

Paths to Spiritual Growth



Week 1. Retreat

- What does the word 'retreat' mean to you? Have you ever been on one?

- Read John 1:1-14

- John speaks of Jesus as the Word made flesh. Where did the 'Word' come from?

'John immediately asserts Christ's divinity...which is revealed in Jesus, who enables us to learn true humanity as he demonstrates the 'with God life.'

(p.1938 paraphrase NRSV Spiritual Formation Bible)

- Thinking of Jesus' life; how did he stay close to God whilst being among people?

- Is solitude and silence necessary?

- What is the purpose of a Retreat?

- What do you do whilst on a Retreat?

- Where might you go for a Retreat?

- How might the experience of a Retreat help you?

- Why might planning for a Retreat be important?

- What resources do you think you would need?

- Why might it be a good idea to have a basic, uncomplicated timetable? What might that look like?

'Taking time out to be with God is essential if we are to stay close to him and grow in our faith.'

- After thinking about all the above, do you think you might consider a Retreat yourself?

- Close in prayer for one another.

Retreat = Withdrawal, Solitude, Peace, Privacy, Sanctuary, Refuge

'Time set aside to ponder big questions of life whilst away from the ordinary'

'Seek a rhythm that moves you from prayer to contemplation, to action & then back to prayer.'

[Benedict's Way : Pratt & Holman OSB : p.17 : Loyola Press : 2000]

Example of a Retreat

Where : Alone for the day in the Forest

Resources to consider : Bible, Notebook, Creative resources, Food & Drink

Timetable : Morning - Walk, Pray, Read chosen Bible passage slowly & prayerfully, write down / draw / paint anything that comes to mind, ponder what God might be saying. Afternoon - repeat or develop further the themes that have emerged from the morning. Intersperse the day with appropriate breaks for drinks and lunch.

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Helpful Books

One Day Creative Retreat Activity Book available from : www.lindisfarne-scriptorium.co.uk

Soul Space : Margaret Silf : SPCK : 2002

Creative Ideas for Seasonal Retreats : Stephen Spencer : Canterbury Press : 2015

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Places to go for a Retreat led by someone else

Hopeweavers offer creative Day Retreats locally www.hopeweavers.co.uk

<https://www.winchester.anglican.org/documents/places-be-and-retreat-centres/>

Wisdom House, Romsey offers a range of Days for learning & Retreat (also has an open access Labyrinth) www.wisdomhouseromsey.org.uk

St Beunos in N Wales offers more structured guided residential Retreats : pathwaystogod.org/org/st-beunos

Lee Abbey in Devon offers a wide range of teaching & space for prayer & reflection : leeabbey.org.uk

The Greenhouse in Poole & St Dominic's Priory, Lymington both offer quiet spaces for personal reflection.

<https://www.the-greenhouse.org/>

<https://www.dominicansisters.net/>



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