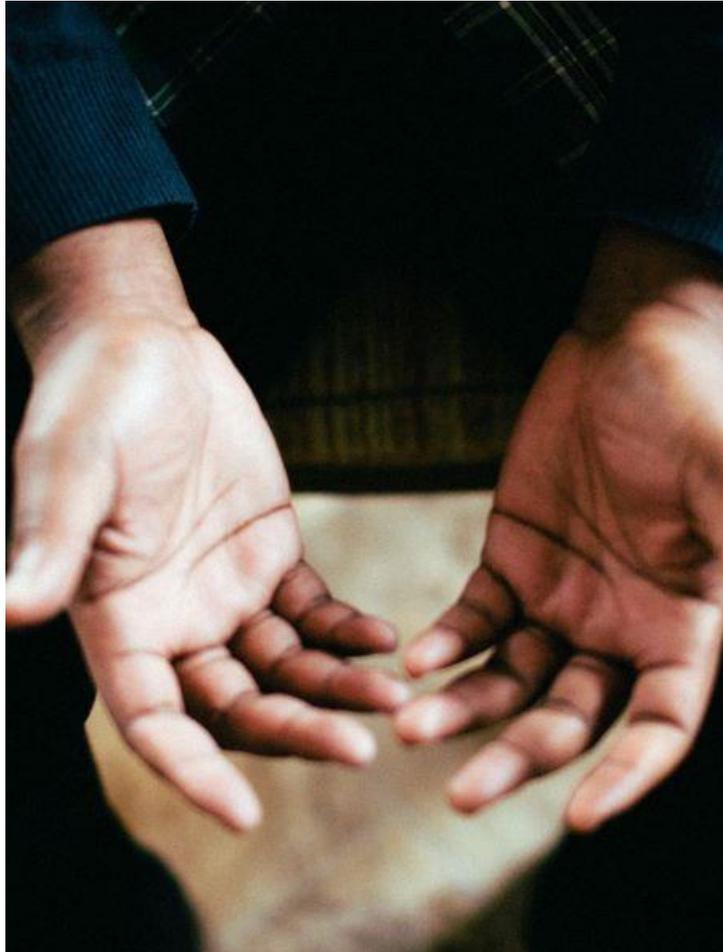


# Retreat in Daily Life

An intentional journey with God during Lent



Anglican Parish of Warracknabeal

March 2023



A Project REGENERATE Initiative  
Renew People. Revive Projects. Restore Place.

*The Retreat in Daily Life is an invitation to simply say, 'Yes'.*

*There are many resources online that explain what a 'Retreat in Daily Life' may look like - and if you're not familiar with this spiritual discipline it can all seem a bit overwhelming.*

*In this booklet, I am offering a simple way to 'enter' an intentional time with God - whoever that may be for you - each day during this particular week in Lent.*

*I will not pretend to be a 'Specialist Retreat Leader'. What lies before you is my own attempt to try something new in the parish, to push myself out of my comfort zone, and literally 'go on a journey' with each other in the context of our ordinary and extraordinary daily lives.*

*I hope that you will find this intentional time useful and fruitful.*



*“Blessed are those who trust in the Lord,  
whose trust is the Lord.  
They shall be like a tree planted by water,  
sending out its roots by the stream.  
It shall not fear when heat comes,  
and its leaves shall stay green;  
in the year of drought it is not anxious,  
and it does not cease to bear fruit.”*

*Jeremiah 17:7-8*



*Acknowledgements:*

*Scripture: Copyright © 1989. Holy Bible. New Revised Standard Version. Mowbray: London.  
Text: Copyright © 2023. Rev James Wood. Unpublished. Cannot be used without permission.  
Image: Public domain.*

### **Why?**

There are many reasons we go on a journey.

Sometimes we go to a familiar place to 'stop' and recalibrate. Sometimes we may choose to travel somewhere unknown for adventure or learn something new about a place we have heard of or have dreamt of going for a long time. Sometimes we go alone, and sometimes we take a significant other with us.

There is a point of departure. There is a destination. What happens between is sometimes more important than the 'destination' itself. This is what the Retreat in Daily Life is inviting us to.

What is it that God wants us to hear or see or experience this Lent?

### **How?**

I will invite you to create a 'special' place for your retreat this week.

Surrounded by all your familiar furniture and knick-knacks - is there a small table you set up with a candle or favourite picture or icon. Maybe the table is covered with a piece of fabric or cloth to determine a 'different space' than normal.

Maybe it is in another part of the house or garden completely different to your normal routine.

I encourage you to communicate with those you share your house with that there may be a particular time that you will be unavailable: no phone or interruptions; certain rituals that you will adhere to; there may be times they are welcome, and other times when they are 'not'.

In the daily-ness of life ... we are invited to seek God with special interest.

### **What?**

Some people like to journal during a retreat.

Some have a specific book they would like to read as well as their Bible.

Maybe you would like to draw ... dance ... sing ....

I encourage you to gather those things that you will need to make this retreat a blessing and not a chore.

### **Action:**

Begin. *"The journey of a thousands steps begins with a broken fan belt."* [Anon]

Trust that God will guide you.

Believe that God will reveal something unique to you this week.

Rejoice that God is near.

In fact God is 'here' already - waiting for you.

*“Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” [Matthew 6:26,33]*

**God loves you.**

That's it - in a nutshell.

There is no debate in God's mind. No indecision.

God loves you - right now!

Our human being complicates this simple truth.

How can God love me?

I'm not perfect. I've 'stuffed up' too many times. I wish I wasn't so angry or impatient or so much better than my neighbour. It is a weight too difficult to bear at times.

Jesus says, *“I'll take the weight. Let me carry it - so that you are free.  
Free to walk with God today.”*

**Action:**

Will you accept this invitation?

Be still, and know that I love you.

Be still, and feel God's presence surround you.

Be still, and hear God say - *'You are my beloved.'*

Be still, and let the tears fall down your face.

Be still, and invite the Spirit to heal your broken heart.

Be still, and challenge the negative thoughts to 'GET LOST!'

Be still, and smile ...

What are 5 things you are most grateful for today?

Day Three - Tuesday 21 March:

**'I am fortunate'**

*“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” [Philippians 4:4-7]*

Did you know, that if you have food in the fridge; or have some money in your purse or wallet; or you own a car; or have some money in the bank - you are in the top 5-10% richest people in the world?

I know completely ridiculous!

“It can't be true Rev?”

Yep - it's true!

However, are our hearts truly at peace?

Are you truly happy within your own skin?

Do you have regrets that keep haunting you?

What stops you from feeling content at the moment?

What makes you frustrated at the moment? Is it a first world problem?

Do you feel you have 'enough'?

'Guilt' - is unhelpful!

'Guilt' in my opinion - needs to be banished from our lives.

It serves NO purpose. At ALL!

Discomfort can be helpful. Dis-ease can be helpful. Fear - can be helpful.

Striving to do better or be a better person or change a negative attitude is helpful.

Wrestling with life's difficulties, annoyances and dis-ease's is what brings peace - not an absence of life's daily challenges and obstacles.

### **Action:**

I invite you to give someone a gift today.

It might be a 'present' or something you've made.

A random act of kindness.

Maybe make a contribution to a favourite charity.

Something for the Christian Emergency Food Centre in Horsham.

What will be your gift to God this day?

*"Kyrie Eleison"*

*"Lord - anoint me with your Spirit! Have mercy on me."*

Today, I invite us to become more conscious of when we have been wasteful.

Have we been hurtful to others or ourselves?  
Have we ignored someone recently?  
Have we spoken to someone harshly?  
Have we upset someone?  
Have we neglected our duty?  
Have we let ourselves down?

Are we aware of our own wounds? - the places in our lives we hurt the most and transmit that pain to others - whether we have been conscious of it or not.

Where are the places of 'disconnection' in our life?

How can we accept an attitude or at least a process of reconciliation with ourselves or with another?

### **Action:**

I invite you to write a letter - to God, to yourself or another person.

You may feel comfortable sending it.

You may not.

The important part of this process - is that you've written the letter saying –  
*"I am sorry."*

I invite you to think of a way to symbolically 'let this hurt go'.

Maybe placing on a small fire that symbolises a fresh start:

Maybe cutting it into small pieces and placing it in the compost that symbolises that something difficult can become nourishment for new growth:

Maybe placing it through a shredder symbolising that our circumstances can no longer 'drag us down':

or maybe explore other ways you can 'transform' rather than transmit your pain.

*"Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful."  
[Colossians 3:12-15]*

Are you confronted with a major challenge at the moment?

Does it feel that 'the wall' before you is just TOO BIG to climb?

During this retreat - has something been revealed to you and you're not sure what to do about it?

Are you at a 'crossroads' in your life - and it is not clear which direction you are called by God to follow?

Is there something that you've been procrastinating to do - which needs to be done?

Are you really afraid of something - and that 'fear' is paralysing?

Have you found yourself in a hole - and there seems no way out?

Are you wondering whether God is 'absent' for a time?

**Action:**

On a piece of paper - I invite you to explore 4 questions.

1. On the top write: **WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?**

Be very specific.

Do not add multiple problems - just one. *[Get another page for others]*

*ie: "I am having trouble with ..... because ....."*

*"I cannot seem to .... because ....."*

*"I cannot stop thinking about ....."*

2. Next write: **What are ALL the possible solutions?**

Write them all down - without judging them. Nothing is left to chance!

Get as many as you can - no matter how ridiculous they may seem.

Remember - they are possible solutions and there are no consequences yet.

*ie: I want to murder ...*

*Change my attitude to ...*

*Speak to Rev or someone who cares about me ....*

3. Next: **What are the two or three best possible solutions?**

Write these two or three - and try and find a reason why.

These solutions won't get you hurt or put in jail.

These solutions are something you can actually act upon - even if you're not sure just how yet.

4. Identify: **What is the best solution?**

Write down the best solution.

Then write the NEXT ACTION. And when you plan to do it.

*ie: I will phone .... To ask for help.*

*I will do this this week.*

*I will do more research ...*

*I will do this by Saturday.*

*I will plant/cook/write/ride/draw/make ...*

*I will do this tomorrow.*

Then - DO IT!

*“After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew Beth-zatha, which has five porticoes. In these lay many ill, blind, lame, and paralyzed people. One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, Do you want to be made well?” The ill man answered him, Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am making my way someone else steps down ahead of me.” Jesus said to him, Stand up, take your mat and walk.” At once the man was made well, and he took up his mat and began to walk.” [John 5:1-8]*

Imagine that you are going through your day - and you meet Jesus.

What do you talk about?

What does he say to you?

Does he ask you a question - or you him?

Is he kind? Did he make you laugh or cry?

Does he tell you a story?

Is he intent on giving you some helpful information?

Is he okay with silence? Are you okay - waiting for him to speak?

I invite you at some stage in this interaction with Jesus - to hear him say to you;

***“What would you like me to do for you?”***

What do you answer?

Jesus has come to save us - to make us 'whole again' - not to judge us.

Jesus was sent by God to be the 'bridge' or the 'ladder' we need to communicate with God more clearly.

Jesus - our example - really wants us to learn from him.

*“Take courage. Do not be afraid.” [Matthew 14:27]*

### **Action:**

Today - I invite you to make a cross.

Today - I invite you to write a prayer.

Today - I invite you to take Jesus at his word - *‘What do you want me to do for you?’*

Where are you 'hungry' for God?

Where are you 'thirsty' for God?

Surrender. And smile, and ..... you will know what to do!

Day Seven - Saturday 25 March:

**'I am worthy'**

Nothing is too much for God.

You are not too difficult or too human or too complicated or too far away from God.

You are God's daughter or son.

You are precious in God's eyes.

You are worthy of EVERYTHING that God has to offer us.

Receiving - is sometimes difficult.

The best response - is to say 'Thank you'!

As Christians, we are invited to live in the Spirit of the Resurrection.

And as I have said many times before - 'freedom' does require responsibility.

However, genuine FREEDOM is joyful.

**Action:**

Today - I invite you to do something celebratory!

Buy some really good food ... and your favourite beverage.

Whether on your own - or with some invited guest/s - celebrate this week in relationship with God and those you have journeyed with.

Make a fuss.

**Reflect on:**

What surprised you the most at how the week unfolded.

Was there a new experience of God through your prayer or reflection.

How did you develop a new confidence in your faith.

Do you have more questions than answers.

What was your 'most enjoyable' moment during the week?

What was your 'most satisfying' moment during the week?

Light the candles. Put the music on!

Maybe you can sneak a dance in the kitchen when no-one is watching.

Let joy dwell in your home. And your heart.

Hallelujah!

Day Eight - Sunday 26 March:

**'I am ready'**

In essence - each day is a journey to 'Jerusalem.'  
As followers of Jesus - we are constantly called to death and resurrection.  
It is not the easiest path to take and it is certainly not for the feint hearted.

Today - the Gospel reading from John 11:1-45, recalls the amazing events of a bunch of Jesus' friends at Bethany located 2.4km south-East of Jerusalem.

Lazarus is dead.  
Mary and Martha have their own way of confronting Jesus with this earthly reality which will escape none of us.  
Jesus weeps.

He who flung stars into space at the beginning of Creation;  
he who grew up as a human being in a small town called Nazareth;  
he who faced the people of God in the 'bush' of Galilee - who healed, listened,  
fed 5,000 people, walked on water and calmed storms;  
he who was whipped, stripped and hung on a cross;  
and who rose from the grave ...

... he knows us, he knows our human condition, he understands we need the simple things of life - *"Unbind him, and let him go!" [John 11:44]*

*"Come, Follow me." [Luke 18:22]*

### **Action:**

#### **What will you bring to church today?**

What would you like to leave at the base of the Cross - forever!  
How would you like to grow in your faith this Easter Season?  
Where is God genuinely calling you to transformation and freedom?  
Who is God calling you to walk beside on this Resurrection journey?

We are God's people!

God loves you.

God will never abandon you.

God is here - are you ready to say: **"YES!"**

It takes time to bake a loaf of bread,  
to grind, to knead, to wait....  
Time for friends to break and share their lives.

It takes time to craft in wood,  
to strip, to wound, to bleed....  
Time for the original to be released from the prison of our fear.

It takes time for us to build  
and fortify our lives,  
Time for the steal of the Divine to slay our pride.

It takes time to be with pain,  
to yield and let the healing have its way,  
Time in the darkness to trust the dawn.

It takes time to be alone  
to become one's intimate friend,  
Time in the dry for the hidden stream to fill the empty well.

It takes time to wait in silence  
for the coming of the spring.  
Time for the bud to swell on winter's dreams.

It takes time to let your life be turned around,  
to accept a vision's death,  
Time in the void to see with different eyes.

It takes time to still within  
and merge with life,  
Time in the wild to let a river slow you down.

It takes time to tend a crop of grain,  
to plough, to sow, to wonder....  
Time for love to ripen and be harvested.

*Noel Davis*

[from 'Heart gone walkabout']



The Anglican Parish of Warracknabeal 2023  
Project REGENERATE: Renew People. Revive Projects. Restore Place.

E: [warrackanglican@gmail.com](mailto:warrackanglican@gmail.com)  
M: 0438 233 630  
W: [warrackanglican.org.au](http://warrackanglican.org.au)

