

# Lent Course : Inspiring Vision



- The course considers how the visual arts provide inspiration and pathways to prayer.
- The Archbishop of Canterbury and Dame Patricia Routledge are amongst the guest contributors.
- The Trinity, Challenging Times, Discipleship, Prayers of Praise, Prayers as Life evolves and the Experience of Forgiveness are all explored across 6 weeks of reflection, discussion and listening.

Through Lent 2018, as a central aspect of our **Diocesan Year of Prayer**, we have asked six people to choose their favourite painting, picture, or work of art and to explain what their choice says about prayer.

Contributors include the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dame Patricia Routledge, Lucy Winkett (Vicar of St James, Piccadilly), Caroline Spelman (First Estates Commissioner) and Charles Harrison (Director of Music at Chichester Cathedral). For each week of Lent there is a chosen painting, a podcast, a special wall chart and notes for leaders and individuals following the course.

The opening introductory session is presented by the Bishop of Chichester. Each week, Lent groups and individuals are invited to reflect on the chosen painting by listening to a specially produced podcast (of around 15 minutes) in which the guest explains the significance to them personally of the chosen work. But in so doing, the guests raise questions for all of us about our own prayer

life and how our prayers develop as we mature, journey on our pilgrimage and discover more about the divine mystery as God speaks to us in good times and bad.

An accompanying set of notes for each session suggest Scripture readings and exercises for us in response to what we see and hear. These resources will all be available for download via the Diocesan website, or can be ordered to print through our online shop.

By the end of the six weeks we hope that each participant's focus on their own prayer life will have been invigorated and challenged as a key aspect of our Year of Prayer.

## Lent Course : Outline Summary

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### WEEK ONE

#### Inspiring Vision. Prayer and the Trinity

Guest : *The Bishop of Chichester*

Bishop Martin introduces the Lent Course and reveals his chosen painting. We will be challenged to look at how The Trinity inspires our prayer life and how the different persons of the Trinity guide and cajole us in our spiritual lives.

### WEEK TWO

#### Prayer in Challenging Times

Guest : *Lucy Winkett*

Writer and Broadcaster Lucy Winkett, formerly at St Paul's Cathedral and now Rector of St James, Piccadilly encourages us to explore prayer in difficult times on our journey and what scripture says to us about staying close to God, even when we feel alone. Her chosen painting has inspired her to think about how to wrestle with prayer in difficult times.

### WEEK THREE

#### Prayer and Discipleship

Guest : *The Archbishop of Canterbury*

Justin Welby reveals his favourite painting on the theme of prayer. In a wide-ranging podcast, the Archbishop is candid about the difficulties of praying as a disciple of Jesus in hugely challenging times. He talks about the importance of a rule of life and how to pray on the move. Discipleship is intrinsic to the Christian pilgrimage.

### WEEK FOUR

#### Prayer as life evolves

Guest : *Dame Patricia Routledge*

After a lifetime in the theatre and as one of the best known faces on British television, Dame Patricia introduces her favourite painting and what it says to her about her prayer life. In a very personal interview she explores how, as life develops and changes, our prayer life inevitably reflects that as we mature and grow older. And it's not always easy!

### WEEK FIVE

#### The Joy and Excitement of Prayer

Guest : *Charles Harrison*

Prayers of praise surprisingly don't come easily and yet, in the Old Testament Wisdom Literature, there are many clues as to why prayers should be immersed in gratitude and thanksgiving to God our creator and redeemer. Charles believes that music inevitably enhances our sense of prayerfulness and chooses his favourite visual image to reflect this.

### WEEK SIX

#### Prayer, Repentance & Forgiveness. Holy Week Approaches

Guest : *Dame Caroline Spelman*

As Holy Week approaches, Dame Caroline takes some time out to reflect on her favourite work of art and the parable it evokes. Repentance and Forgiveness often dominate the headlines but everyone knows the challenge posed by both is hardly an easy one! How do we forgive others? Do we ourselves need to be forgiven? How does prayer play a part? And can we know God's forgiveness?