

# Tending the Flame

Exploring our  
processes of prayer

<https://soulspace.online/tending/>

Nick Helm 24 June 2024



# Tending the Flame

Exploring our processes of prayer

They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?'

Luke 24.32

Part 1: From welcome to engagement

Part 2: Moving into greater intimacy with God

Going Deeper

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# Tending the Flame

Exploring our processes of prayer

- Prayer as process
- Journey of prayer
- God talk



# Tending the Flame

Exploring our processes of prayer

## Ignatian Process of Prayer

- **Value of attentiveness to prayer experience**
- **Three phases**
  - 1. Approach & Engagement**
  - 2. Focussed Spiritual Exercise**
  - 3. Reflection and intimate conversation**



# Tending the Flame

## From welcome to engagement

### 1. Approach & Engagement

'as you approach the place where you are going to pray, pause for about the length of an 'our Father' and consider how God is looking at you'

(Spiritual Exercises 75)

"Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?

If you, then, ... know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

(Matthew 7.9-11)

Ask for Grace.

Which fruit of Spirit do I seek?



# Tending the Flame

From welcome to engagement

Reflection time

Receiving God's loving gaze and seeking God's grace...

- In my prayer life how do I do this? What helps me?
- In leading others in prayer how do I help them receive God's loving gaze and seek God's grace?

Share with neighbour...



# Tending the Flame

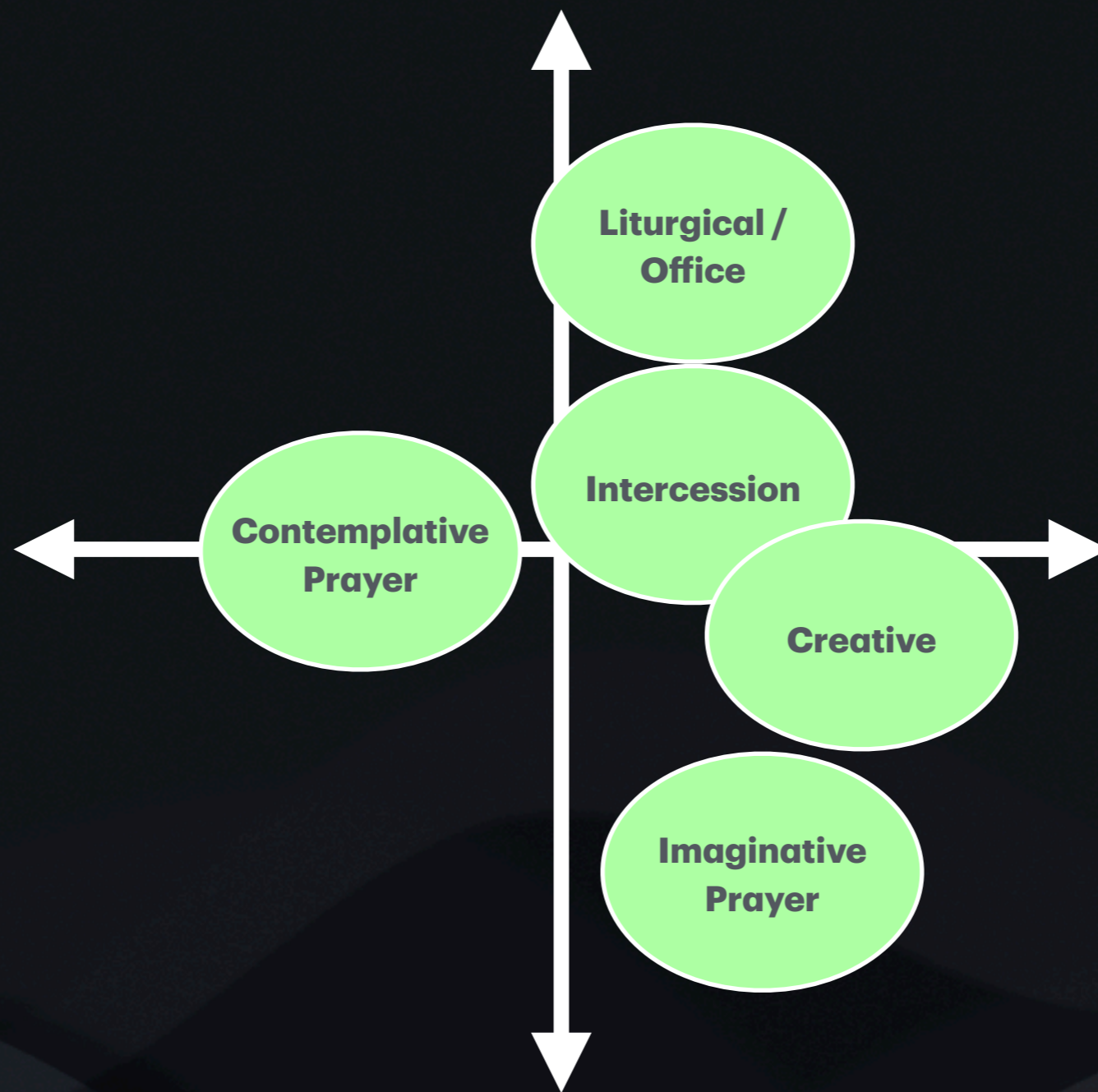
## From welcome to engagement

### 2. Active Prayer - Spiritual Exercise

- **Praying with Scripture** - lectio divina or imaginative contemplation of a gospel scene
- **Reflective exercises** - eg look back on your life...
- **Many other ways of engaging**
  - Creative arts
  - Liturgical prayer - The Office
  - Intercession
  - Tongues
  - Silence - contemplative prayer
  - Prophetic prayer
  - ...



Speculative - prayer of the mind



Apophatic -  
via negativa  
Without words  
or images

Kataphatic -  
via positiva  
With words or  
images

Affective - prayer of the heart

Urban T. Holmes III,  
A History of Christian Spirituality: An Analytical Introduction, HarperCollins, 1981



Speculative - prayer of the mind

**In your personal prayer life...**

Apophatic -  
via negativa  
Without words  
or images

**Where are you most often?  
Where do you go less?  
What area might be inviting you?**

Kataphatic -  
via positiva  
With words or  
images

**And in your ministry?**

Affective - prayer of the heart

# Tending the Flame

## From welcome to engagement

### For group exploration

- What has emerged that seems significant for me and my ministry?
- What is affirming and encouraging me in my personal prayer life?  
... and in my ministry?
- What is inviting exploration and growth?  
(Personally and ministerially)
- What grace of God's do I need to explore/  
grow?
- Going deeper... where would be helpful to go?



# Tending the Flame

From welcome to engagement

Going deeper... where would be helpful to go?

[www.bit.ly/TTFGoingDeeper](http://www.bit.ly/TTFGoingDeeper)



# Tending the Flame

Moving into greater intimacy with God

## 3. Reflection and Intimate conversation

- Separating reflection from activity
- Do the reflection after the engaged prayer
  - Allows engaged prayer be unselfconscious
  - Enables a deeper and more intimate conversation with God



# Tending the Flame

## Moving into greater intimacy with God

### 3. Reflection and Intimate conversation

- Looking back with a discerning eye
  - Where was my heart burning?
    - Give that greater time and attention to receive its gift.
  - Where was my heart distracted by other things?
    - What do I need from God here?
- Now move into deeper conversation with God - Father, Son, Holy Spirit



# Tending the Flame

Moving into greater intimacy with God

## 3. Reflection and Intimate conversation

- Heart to heart (as with a close friend)

The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend.

Exodus 33.11



# Tending the Flame

Exploring our processes of prayer

## Process of Prayer

- **Three phases**
  1. **Approach & Engagement**
  2. **Focussed Spiritual Exercise**
  3. **Reflection and intimate conversation**
- **Invitation to reflect on our personal prayer and ministry**



# Tending the Flame

Exploring our processes of prayer

To what benefit?

**Exodus 33.12-17**

**Intimacy with God**

- **Call**
- **Presence**
- **Rest**

**Trust God ...**

