

Online Retreat Programme, October 2020 to July 2021

Each retreat will be based on a weekly audio talk, accompanied by related prayer and reflection exercises.

To take part you will need to register using this link, if you have not already done so.

<https://staugustinescollege.ac.uk/login>

The retreats are free; if you would like to make a donation towards the costs please use this link.

<https://staugustinescollege.ac.uk/fundraising-at-st-augustines-college/tattersall-bursary-fund/>

October 2020:

Praying the Parables

[4 sessions, beginning 18th October, led by Chris Chapman]



The Parables of Jesus reveal how we are always walking on holy ground, where the living word of God is being sown within our lives. Rather than define truth in a statement, parables invite us to explore what is true with open mind and heart, and then respond. Praying with Parables will explore 4 parables, both within their original context and for how they might speak to us now:

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| • The workers in the vineyard | Matthew 20.1-16 |
| • Building bigger barns | Luke 12.13-21 |
| • The woman who searches for her lost coin | Luke 15.8-10 |
| • The seed that grows unseen | Mark 4.26-29 |

We will also explore how we can recognise and respond to the 'parables' within our own experience.

Advent 2020:

Waiting, Watching, Rejoicing, Consoling

[4 sessions, beginning 29th November, led by Luigi Gioia]



Waiting with Creation

“The Hastening that Waits”: used to sum up the thought of the Swiss theologian Karl Barth, this sentence captures the essence of Christianity. Christian hope teaches us how to take responsibility while waiting the completion from the Lord. In this balance we discover authentic freedom.

Watching with the Prophets

The ‘advent’, the way God visits us, never corresponds to our expectations. Instead, it invites us to embark on the journey beyond the desert, or beyond the lake. Hence the need to be watchful: not apprehensive, but eager and attentive to the signs through which God reveals his presence and action among us.

Rejoicing with the Consoler

Our constant quest for excitement might lead us to miss the joy of our covenant with the Lord. It is an acquired taste, it takes time, but for this very reason, whereas excitement fades, joy lasts.

Consoling with the Prince of Peace

Nothing matters more to the Lord than our consolation. He visits us from on high for this reason: *Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, says the Lord.* The only way of welcoming this consolation is sharing it with our sisters and brothers, through care, patience, listening and forgiving, thus building the only peace that lasts.

January 2021

Soul Songs: Praying the Psalms

[4 sessions, beginning 10th January]



- Psalms of Lament
- Psalms of Remembrance
- Psalms of Trust
- Psalms of Pilgrimage

The Psalms are 'soul songs' that express the heights and depths of human experience. Each week we will explore how the Psalms give language for what is moving in our hearts.

Lent 2021

Adventures in Prayer

[5 sessions, beginning 21st February]



Adventures in Prayer provides the opportunity to explore what prayer is, the many different forms it can take and ways of overcoming the barriers that might have made growth in prayer difficult for us in the past. Each week will introduce a different way of prayer, with practical guidance on how to begin.

April / May 2021

A Cloud of Witnesses

[4 sessions, beginning April 18th]

Taking inspiration from people of the Old Testament.



What can we learn from the witness of people like Abraham and Sarah, Moses, Job, Naomi and Ruth about the shape of God's invitation to us? Their journeys, struggles, hopes and prayers are not so different from our own.



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June / July 2021

Windows on God

[4 sessions, beginning 13th June]



Each week will be a personal take on one Christian spiritual tradition or figure and the light they shed on relationship with God, our experience of life and our practice of prayer. Looking through these windows will challenge and refresh our usual ways of seeing.