



COME AWAY

A HALF DAY RETREAT

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PREPARATION

PRACTICAL AND SPIRITUAL

As we begin, spend some time asking yourself what are you being invited to come away from?

Your work, your friends, your family, that situation which is causing you distress, that situation which is causing you joy?

If you are using this guidebook on a PDF reader you can use the section below to journal your thoughts.

Jesus said to them, 'Come away with me.

Let us go alone to a quiet place and rest for a while.'

Many people were coming and going. They could not even eat.

So they went away in a boat to a lonely place by themselves.

MARK 6: 31 - 32

Welcome to this guided retreat from Monastic Retreats. On the following few pages you can find content to help you structure a half day experience for yourself. This retreat is an invitation. An invitation to pause, to rest, to come away.

This guide is split into the following sections;

1. Preparation, both practical and spiritual,
2. Worship,
3. Lectio Divina, Sacred reading,
4. Visio Divina, Sacred seeing,
5. Contemplation,
6. Journalling

May you encounter the Lord in real and beautiful ways over the next few hours.

David

David Towns

Monastic Retreats

Jesus is inviting you to come away.

To leave it all for these next few hours.

It will still be there for you when you return but for now let's leave them in the hands of the Lord and consecrate this time and space to Him as we prepare for this time of retreat.

PREPARATION

PRACTICAL AND SPIRITUAL

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BEFORE WE BEGIN

You may be partaking in this retreat at a monastery or retreat house or you may be in your own home. Wherever you are, begin this time by setting aside any distractions such as your phone or anything that may prompt you to return to other responsibilities. It will all still be there later.

Entrust all your demands and dependants into the Lord's hands and create a space that allows you to focus on Him. You may wish to light a candle or burn some incense. Make your space feel special and sacred. It is here today that you will encounter the living Christ.

Loving and faithful God,

we entrust into your care our family and friends, our commitments and concerns.

We surrender them completely into your care for the next few hours.

O, Lord take in your hands all that is in our hearts, that we may hear your voice clearly and be restored and refreshed in you.

Come and cleanse this space, that it may be a suitable place for your presence.

Amen.

WHAT YOU MAY NEED

The following things may be useful to have to hand

- 1. Bible**
- 2. Journal and pen**
- 3. Something to play the accompanying Spotify play-list**

(The retreat playlist can be found [here](#).)

SUGGESTED TIMETABLE

| | |
|------------|-------------------------------|
| 9:00am - | Settling and Preparation |
| 9:45am - | Worship |
| 10:15am - | Lectio Divina |
| 10:45am - | Lectio Visio |
| 11:00 am - | Coffee break and walk |
| 11:30 am - | Contemplation and Journalling |
| 12:30 pm - | Closing reflections |

CONFESSION

A candle may be lit and a time of reflective silence kept.

Almighty and most merciful Father,

we have wandered and strayed from your ways like lost sheep.

We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts.

We have offended against your holy laws.

We have left undone those things that we ought to have done;

and we have done those things that we ought not to have done;

and there is no health in us.

But you, O Lord, have mercy upon us sinners.

Spare those who confess their faults.

Restore those who are penitent,

according to your promises declared to mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake,

that we may live a disciplined, righteous and godly life,

to the glory of your holy name.

Amen.

SLOWING DOWN AND ENTERING IN

Listen to the first two songs on the retreat play-list, or select some songs of your own.



- The More I Seek You

- Just Be

As you listen to them think about the lyrics and turn them into your prayer for this time with the Lord.

The lyrics are included on the next two pages.

PREPARATION

PRACTICAL AND SPIRITUAL

SONG: THE MORE I SEEK YOU

The more I seek you

The more I find you

The more I find you, the more I love you

I want to sit at your feet

Drink from the cup in your hand

Lay back against you and breath, feel your heart beat

This love is so deep, it's more than I can stand

I melt in your peace, it's overwhelming

The more I seek you

The more I find you

The more I find you, the more I love you

I want to sit at your feet

Drink from the cup in your hand

Lay back against you and breath, feel your heart beat

This love is so deep, it's more than I can stand

I melt in your peace, it's overwhelming

I want to sit at your feet

Drink from the cup in your hand

Lay back against you and breath, feel your heart beat

This love is so deep, it's more than I can stand

I melt in your peace, it's overwhelming, oh your love is overwhelming me

And now my love, your love is overwhelming me, over me

Author : Zach Neese

From the album 'The more I seek you' by Gateway Worship

PREPARATION

PRACTICAL AND SPIRITUAL

SONG: JUST BE

Everything else can wait

I've come to seek Your face

So everything else can wait

I'm here for You, I want to

Just be here at Your feet

Just be here on my knees

Here in Your presence, I am complete

Jesus, You're all that I need

Everything else can wait

I've come to seek Your face

So everything else can wait

I'm here for You, I want to

Just be here at Your feet

Just be here on my knees

Here in Your presence, I am complete

Jesus, You're all that I need

There's nothing I want more

'Cause nothing matters more

There's nothing I want more, God

'Cause nothing matters more, no

There's nothing I want more, more than You, oh

'Cause nothing matters more, oh

There's nothing I want more, oh

'Cause nothing matters more

Author : Kim Walker Smith

Single: 'Just be'

WORSHIP

AND ADORATION

Now that we have confessed our failings, entrusted all our cares and concerns to God and began to slow down we are going to turn our attention to the Lord in Worship. On the following few pages are three worship ideas for you to try.

ONE: I PRAISE YOU BECAUSE

Look at the below phrases. Sit with each, one at a time and add your own testimony or reflections to each phrase, remember God's goodness in your life and offer Him your worship.

I praise you because You are Wonderful ... you are full of wonder.

I praise you because You are the Lion of Judah ... you cannot be tamed.

I praise you because You are the I AM You are everything.

I praise you because You are the counsellor ... probing and guiding.

I praise you because You are the Creator ... the maker of the heavens and the earth.

I praise you because You are Almighty ... you have the power to heal the body and the mind.

I praise you because You are the Lord ... good and fair and worthy of our labour.

I praise you because You are the Bread of Life ... you sustain me and give me what I need to live each day.

I praise you because You are the Alpha and Omega ... where I begin and where I end.

I praise you because You are my high place ... I hide in your shadows and take rest in your strength.

I praise you because You are King of Kings ... you are powerful and awesome ... I must kneel in your presence.

I praise you because You are able ... you are huge and you can do anything, anytime.

I praise you because You are the Deliverer ... you have freed me from my oppressors.

WORSHIP

AND ADORATION

TWO: PRAYER LABYRINTH

Sit comfortably, be still and gently pray: ***I place myself in your presence O Lord, my God.***

- When you are ready...Slowly trace the labyrinth path (*on the following page*) with a finger, use a finger on the hand that you do not write with, just let your thoughts come to the surface and let them flow... Jesus is with you every step of the way, you are never alone. You are always loved by God.
- When you reach the centre...Consider your thoughts... Stay in the centre for a while and spend some time in prayer and reflection receiving God's love and blessing.
- When you are ready...Return along the same path... Return gratefully, prayerfully ... you might like to sing or say aloud a line from the psalms or a favourite hymn.
- As you exit the labyrinth give thanks and praise to God:



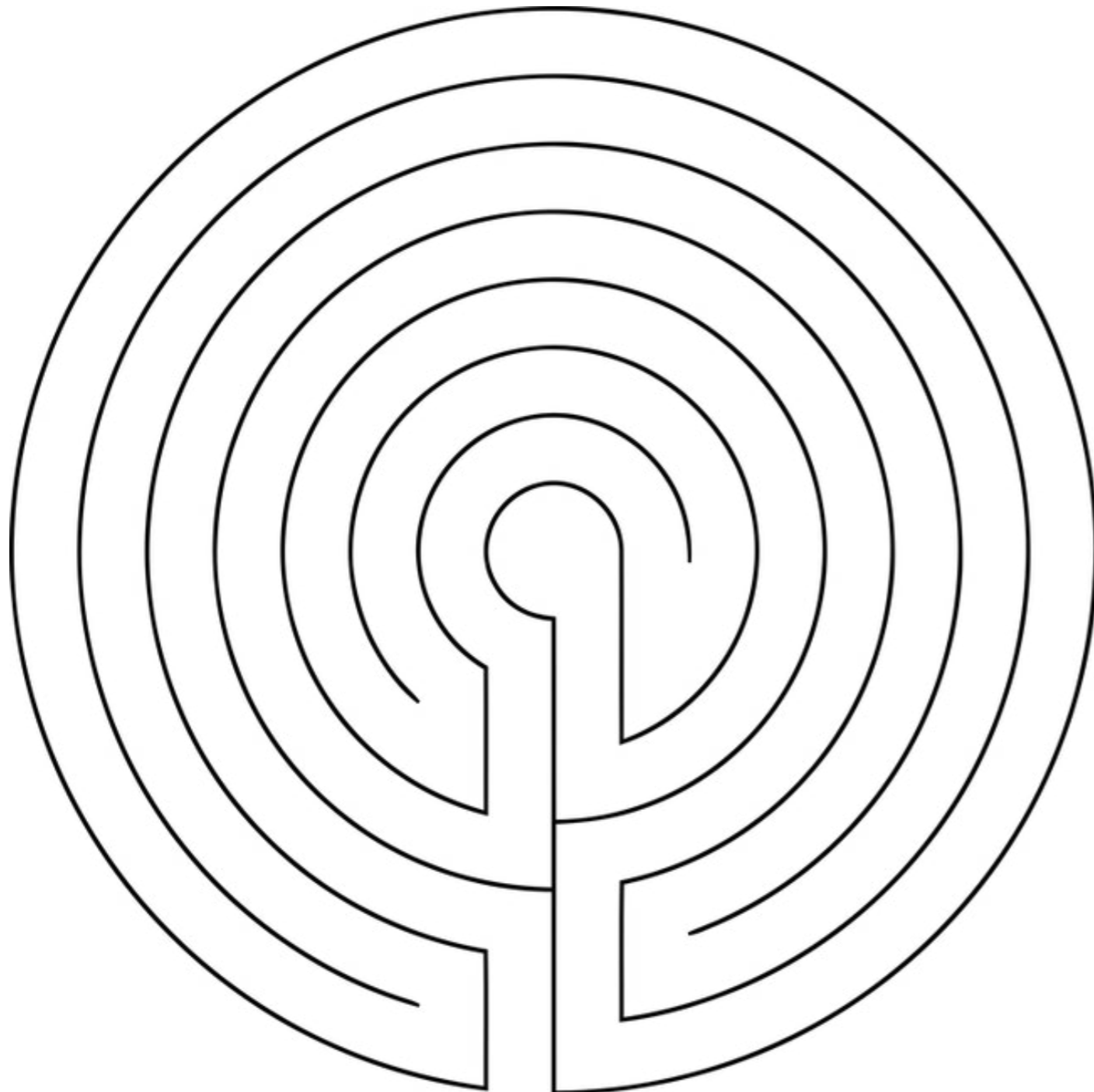
A Prayer Labyrinth on the island of Iona

THREE: WRITING YOUR OWN PSALM

Read *Psalm 136:1-17; 21-26* to yourself. Now rewrite the Psalm using the prompts below.

Give thanks ... His love endures forever

- [1] Give thanks to the Lord, for he is _____; His love endures forever.
- [2] who alone _____; His love endures forever.
- [3] who created _____; His love endures forever.
- [4] who _____; His love endures forever.
- [5] Give thanks to God, for he is _____; His love endures forever.
- [6] who loves _____; His love endures forever.
- [7] who _____; His love endures forever.
- [8] who promises _____; His love endures forever.
- [9] Give thanks to the Lord, for he is _____; His love endures forever.
- [10] who does _____; His love endures forever.
- [11] who made _____; His love endures forever.
- [12] who sustains _____; His love endures forever.
- [13] Give thanks to the Lord, for he is _____; His love endures forever.
- [14] who by his _____; His love endures forever.
- [15] who laughs _____; His love endures forever.
- [16] who weeps _____; His love endures forever.
- [17] Give thanks to the Lord, for he is _____, His love endures forever.



WORSHIP

AND ADORATION

WORSHIP

AND ADORATION

- [18] who gave _____; His love endures forever.
- [19] who made _____; His love endures forever.
- [20] and brings _____; His love endures forever.
- [21] Give thanks to God, for he is _____; His love endures forever.
- [22] who loves _____; His love endures forever.
- [23] who teaches _____; His love endures forever.
- [24] who forgives _____; His love endures forever.
- [25] Give thanks to the Creator, for he is _____; His love endures forever.
- [26] who formed _____; His love endures forever.
- [27] who directed _____, His love endures forever.
- [28] who chose _____; His love endures forever.
- [29] Give thanks to the Lord, for he is _____, His love endures forever.
- [30] who freed _____, His love endures forever.
- [31] who provides _____; His love endures forever.
- [32] who stands _____; His love endures forever.
- [33] Give thanks to God, for he is _____; His love endures forever.

MUSIC: TO WORSHIP

As part of your worship time you may also want to listen to the next two tracks on the retreat play -list.



- Holy, Holy, Holy
- Come Away

SONG: HOLY HOLY HOLY

Holy, holy, holy
Lord God Almighty
Early in the morning
My song shall rise to Thee

Holy, holy, holy
Merciful and mighty
God in three persons
Blessed Trinity

Holy, holy, holy
All the saints adore Thee
Casting down their golden crowns
Around the glassy sea

Cherubim and Seraphim
Falling down before Thee
Who was and is and
Evermore shall be

Holy, holy, holy
Though the darkness hide Thee
Though the eyes of sinful men
Thy glory may not see

Lord only Thou art holy
There is none beside Thee
Perfect in power
Love and purity

I bow before Thee, King of glory
Holy are You, Lord, none beside Thee
Perfect in power, my God forever
You were and are and You will be

I bow before Thee, King of glory
Holy are You Lord, none beside Thee
Perfect in power, my God forever
You were and are and You will be

Holy, holy, holy
Lord God Almighty
All Thy works shall praise Thy name
In earth and sky and sea

Holy, holy, holy
Merciful and mighty
God in three persons
Blessed Trinity

I stand before Thee, King of glory
Holy are You, Lord, none beside Thee
Perfect in power, my God forever
You were and are and You will be

I stand before Thee, King of glory
Holy are You, Lord, none beside Thee
Perfect in power, my God forever
You were and are and You will be (you were)

Author : Kevin Jones. Shane Bernard

Hymn: Reginald Heber (1826)

From the album 'Hymns Live' by Shane and Shane

SONG: COME AWAY

I love it when you open up
It's enough when you come to me
Just let me see the beauty of your heart

Let us make a memory
that lasts for all eternity
A story of love remembered
for all the ages to come
Awaken love inside of me
and rid my heart of unbelief
Put your strength inside of me
to love you rightly, oh Jesus

Whisper your love in my ear
I want to know You, I want to know You

Your love
It never fails
It's lasted through the ages
It calls out to my heart and says
Come away, just come away

Just come away, come away, come away

Let me hear it again
The voice of the One who dwells inside
Let me hear it again
The sound of many waters
Let me hear it again

Author : Brian Mcleery

From the album 'Come Away'

SACRED READING

Lectio Divina is a traditional monastic practice of scriptural reading, meditation and prayer intended to promote communion with God. Today we will follow a five step approach to lectio.

1. Silencio (silence)

Spend a few moments now silencing and settling your soul, you may wish to light a candle and spend a few moments in quiet. Breathe slowly and deeply. You also may wish to listen to the next instrumental track on the retreat play-list.



- Come Away (Instrumental)

2. Lectio (reading)

For today's lectio exercise we are going to focus on Mark 6: 30 - 44 Read the following passage through prayerfully and slowly a few times.

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest."

So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. "This is a remote place," they said, "and it's already very late. Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat."

But he answered, "You give them something to eat."

They said to him, "That would take more than half a year's wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?"

"How many loaves do you have?" He asked. "Go and see."

When they found out, they said, "Five—and two fish."

LECTIO DIVINA

SACRED READING

VISIO DIVINA

SACRED SEEING

Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.

3. Meditatio (meditation)

Now you have read the passage begin to meditate on it. There is no rush. What words or phrases feel highlighted to you? Where do you see yourself in the passage? Use your imagination to fully engage in the text. Sit with the text using all your senses.

4. Oratio (prayer)

Still holding this passage in your mind, begin to talk to God about it. What from the text prompts worship, what prompts conviction? Speak to the Lord out of what he has revealed through this passage.

5. Contemplatio (contemplation)

There is nothing better after having a good meal than “resting” in the company you are with. Do not get up from the table right away. Just spend these last few moment in silence, completely content, being with God.

When you feel comfortable to proceed, again there is no rush, you may wish to play the next track on the retreat play-list as you move into visio divina - sacred seeing.



- II (Peace)

“It is especially necessary that listening to the word of God should become a life-giving encounter, in the ancient and ever valid tradition of *lectio divina*, which draws from the biblical text the living Word which questions, directs and shapes our lives.”

- Pope John Paul II

SACRED SEEING

When you feel ready to move on, spend some time taking in this beautiful mosaic. As you look at it let your eyes worship, explore the different characters. Let the Spirit inhabit your thinking as you take in this piece. Breathe slowly and deeply.



Marko Ivan Rupnik (Slovenian, 1954-), Resurrection of Christ (detail), 2006. Mosaic, St. Stanislaus College Chapel, Ljubljana, Slovenia.

YOUR TIME

GO IN PEACE

COFFEE BREAK AND WALK

Hopefully your time so far today has been peaceful and restorative.

Now may be a good time to have a drink and go for a walk.

As you walk observe all that is around you. Listen and look. Reflect on what God has revealed to you so far this morning. You may wish to pick up a rock or twig to bring back to your sacred space a reminder for you of your time with the Lord.

CONTEMPLATION AND JOURNALLING

Welcome back. The rest of your time this morning is for you to use as you wish. You may want to take a nap, write a letter, journal or return to the passage in Mark. There is no wrong or right way to spend a retreat. Do what feels right and life giving for you now.

The retreat play-list has two more songs to play in the background as you journal or spend this time.



- Touched by Heaven

- Unwind

CLOSING REFLECTIONS

I hope that you have found this half day retreat helpful and that it has been a life giving experience for you.

The invitation has been to 'come away' and now as you ready yourself to return to all that you set aside may the Lord be with you, may He bless you and keep you and make his face to shine upon you.

If you have any feedback on this retreat or would like to find out where your nearest monastery is do please get in contact with me via

www.monasticretreats.org



REFERENCES

Worship Suggestion One - I Praise You Because

SmallGroups.com

<https://www.smallgroups.com/meeting-builder/worship-ideas/i-praise-you-because.html>

Worship Suggestion Two - Labyrinth

www.pilgrimpaths.co.uk

Worship Suggestion Three - Writing your own Psalm

<https://www.smallgroups.com/meeting-builder/worship-ideas/his-love-endures-forever.html>