

Advent

Imagine a nativity scene

AIMS

To encourage people to use their imagination with prayer, particularly during Advent.

INTRODUCTION

Here is a simple activity to encourage participants to use their imagination while praying. Most people will be able to imagine a nativity scene. Here are some ideas to get people started:

1. Encourage people to imagine a nativity scene, perhaps with their eyes closed for a while. A nativity set could be placed in the centre of the space as a way of helping people with this task;
2. Provide some Christmas cards or post cards of nativity scenes that participants could spend a few minutes looking at in silence;
2. Prepare a tableau with real life people in which some people take the part of the characters of the nativity, both those that are very familiar and those who are less so, and freeze the action so as to present a 'still' of the scene.

Remember to leave plenty of silent pauses for folks to reflect and pray in their own time

PRAYER: Imagine a nativity scene in your mind's eye...

The following words can then be read aloud

As Mary holds her creator,
and Joseph gazes on God,
the wonder of new birth
leaves us speechless! (pause)

Dear Lord, we need your presence.

Help us join in Your nativity -
new birth and new beginnings,
new life in our tired lives,
new joy in our faded traditions,
new love in our distracted eyes -
this is what we ask, O God.

Help us to prepare ourselves...

Advent

Imagine a nativity scene

Our hearts need to welcome You,
our hands need to worship You
before we can help others
to gaze on You this Christmas. (pause)

We open our hearts to you now, Lord...

We open our hands as well...

We receive your gifts of new life and love...

And prepare to pass them on. (pause)

As Mary holds her creator,
and Joseph gazes on God,
the wonder of new birth
breathes new life into our Christmas too!

EVALUATION

Please try to answer these questions for yourself and for others who will use this material:

1. What was the most helpful thing?
2. What was the least helpful thing?
3. What would you like to try now?

THE NEXT STEP

If you want more Advent materials please revisit the website. Other seasonal material will be available during the year.

Acknowledgements

This material was contributed by Ruth Sermon who holds the copyright, and who has agreed that it can be used by churches taking part in Vision4life Prayer Year. Any other enquires for use via the website please.