



**Mothers' Union Dioceses of Edinburgh; Terekeka,(S.Sudan); Nairobi, (Kenya); Maiduguri, Osun North, (Nigeria); and Calcutta, (India).**

*Intercessions May - August 2015*

**The Mothers' Union Theme for 2015: United in Prayer**

This develops the 2014 theme – ‘Sowing the Future together’, by focusing on the centrality of prayer in the work of Mothers’ Union across the world

*Jesus, Lord of life, by the power of your word  
and through your actions of love, call us to be your disciples.  
Give us strength to be different, to stand up for justice and peace  
and be signs of your reconciling love for all.*

*God of grace, enable your servants to carry out your mission on earth  
through the work of Mothers’ Union worldwide.*

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**MAY -**

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|---|--|
| 1 Fri <b>Philip and James, Apostles</b>                             | 3 Sun <b>Fifth Sunday of Easter</b>                    |
| 10 Sun <b>Sixth Sunday of Easter</b>                                | 12 Tue (Consecration of the Bishop of Edinburgh, 2012) |
| 14 Thu <b>ASCENSION DAY</b>   | 15 Fri <b>Matthias, Apostle</b>                        |
| 17 Sun <b>Seventh Sunday of Easter - Sunday after Ascension Day</b> |  |
| 24 Sun <b>THE DAY OF PENTECOST (Whitsunday)</b>                     |  |

**JUNE**

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|---|---|
| 1 Mon <b>The Visit of Mary to Elizabeth</b>                   | 4 Thu Corpus Christi                        |
| 7 Sun <b>Pentecost 2 - Trinity 1</b>                          | 9 Tue <b>Columba of Iona, Abbot, 597</b>    |
| 11 Thu <b>Barnabas, Apostle</b>                               | 14 Sun <b>Pentecost 3 - Trinity 2</b>       |
| 21 Sun <b>Pentecost 4 - Trinity 3</b>                         | 24 Wed <b>The Birth of John the Baptist</b> |
| <b>26 Fri – General Meeting –<br/>Nottingham Concert Hall</b> | 28 Sun <b>Pentecost 5 - Trinity 4</b>       |
| <b>29 Mon Peter, Apostle or Peter and Paul, Apostles</b>      |   |

**JULY**

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|--|---------------------------------------|
| 3 Fri <b>Thomas, Apostle (if not kept on 21 Dec)</b> | 5 Sun <b>Pentecost - Trinity 5</b>    |
| 12 Sun <b>Pentecost 7 - Trinity 6</b>                | 19 Sun <b>Pentecost 8 - Trinity 7</b> |
| 22 Wed <b>Mary Magdalene</b>                         | 25 Sat <b>James, Apostle</b>          |
| 26 Sun <b>Pentecost 9 - Trinity 8</b>                |                                       |

**AUGUST**

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|---|---|
| 2 Sun <b>Pentecost 10 - Trinity 9</b>                       | 5 & 6 Open Days at Mary Sumner House    |
| <b>6 Thu THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD</b>                |   |
| 9 Sun <b>Pentecost 11 - Trinity 10 ALSO Mary Sumner Day</b> |   |
| 15 Sat <b>Mary the Virgin</b>                               | 16 Sun <b>Pentecost 12 - Trinity 11</b> |
| 23 Sun <b>Pentecost 13 - Trinity 12</b>                     | 24 Mon <b>Bartholomew, Apostle</b>      |
| <b>29 Sat The Beheading of John the Baptist</b>             | 30 Sun <b>Pentecost 14 - Trinity 13</b> |

Please use ‘Families Worldwide’ booklet as well as the following prayers

*We pray for all members. May God be with them in every part of their lives, encouraging them and leading them, sheltering and strengthening them So they may work to your praise and glory. Amen*

**We pray for:** All Office Bearers, especially those in our new linked dioceses, that we may learn about these links and find ways to contact them. We continue to pray for our informal links with Sri Lanka and that their new links will flourish. We pray for the work of MU - Province of Scotland.

**We pray for:** ‘On The Way’ – the Scottish Provincial Day Conference to be held on 24<sup>th</sup> Sept 2015.

**We pray for:** Those we know who are sick, especially for Doris Bilton’s daughter Deana, home in a wheel chair after 21 weeks in hospital after a stroke and still badly paralised down her left side. Give thanks that her speech and brain are working well. Pray for Doris and Elaine caring for her.

### **Persistence in Prayer** - from *The Mothers' Union Web site*.

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’”

“For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or care what people think, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually come and attack me!’”

And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”

*Luke 18:1-8 (NIV)*

Lord God, like the disciples we ask,

**teach us how to pray.** Teach us the secret of prayer –

when to speak and when to keep silent,  
when to accept and when to go on seeking,  
When to persevere and when to let go,

**teach us how to pray.** Teach us the power of prayer – its ability to challenge,  
to encourage, to transform all life,

**teach us how to pray.** Teach us the joy of prayer - to express our worship,  
discover your will, and hear your voice.

**In the name of Christ. Amen** *Nick Fawcett (adapted) Prayers For All Seasons; 1998*

‘United in Prayer’ led by Fiona Fidgin was the Theme of the Provincial MU Retreat held at Netherurd, the Guiding Centre in the Borders from 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> April. Fiona showed us several different ways of praying. ‘*When a believing person prays, great things happen*’

Fiona reminded us of our first experiences of childhood prayer – Have we lost our easiest ways of approaching God as we grew up? Interspersed in the usual daily services of Morning Prayer, Eucharist, Evening Prayer & Compline were **Reflection 1: ‘Prayer a Well Trodden Path’** - led to several questions, which you may like to think about and which may help you in your prayer times.

***Below and on the next page are extracts from the Retreat Booklet:***

What is your earliest memory of prayer?

Who has helped to shape your life of prayer?

Are there places that have been significant for you in your life of prayer?

What has hindered you in prayer?

How has your prayer changed or evolved and why?

What else was going on in your life at the time?

Has prayer ever seemed impossible or nonexistent?

What is prayer for you in practice now?

How could you deepen your prayer life?



Pray that the account of this  
Retreat will encourage others  
to come to future MU Retreats.

## Reflection 2 – Praying with the Imagination

Sometimes God speaks to people in prayer through the imagination. In imaginative contemplation of Scripture, we enter into a Bible passage by way of imagination and using our senses. As we contemplate particular events in Jesus' life, he is present with us. This way of praying can help us get beyond what we feel we *ought* to think or say or what is the *correct* thing to do.

- Spend a few moments coming to relaxed attentiveness. Become still and quiet and invite God to work through your imagination as you pray the passage.
- Trust that it is OK to come as you are and whatever happens is alright.
- Be open and generous to what God might want to touch in you.
- Read or hear the passage read and become familiar with it.
- Then let the scene gradually unfold in your mind's eye.
- Take time to see in your imagination the place, the buildings, the countryside. What kind of day is it? Listen to sounds. Use other senses if it is helpful.
- Picture who else is present in the scene. What are they doing or saying?
- Where are you? Take your place in the unfolding story. You may be a central character, a bystander, or simply enter into the action as yourself. You might feel you are drawn to see things through Jesus' eyes.
- Slowly picture the scene unfolding. Maybe you are drawn into conversation with Jesus or one of the characters. Say whatever you want. Allow a chance for response.
- You might find yourself moving between conversation and silent observing as the prayer continues.
- Stay in the scene for as long as you have chosen and then slowly come back to the present space.
- Spend some time at the end being with God. Be with God as with a good friend, sometimes talking, sometimes listening, sometimes silent.
- Review the prayer time – what happened? What was I drawn to in the story? How do I feel at the end of this time of prayer? What has particularly struck me? What gave me energy/comfort/peace? What challenged me? What am I taking away from this time of prayer? Is there something you may want to return to at another time?

Some suggested passages for imaginative prayer:

John 1:35-39	Come and See
Mark 10: 46-52	Bartimaeus
Luke 5: 1-11	Call of four disciples
1 Samuel 3: 1-10	Call of Samuel
Matt 8: 23-27	Calming of the storm
John 13: 1-17	Washing of the feet.
John 21	Jesus Appears to Seven Disciples - Jesus and Peter

\*Fiona Fidgin asks me to add:  
“There is an Edinburgh Labyrinth which is in George Square, which she thinks is open most days”.

*Do you love me? Tend my Sheep Follow me*

Praying with the imagination helps us to notice feelings and desires inspired by our encounter with Jesus. Spend some time reflecting on your feelings, your desires, your conversation with Jesus. You can sit quietly, write your thoughts or draw a response .....

### **Wednesday Afternoon: Optional extra!! Walking the Labyrinth\***

There is a Labyrinth in the grounds and you may like to spend some time walking this ancient path of Prayer. A labyrinth is not like a maze – there are no dead ends and no shortcuts – it has one path that leads to the centre and the same path back out again.

The path winds back and forth and becomes a mirror for our lives – sometimes we walk with others and sometimes we are alone; sometimes we feel like we are going one way and the rest of the world is going another; sometimes we feel flung to the edge and sometimes we feel safe in the middle.

## **Reflection 3: Where is Christ's Message Alive?**

### **Praying with images. - Space to write your thoughts, reflections, to draw.....**

*Fiona had provided a large selection of A4 images. We were invited to select the ones that appealed to us. On the back of each were questions concerning the image. Common to all was - What is this picture saying to you? The one that appealed to me was meeting Jesus on the road to Emmaus –Who are the people who have shaped your faith? Who has walked beside you? In what way has Christ revealed himself to you through bread, wine, hospitality?, Another was The Good Samaritan – In what way do you help those in need? In what way do you help those in trouble? The third was Jesus on the Tube – Where is Jesus alive in our circuit?*

## **Reflection 4: Praying with an Awareness**

### **What is Prayer?**

Often we do not label as prayer those experiences which put us in touch with the Mystery, although they are prayerful experiences.

We need to understand prayer in much wider terms than only ‘talking to God.’

Prayer is about relationship – relationship with God, but also our relationships with others and the world. Any good relationship is built on listening as well as talking.

So we need to develop our listening skills in prayer – to be receptive to the nudging of God. We need to learn to listen with our heart rather than with our head.

Heart looking, heart seeing happens when we develop an awareness of the world around us/ through being present to the things that are happening in our lives, God is revealing Godself to us. Through reflection and practising an ‘awareness of the present moment’ we will more easily be able to live in a prayerful relationship, noticing the ‘graced moment’ of our daily lives.

We will become more aware of God’s footprints in the High Street’.

*Margaret Silf*

### **EXAMEN At the end of the day (or just before I start the next day if I am a ‘morning person’)**

- I stop and quietly sit with my loving God.  
I consider all the good that has happened in the day: everything I have done that I'm proud of. Then I give thanks for all this good.
- I then ask for God's grace to see what I might have done wrong, my sins and faults.  
I consider too how I might have hurt others unintentionally.
- I become aware of my moods and feelings. Overall how would I describe my day.  
I then go over my day: all my thoughts, words and actions.  
What are the good things that have brought me joy, consolation and a sense of being alive?  
What has disheartened me, made me uneasy, unhappy, bad tempered and dispirited?
- I ask God's pardon for my faults, for hurting others, for not using my own time and gifts wisely.  
I give thanks for using my gifts well, for loving others, for all that brings me joy and consolation.
- Looking back on the day; are there good things I need to repeat and other things I need to avoid?  
I ask God's help to live a more fruitful and joyful life.

I finish my examen prayer by speaking to God in my own words or using a formal prayer.

### **EXAMEN 2**

- Light a candle
- Take a moment to let God look at you. Breathe in God's love.
- With your hand on your heart ask Jesus to bring to your heart the moment today for which you feel most grateful.
- Recall what was said and done in that moment. Enjoy the gratitude you feel again now. Breathe in its life.
- Ask Jesus to bring to your heart the moment today for which you feel least grateful. What was said and done in that moment? Let it be. Breathe in God's love just as you are.
- Speak to God about what you have noticed.
- Give thanks to God for the day. Ask help for tomorrow.

I hope the abbreviated account of the Provincial Retreat will help your prayer life.

The services also included lots of inspiring hymns/songs. *Leaflet prepared by Jean Hindle*