

The background of the slide is a black field filled with numerous bubbles of various sizes. The bubbles are iridescent, showing a spectrum of colors including blue, green, yellow, and red, which are reflections of light. They are scattered across the frame, with some appearing larger and more prominent than others.

Exploring Your Calling Responding to 🔊 God's Call to Serve

God wants us to find out who we were
created to be

‘You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit ...’ John 15:16



Loving God, I know you love me and have plans for me.

But sometimes I am overwhelmed by the thought of my future.

Show me how to walk forward one day at a time.

May I take heart while I search openly, learn all about the choices, listen to others for advice, and pay attention to my own feelings.

By doing these things, may I hear your call to live a life that will let me love as only I can,

and allow me to serve others with the special gifts you have given me.

I ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen



Vocations Journal

On the vocations webpage is a printable vocations journal that mirrors the content of these slides.

It is provided as a way of helping you navigate your reflections, thoughts and prayers as you begin your journey of exploration.

Use it as you will, and enjoy the adventure!

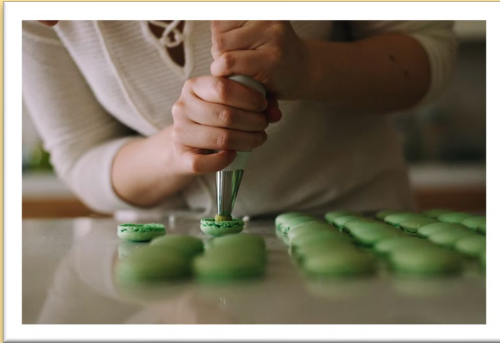


Take some
time to reflect
& pray on the
questions on
the following
slides

Calling is about - Daily Occupation

The person God made me to be
A place to express who I am
A place of witness to God's kingdom

Question: In the course of my life what
achievements give me the greatest satisfaction?



Calling is about -Home

Providing a safe haven

Teaching values

Developing self-worth and value

Question: At this stage in my life who are the people to whom I can demonstrate unconditional love?



Calling is about - Rest

Refilling the reservoir of joy

Worship

Recreation

Question: What things restore my soul and bring me to life?



Calling is about - Church

Gifts given to me and a focus for using them

Question: In serving others - where and when do I find joy and energy and excitement flowing?



Calling is about – the World

Witnessing in word & deed to God's kingdom

Expressing the compassion of Jesus by responding to need and standing for justice

Question: What do I do to demonstrate Jesus's love and compassion?



Calling is about – Cost

The journey to fulfilment & fruitfulness is likely to require some sacrifice

Question: What might I have to let go of to travel this road?



Calling is about – Openness

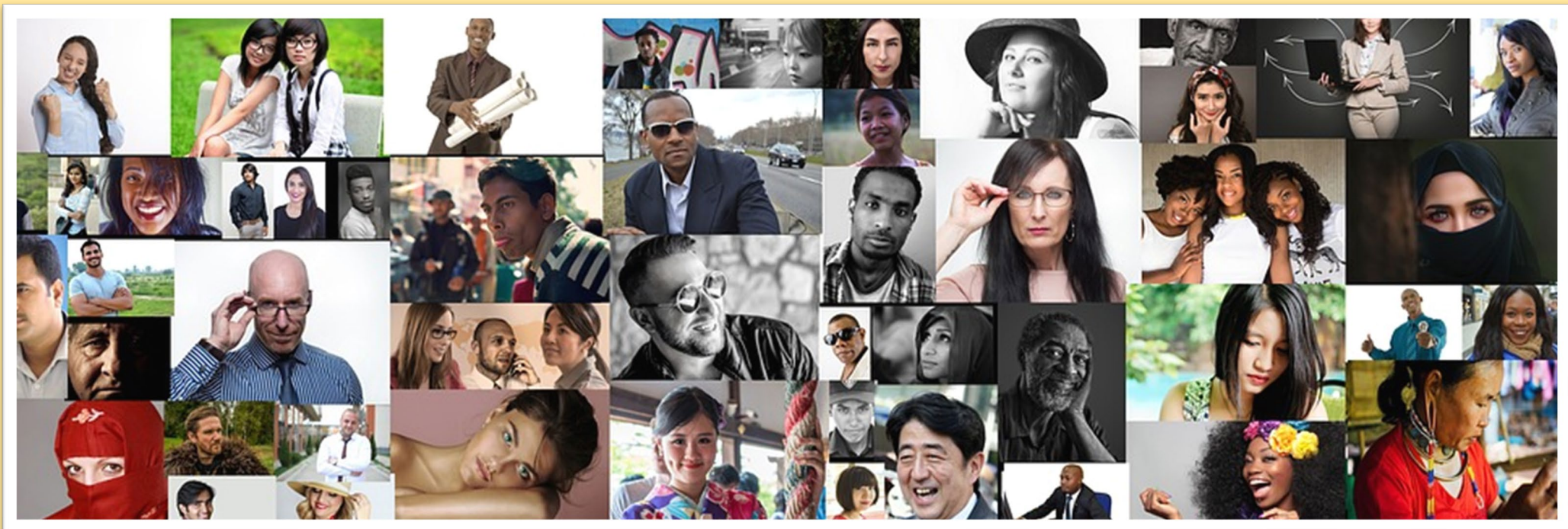
To hear a call requires deep and genuine openness

Questions: Am I aware of and open to ...

The world as it is and people as they are?

To myself as I truly am with all my hopes and dreams, gifts and flaws and potential?

To the hints and nudgings from God who is calling me to put my whole being, 'warts and all',
at the service of the world? How do I know?



What is a vocation?

Now please watch this video, Vocation 101 – What is a vocation

<https://youtu.be/ihnzFH2L818>



Meditation on Pilgrimage and Vocation

Follow the path with your finger until you reach the centre.

Along the way reflect on how your life has changed over the years.

Think of both positive and negative things and make a note of anything that comes to mind while you are tracing the path.

After you have completed the path, ask yourself these questions:

What experiences in your life have felt like twists and turns along an unknown path?

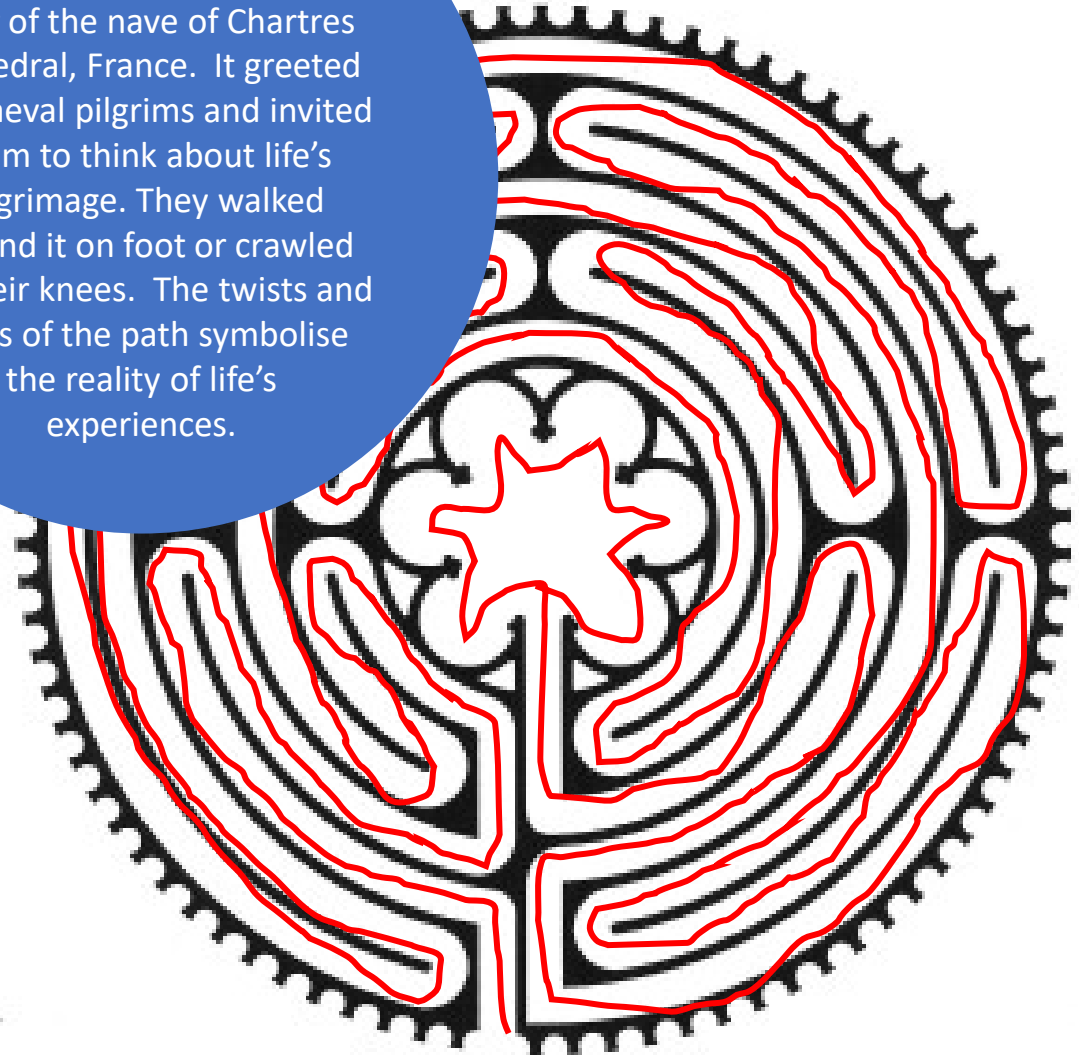
Have you experienced God's call leading you in different directions at different times?

Have there been times when you felt that your path was particularly in tune with God's will and call to you?

Have you had experiences that at the time felt like you had turned away from God?

Do you now recognise those experiences as part of the pilgrimage God has called you to follow?

This is a representation of the labyrinth marked out on the floor of the nave of Chartres Cathedral, France. It greeted mediaeval pilgrims and invited them to think about life's pilgrimage. They walked around it on foot or crawled on their knees. The twists and turns of the path symbolise the reality of life's experiences.



Calling in the Bible

On the next slide are some passages from Scripture where God calls someone to a particular task or way of life.

Choose one

What is going on for the person in the passage?

What does this passage mean for you today?

What action might you be prompted to take?



Calling in the Bible

The calling of:

Mary, Mother of Jesus Luke 1 26-38

Samuel 1 Samuel 3 1-21

Isaiah Isaiah 6 1-8

Mary Magdalen John 20 1-18

Peter John 21 15-19

Matthias Acts 1 15-26

Esther Esther 4 1-17

The calling of:

Jonah Jonah 1 1-4, 15-17 Jonah 3 1-10

Paul (Saul) Acts 9 1-28

Moses Exodus 3 1-14

Lydia Acts 16 13-15

Jeremiah Jeremiah 1 4-9

Gideon Judges 6 11-40

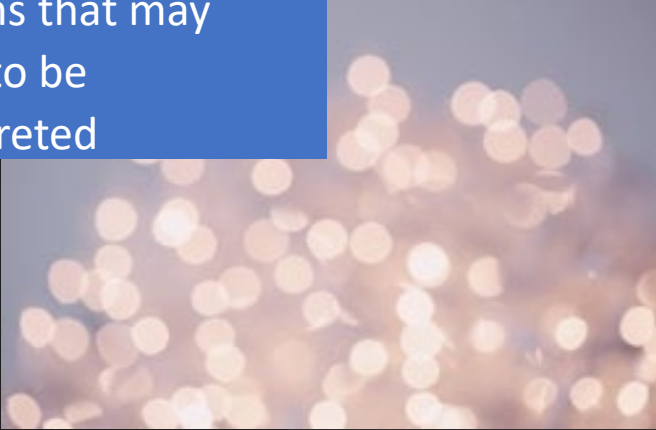
How God Communicates - Looking at How God Might Call People

Click on the pictures below and consider the different ways that God called people in the Bible and ways in which people may be called today. Have you experienced God calling you in one or more of these ways?

How? Describe the experience.

Has God called you in other ways? How?

Dreams that may
need to be
interpreted



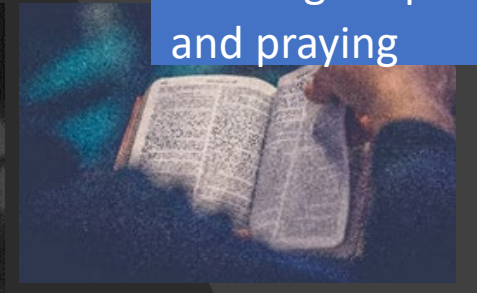
Niggling feeling that
won't go away



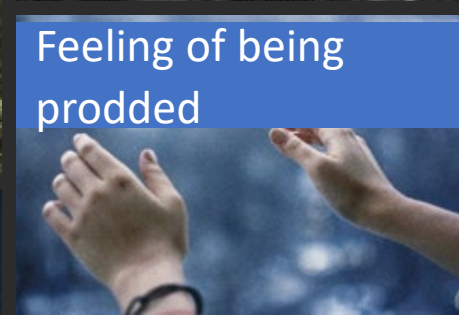
Hearing a voice
within



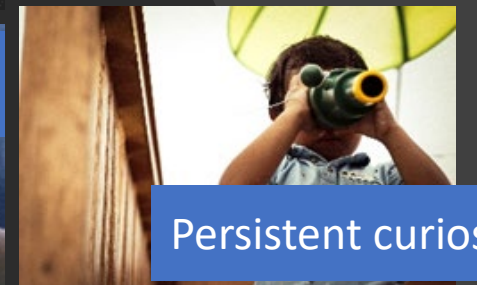
Reading scripture
and praying



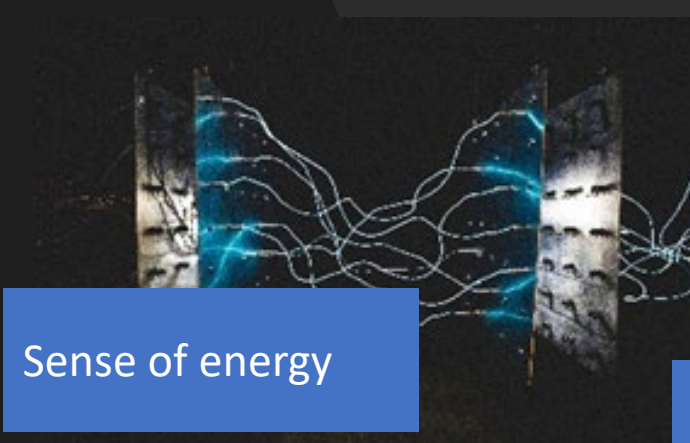
Feeling of being
prodded



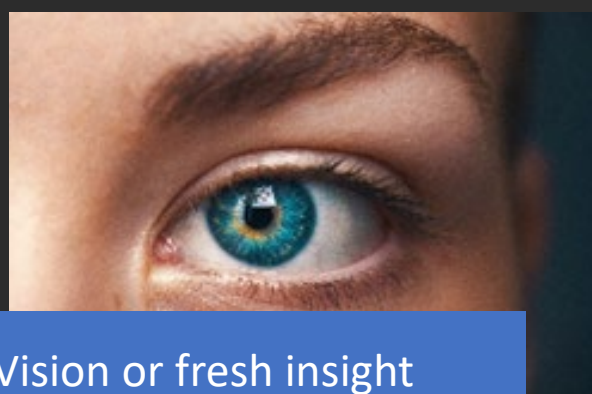
Persistent curiosity



Sense of energy



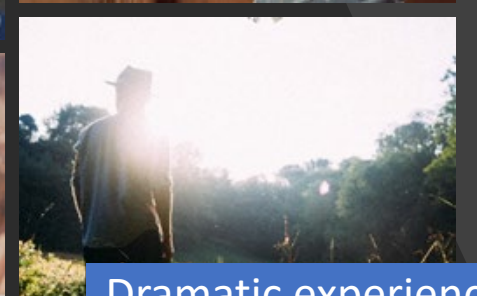
Vision or fresh insight



Someone passing
on a message

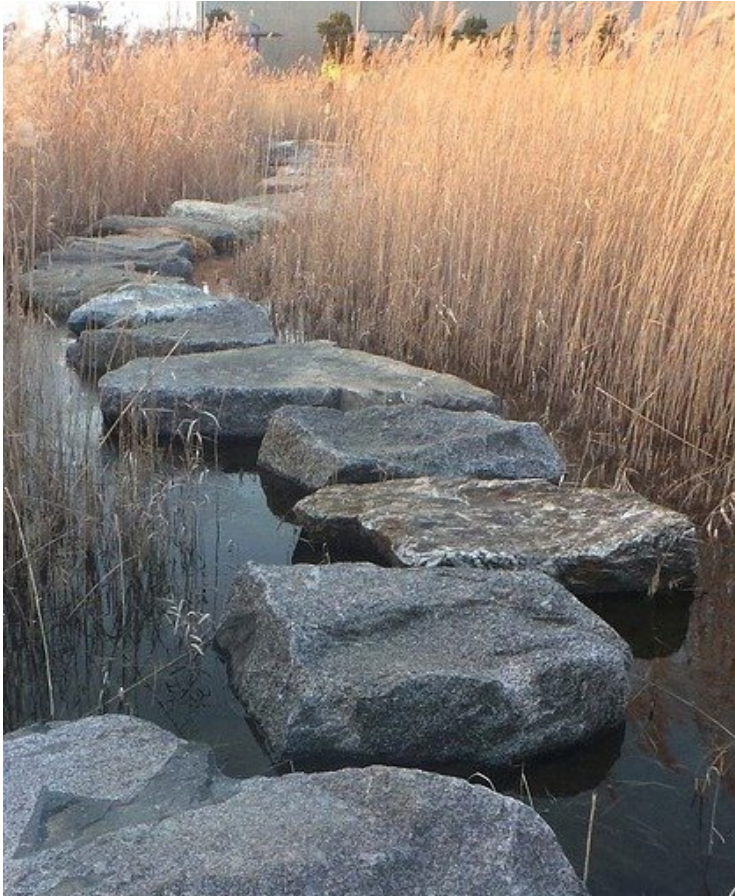


Dramatic experience
(e.g. Damascus road)



Adapted from After Sunday-Discerning Vocation

Inspiration and Reflection



On the following slides are some quotes that we hope you will find inspiring .

Choose one quote which you feel helps to show where you are at the moment with regard to your vocation.

Reflect and pray on it.

Do you know what your next step will be?

Inspiration and Reflection

‘He does not call those who are worthy, but those whom He will.’

Therese of Lisieux

‘I will take the Ring ... though I do not know the way.’

Frodo, The Lord of the Rings

‘I don’t want to be anything special, I only want to try to be true to that in me which seeks to fulfil its promise.’

Etty: A Diary 1941-43

‘... God does not call us once but many times.’

Barbara Brown-Taylor

Inspiration and Reflection

‘The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s hunger meet.’

Frederick Buechner

‘You must give up everything in order to gain everything. What must you give up?

All that is not truly you ... ’

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

‘I may wonder what kind of mission God has for me, when I should ask what kind of me God wants for his mission.’

Chris Wright

‘It isn’t what you wish to do, it’s what you will do for God that transforms your life. ’

Henrietta Mears.

Inspiration and Reflection

‘You are called to unearth your treasure, to live your giftedness, to have a whale of a time doing what you are for.’

Francis Dewar

‘Trying is all that matters. Our yes to call is saying that we will try.’

Elizabeth O’ Connor

‘For each one of us, there is only one thing necessary: to fulfil our own destiny, according to God's will, to be what God wants us to be.’

Thomas Merton

‘There is nothing fixed or final about God’s personal invitation to you. It is not something settled once and for all. As you respond, God calls on you further. It is a continuous, lifelong process of growing in attentiveness and responsiveness.’

Francis Dewar

Inspiration and Reflection

‘Wherever God has put you,
That is your vocation.
It is not what we do,
But how much love we put into it.’

Mother Teresa of Calcutta

‘I always wondered why somebody
doesn't do something about that. Then I
realized I was somebody.’

Lily Tomlin

‘God himself will milk the cows through
him whose vocation it is.’

Martin Luther

Inspiration and Reflection

'There is an old Christian tradition
That God sends each person into this world
With a special message to deliver,
With a special song to sing for others,
With a special act of love to bestow.
No one else can speak my message,
Or sing my song, or offer my act of love.
These are entrusted only to me.'

John Powell



Gifting Exercise

The following informal gifting exercise is also in your journal. It is not a psychological profile.

How you answer the questions will hopefully give you a starting point to explore where your gifts are and how you can best use them.

INSTRUCTIONS

Read each statement and give yourself a rating for each one on a scale of 0 - 5

0 does not apply to me. **1** seldom applies to me. **2** sometimes applies to me. **3** fairly often applies to me. **4** usually applies to me. **5** is exactly me

	Statement	Score 0-5
1	I enjoy explaining things to others	
2	I am a good listener	
3	I enjoy being with other people	
4	I dislike anyone being treated unfairly	
5	I am a practical person	
6	I like to express myself artistically	
7	I enjoy being quiet	
8	I am able to get people to see things in a new light	
9	I am sensitive to other people's pain	
10	I enjoy working for the good of the community	
11	I try to be just and see that others are treated justly	

	Statement	Score 0-5
12	I enjoy paying attention to detail	
13	I enjoy discovering how things work	
14	I like to spend time regularly just thinking about things	
15	I can communicate effectively in public	
16	I try to help people in need	
17	In groups I am happy to take the lead	
18	I have to speak out about injustice when I see it	
19	I am good at administration	
20	I like devising new and exciting ways of doing things	
21	Contemplation is important to me	

Copy your scores below against each statement. Then add up your scores for each of the columns A to G, and write each column total in the table on the next slide.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Question No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Question No.	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Question No.	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Column Total							

Gifts	Column Total
A Teaching	
B Caring	
C Building Community	
D Seeking Justice	
E Making things work	
F Creating	
G Reflection	

The highest score indicates a strong gift



Personal Reflection on Gifting Exercise

Now that you have got the findings from the exercise, spend some time thinking about the questions below.

Where did you score most highly?

Which gifts does this indicate?

Were you surprised by this?

How are you already using these gifts in your daily life?

How else could you be using them?

If you are not already using them, how could you utilise these gifts?

If you don't see an opportunity to use these gifts, what might God be saying to you?

What are you going to do about this?

How are you going to explore further?

Listening to God - a Reflective Prayer Exercise

Remembering means literally piecing together again what has been fragmented or broken. Ask God for the grace to remember the fragments of your life in a way that will reveal to you the patterns that are leading towards your wholeness in Christ.

Adapted from a reflection by Margaret Silf, Inner Compass (1999)



Listening to God - a Reflective Prayer Exercise



Imagine your life as a river or path.

Remember the exterior events of your life and your reactions to them.

As you notice these events, notice the gifts that you have received:

Skills and talents

Gifts of personality

Gifts from your circumstances - education, family, friends, work, your whole situation in life

Gifts of people who have become significant to you.

Adapted from a reflection by Margaret Silf, Inner Compass (1999)

Listening to God - a Reflective Prayer Exercise

Draw a timeline of your life

(you could use the image of the river or path).

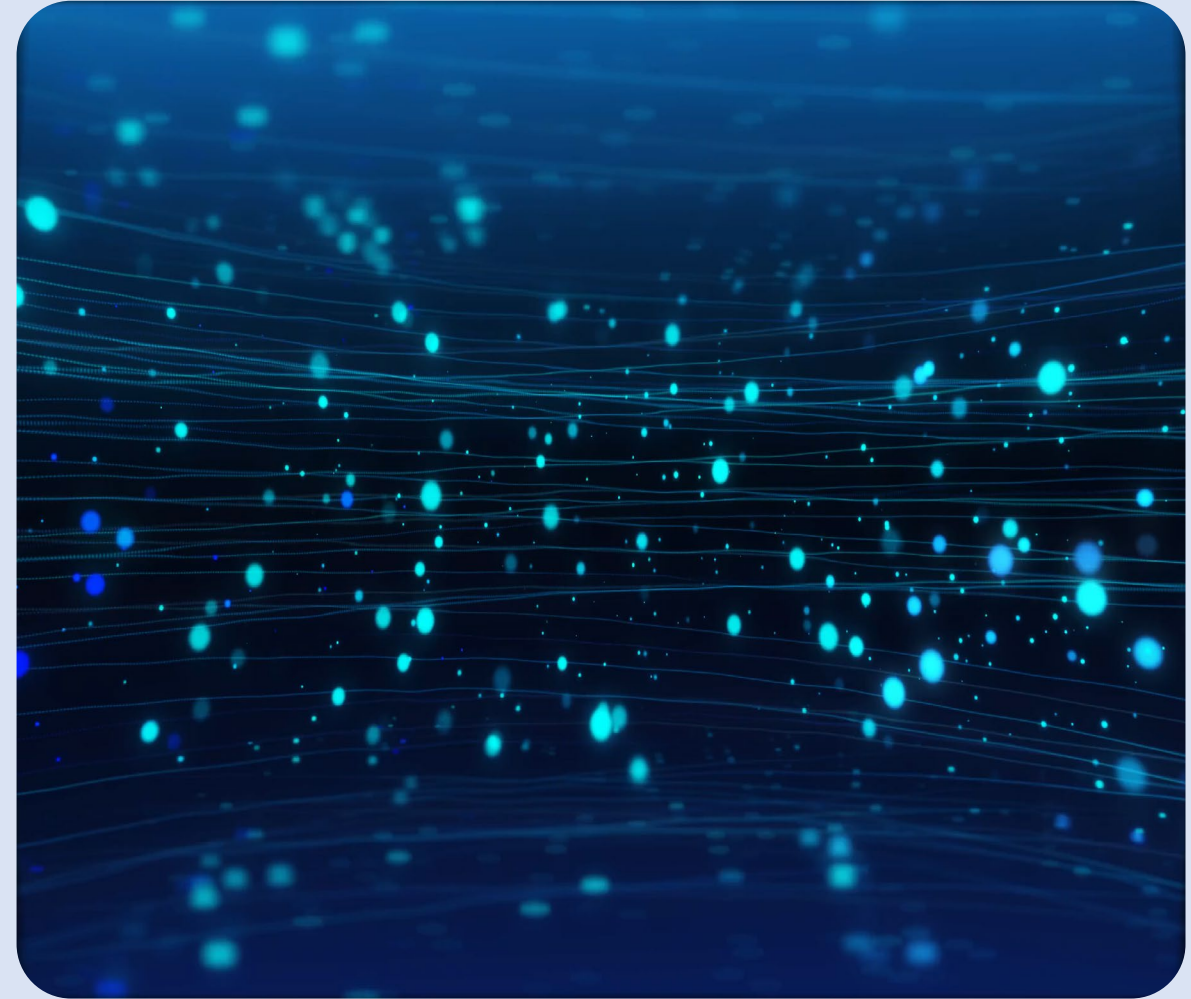
Reflect on the times in your life when you might have been aware of God's presence or call on your life.

It may be a time when you felt called or drawn to something in particular, or it may be a time when you were particularly aware of God's call of love.

It could be a calling to baptism, a calling in everyday life or a calling within the church.

Mark your sense of calling on your timeline.

Feel free to be creative, using words, pictures and symbols.



Adapted from a reflection by Margaret Silf, Inner Compass (1999)

Listening to God - a Reflective Prayer Exercise

Notice how God has been constantly present, not just in the special moments.

Notice especially how, with hindsight, periods when he felt absent may have prepared you in some way for further growth.



Notice how periods of difficulty strengthened you in certain ways, as hard exercise strengthens our muscles.

Remember how consolation and new strength have sometimes come when you were at the end of the line.

This isn't to pretend that everything, with hindsight, was good.

Adapted from a reflection by Margaret Silf, Inner Compass (1999)

Listening to God - a Reflective Prayer Exercise

Become aware of how God touches your unique personality and brings you to life, how God speaks through your personality, gifts and decisions.

Can you see any concrete examples of how God is using your gifts or working through your decisions now, in your immediate experience?



Adapted from a reflection by Margaret Silf, Inner Compass (1999)

What Next?

If you would like to continue your journey of vocational exploration, then go the Diocesan website and find out about working with a vocations adviser.

<https://derby.anglican.org/en/faith-and-life/hearing-god%E2%80%99s-call/what-to-do-next/vocations-advisers.html>

You may also like to complete this questionnaire on the Everyday Faith pages (you will need to register and create a log-in)

<https://everydayfaith.churchofengland.org/s/journey/a1X4K000001nITUUA2/everyday-faith-gifts-goals>