feelings, and images moving in you. In the concrete circumstances of your life right now, what awareness or action is God calling you to? What is my invitation in this moment of my life? How am I being called to respond? Take a few more moments resting with this invitation.

- Connect to your breath once more. Breathe in gratitude for whatever has been revealed. Breathe out and release the images moving within you and rest for a few moments in gratitude, simply relishing the experience of stillness and being in the presence of God.

- In these final moments of prayer, allow your breath to slowly and gently bring your awareness back to the room. As you open your eyes, take another moment to gaze upon your photo and take it in as a whole. See if there is anything else you notice right now, and then bring your meditation to a close. Now take a few moments to write any brief reflections in your journal.

- If you practice this you will find that over time when you go on your contemplative walks you will take the spirit of the Visio Divina with you as you walk and photograph and not just in reflecting in afterwards. As you receive your images, pay attention to moments that seem to shimmer and make space within your heart to be with whatever feelings or memories these stir, trusting that God is at work in the process. Let your camera be a window on to a new way of seeing.

Day 13 Friday 30th July

A rest day from walking.

Day 14 Saturday 31st July

Ignatius of Loyola

A rest day from walking.

Born in 1491, the son of a Basque nobleman, Ignatius served as a soldier and was wounded at the siege of Pamplona in 1521. During his convalescence he read a Life of Christ, was converted and lived a life of prayer and penance, during which he wrote the first draft of his Spiritual Exercises. He gathered six disciples, and together they took vows of poverty and chastity and promised to serve the Church either by preaching in Palestine or in other ways that the Pope thought fit. By 1540, Ignatius had won papal approval for his embryonic order and the Society of Jesus was born. For the next sixteen years he directed the work of the Jesuits as it spread around the world, until his sudden death on this day in 1556.



He gathered six disciples, and together they took vows of poverty and chastity and promised to serve the Church either by preaching in Palestine or in other ways that the Pope thought fit. By 1540, Ignatius had won papal approval for his embryonic order and the Society of Jesus was born. For the next sixteen years he directed the work of the Jesuits as it spread around the world, until his sudden death on this day in 1556.

The Examen – The Review of the Day

Fr Alan Butler, the priest at St Mary's who encouraged my vocation was greatly influenced by Ignatian Spirituality and was a wonderful teacher. He would regularly lead us in Imaginative Contemplation, a way of prayer that Ignatius taught and wrote about. More of that another day! Another way of Ignatian Prayer is the Examen - often called the review of the day. I find that this way of prayer helps me to recognise God at work in my life, in others and on creation. As I practice this way of prayer I find I am recognising God's presence or God's work not just upon reflection in prayer but also in the moment as I go about my daily life. So thankful for all that Alan taught me.

At the end of the day we often find ourselves mulling over our experiences, re-living the events of the day. This reflection, which can be done at any time of the day, builds on this natural tendency to play back what's been going on in our lives. But, instead of making our own analysis and judgement, we ask God to show us how the Creative and Life-giving Spirit has been working in the experiences of our lives. We can reflect back over a day, over a week, or even a year. Why not try this way of prayer looking back over the day, this past week, or even over the time of lockdown.

Prepare yourself for a time of prayer, light a candle and take some time to still yourself. "Be still and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10

Reviewing the day in God's Presence

✠ Let the day/week/time of lockdown 'play back'. First, allow the moments you **enjoyed** to come to the surface. Don't force it. Simply wait and let what comes, come. Let the **feelings** of these moments and events be really felt. Re-visit the experience, re-live it, take time to relish it. Be thankful!

✠ Ask God for light to see the time you are reviewing as **God** wants you to see it. "*Lord that I may see!*" Mark 10:51

✠ Let the day/week/period of time 'play back' again, this time trying to become more aware of the various **moods** and **feelings** of the weekend, especially where there were **shifts of mood**.

Let yourself feel again what you felt then.

Where did these moods or feelings come from? Where did these moods or feelings take you?

What were the creative, life-giving moments? Where did you feel connected, in tune, going with the flow, most fully alive, most truly yourself? What were the destructive, life-denying moments?

Where did you feel disconnected, out of kilter, going against the grain, deadened, out of touch with yourself? What is being revealed to you?

✠ Be **thankful** for all that's leading you to life.

✠ What do you want to own and express which needs **healing** and **redeeming**? Does any of this have the potential to become life-giving, or do you need to let it go?

✠ What choices does this reflection time reveal to you about tomorrow?

✠ **Ask God** for what you want and need.

"For all that has been, thanks. To all that shall be, yes!" Dag Hammarskjöld