

pilgrim journeys



FREE SAMPLER

40 DAYS OF
REFLECTIONS ON
**THE LORD'S
PRAYER**

STEVEN CROFT



INTRODUCTION

All over the world, every day, Christians pray the Lord's Prayer. The words are powerful. The prayer reshapes our lives in sorrow and in joy. The whole of the Christian gospel is here.

Pilgrim Journeys invites you to spend 40 days reflecting on more of what this means.

The Church takes 50 days to celebrate Easter. You might want to use these reflections for the 40 days from Easter Day to Ascension. You can use them to help you prepare for baptism and confirmation or as a way of going deeper in the Way of Christ.

In 2016 we invited the whole Church to pray *Thy Kingdom Come* between Ascension and Pentecost. That invitation has become an annual global prayer movement. We hope and pray that *Pilgrim Journeys* will help the Church prepare for *Thy Kingdom Come* and be a way of teaching those who come to faith what this great prayer of Jesus means.

However you read this Pilgrim Journey, welcome! May the Lord bless you as you make his prayer your prayer in the coming days.

Archbishops Justin Welby and John Sentamu

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Pilgrim Journeys: The Lord's Prayer is ideal for anyone to use daily during Easter – starting from Easter Day* and finishing 40 days later on Ascension Day – though it can be used at any time of year.

The 40 daily reflections on The Lord's Prayer are grouped in eight chapters of five days on each line. Each day offers:

- A **theme** linked to the line of the Lord's Prayer
- A short Bible **reading** that explores the theme
- An invitation to **reflect** on the reading
- A prompt to **pause** and consider what this might mean for you
- A suggestion of how to **pray**.

Across each group of five days we will explore what each line of the prayer tells us about the Christian vision for human life. We will also ponder how this line of the prayer might shape our lives and our discipleship.

At the end, you will find some possible next steps for you on your discipleship journey, as well as further resources including other *Pilgrim* materials for you to explore.

Those preparing for baptism, confirmation or the renewal of baptism promises may find this *Pilgrim Journey* helpful as part of their preparation for that commitment. Members of *Pilgrim* groups spending six weeks exploring *The Lord's Prayer* (Book 4) together could use this daily material in between sessions.

** Easter Day falls on the following dates over the coming years:
21 April in 2019; 12 April in 2020; 4 April in 2021; 17 April in 2022;
9 April in 2023; 31 March in 2024.*



DAY 1

FORTY DAYS OF EASTER

READ Acts 1.1–3

‘After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over the course of forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.’

REFLECT

In the early Church, most candidates were baptized at Easter. In baptism, we die with Christ and rise again to the joy of new and eternal life with God.

The Church celebrates Easter for 50 days: 40 days between Easter and Ascension and then 10 more days looking forward to Pentecost and the gift of the Spirit.

In this Easter season, the Church gives to the newly baptized all that we need to grow in faith and to live a good and fruitful life. One of the most important of those gifts is the Lord’s Prayer.

Many today learn the kingdom prayer by heart as children, but then never understand its meaning as adults. In the early Church, new Christians would be taught the prayer for the first time just after baptism as one of the great mysteries of the faith. Come to the Lord’s Prayer in this season with fresh eyes and in the joy of Easter.

PAUSE

Remember the earliest time you heard and used this prayer. What does it mean to you?

PRAY

Pray the Lord’s Prayer slowly and carefully today and each day in the Easter season.



DAY 2

FATHER

READ Matthew 6.7–15

‘Pray then in this way: “Our Father in heaven...”’

REFLECT

There are just 63 words in the Lord’s Prayer in contemporary English. They are meant to be said by every disciple every day. The words have power to shape the deepest places in our lives. They are the gospel – the good news. They are life-giving medicine for hungry, confused and weary souls.

These first four words help us find our place again each day in the vastness of the universe. We are

not here by chance, as random collections of atoms in infinite space. We are people and we are called into a relationship with our creator.

That relationship is defined by love: not our weak love for God but God’s strong love for us. The love of a Father for his children. God made you. God loves you powerfully and personally. God calls us by name into a relationship of love and trust, which forms us and recreates us as God’s children: ‘Our Father in heaven’.

PAUSE

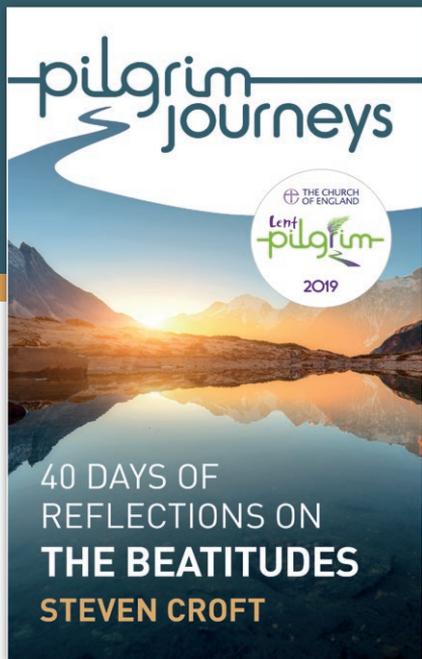
Set an alarm on your phone every hour today. When it sounds, simply say these four words: ‘Our Father in heaven’. What do you notice?

PRAY

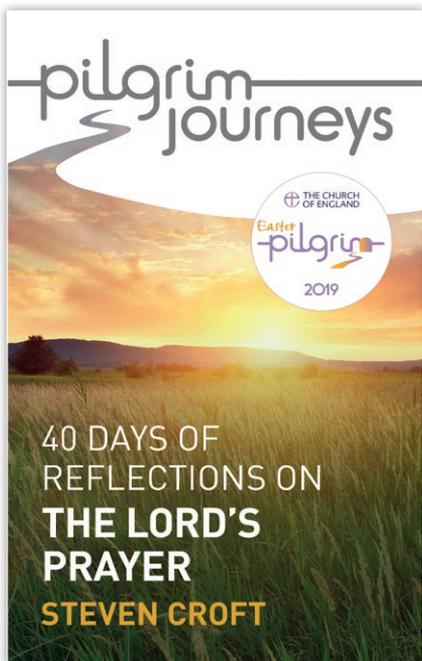
Almighty God, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in you: pour your love into our hearts and draw us to yourself...

Collect for the Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

TAKE A PILGRIM JOURNEY THIS LENT & EASTER



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Explore some of the Bible's most beloved texts - the Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer - with two new booklets by Bishop Steven Croft. Each booklet offers 40 short daily Bible reflections, prayers, and suggestions for how you might respond to Jesus' teachings in your own life.

The Pilgrim Journeys booklets are ideal daily companions for anyone seeking to grow in the Christian faith. They are also suitable for those preparing for baptism or confirmation - including those using the Pilgrim discipleship course - but can be used by anyone at any stage of their Christian journey.

PRAISE FOR OUR 2018 #LIVELENT CAMPAIGN:

In independent research, 78% of users found the #LifeLent reflections very helpful or extremely helpful in bringing them closer to God and supporting their Christian faith.

"Life is so busy. It was nice to have something once a day that I could open up, generally at work. It was structured in the way it took you through. I really appreciated that."

"It made Lent a significant time for me, whereas in the past I haven't used it as a particular time to reflect. It's changed my view of Lent."

Available in singles, packs of 10 and packs of 50
from www.chpublishing.co.uk

Find out more about the Church of England's
official campaign for Lent and Easter 2019 at
www.churchofengland.org/lent.