

pilgrim journeys



 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

Lent
pilgrim



2019

FREE SAMPLER

40 DAYS OF
REFLECTIONS ON
THE BEATITUDES

STEVEN CROFT



INTRODUCTION

Jesus Christ gave the most beautiful and powerful talk the world has ever heard: the Sermon on the Mount. These words have shaped history and turned many people's lives inside out.

Right at the beginning are eight short sayings which all begin with the word 'Blessed'.

These sayings are a portrait of Jesus, the Son of God. They answer the deepest question of our age: what does it mean to be human?

For some they will be a very simple introduction to Jesus. For others they will be a way of going deeper. Some will read them in Lent, but they can be used at any time of year. Some will use them to prepare for baptism and confirmation. Others to go deeper in the Way of Christ.

However you take this *Pilgrim Journey*, make space. Allow God's word to dwell in you richly as we seek together as a Church to know Jesus better and to become more Christ-like in everything we are and in everything we do.

Archbishops Justin Welby and John Sentamu

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Pilgrim Journeys: The Beatitudes is ideal for anyone to use daily in Lent – starting from Ash Wednesday* and finishing 40 days later on Palm Sunday – but it can be used at any time of year.

The 40 daily reflections on The Beatitudes are grouped in eight chapters of five days on each beatitude.

Each day offers:

- A **theme** linked to the beatitude
- A suggested short Bible **reading** that explores that theme
- An invitation to **reflect**
- A suggestion of how to **pray**
- A prompt to **act**.

Across each group of five days we will explore what each beatitude tells us about Jesus, what it tells us about a vision for human life and the life of the Church.

At the end, you will find some possible next steps for you on your discipleship journey as well as some further resources including other *Pilgrim* materials for you to explore.

Those preparing for baptism or confirmation may find this *Pilgrim Journey* helpful as part of their preparation for that commitment. Members of *Pilgrim* groups spending six weeks exploring *The Beatitudes* (Book 4) together could use this daily material in between sessions.

* Ash Wednesday falls on the following dates over the coming years:
6 March in 2019; 26 February in 2020; 17 February in 2021;
2 March in 2022; 22 February in 2023; 14 February in 2024.



DAY 1 EIGHT BLESSINGS

READ Matthew 5.1–10
*‘Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.’*

.....

REFLECT
Welcome to this 40-day journey. Like the first disciples, we are making time to listen to the words of Jesus.

At the beginning of the most famous sermon in history – known as the Sermon on the Mount – Jesus commends eight beautiful qualities. These are almost his first words and the very heart of his teaching.

Each *quality* is set within a *blessing*. Every blessing is set within a *promise*. These are words of joy and hope.

We will take five days to think about each blessing. The eight blessings will help us come to know Jesus better. They are a kind of miniature portrait, unpacked in the four gospels.

The same eight blessings will give us a vision for what it means to be fully alive, to live as God intends, both as individuals and as a community.

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PRAY
Still your mind. Take time to listen to the words of Jesus and repeat them several times with the rhythm of your breathing:

*‘Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.’*

.....

ACT
How will you set aside time and space for reflection and listening through these 40 days?

DAY 2

A RHYTHM OF LIFE**READ** Luke 5.12–16

‘But he would withdraw to deserted places and pray..’

.....

REFLECT

One of the greatest needs in our 24/7 world is to learn to withdraw and reconnect with God.

Jesus himself knows his need of God. His life is lived in a rhythm of full engagement with God’s world alternating by withdrawing to deserted places to pray.

Jesus prays in the great crises of his life – before great miracles and before his arrest and trial. But these prayers grow out of his daily prayer and conversation with his Father in heaven. He models what it means to be poor in spirit.

Luke tells us, ‘But he would withdraw to deserted places and pray.’ To follow Jesus is to recognize this inner thirst for the living God. To follow Jesus and to be poor in spirit is to find this life-giving rhythm.

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PRAY

*As the deer longs for the water brooks,
so longs my soul for you, O God.
My soul is athirst for God,
even for the living God.*

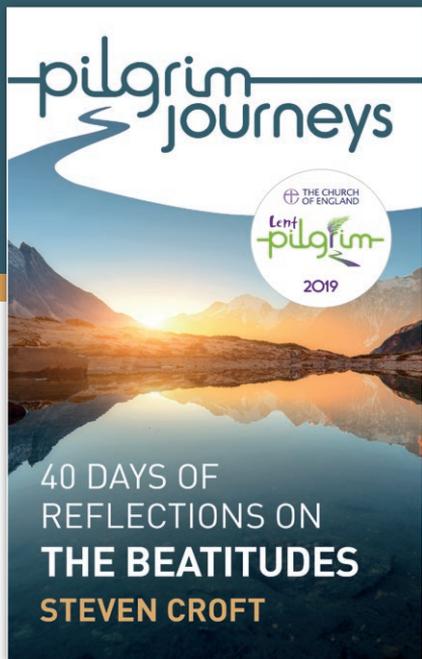
Psalm 42

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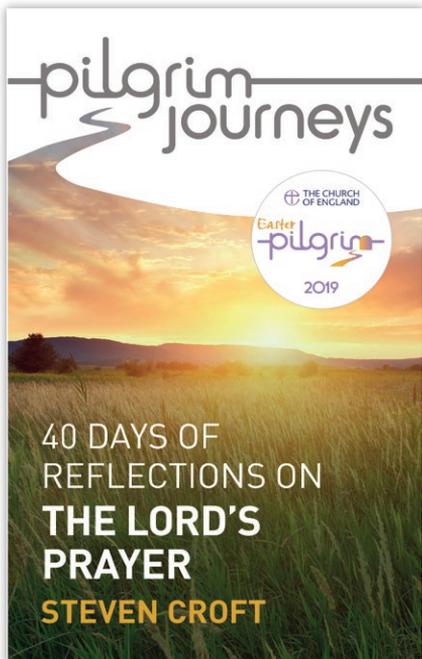
ACT

*What is your best time of day to pray?
How can you create the time and space?*

TAKE A PILGRIM JOURNEY THIS LENT & EASTER



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Explore some of the Bible's most beloved texts - the Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer - with two new booklets by Bishop Steven Croft. Each booklet offers 40 short daily Bible reflections, prayers, and suggestions for how you might respond to Jesus' teachings in your own life.

The Pilgrim Journeys booklets are ideal daily companions for anyone seeking to grow in the Christian faith. They are also suitable for those preparing for baptism or confirmation - including those using the Pilgrim discipleship course - but can be used by anyone at any stage of their Christian journey.

PRAISE FOR OUR 2018 #LIVELENT CAMPAIGN:

In independent research, 78% of users found the *#LifeLent* reflections very helpful or extremely helpful in bringing them closer to God and supporting their Christian faith.

"Life is so busy. It was nice to have something once a day that I could open up, generally at work. It was structured in the way it took you through. I really appreciated that."

"It made Lent a significant time for me, whereas in the past I haven't used it as a particular time to reflect. It's changed my view of Lent."

Available in singles, packs of 10 and packs of 50
from www.chpublishing.co.uk

Find out more about the Church of England's
official campaign for Lent and Easter 2019 at
www.churchofengland.org/lent.