

Painting and Prayer Handout

We don't need to be kneeling down with our hands together and eyes closed in order to pray. Prayer is something we are doing right through our day, often subconsciously, in the mundane tasks of life, when we suddenly seem to connect with God. John Pritchard, in his book *How to Pray* (2002, p. 3) says that we need "to recognise these moments when something stirs within us and to savour them...there is nothing pushy or invasive about these stirrings. They're gentle, quiet, courteous even. But then, that's God's way."

As God is so quiet and courteous, he can easily be drowned out by the everyday noise of life, and we need to find ways of switching off that noise and listening to him. Some people do this through meditation, sitting quietly and listening. Not all of us find this easy. - We need to be busy with some activity. The knack is to find an activity which we can use to enable us to achieve stillness within us.

Art may be one such activity. It may work for you. It may not. We are all different and God speaks to us in different ways. We've all seen famous paintings by Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci and so on - moving pictures of the Last Supper, The Crucifixion, etc. That's not what we are about.

Prayer is a two way business!

We not only talk to God, but we need to listen to what he is saying in return.

Practical work – Alleluia Butterflies

- I would like everyone to take piece of paper and fold it in half (butterflies are symmetrical!
- You may choose whatever colours/materials you like to create your butterfly.
- Focus on the task and try not to think about anything in particular.
- Notice if anything happens while you are working.
- **THE ONLY RULE IS THAT THERE MUST NOT BE ANY WHITE PAPER SHOWING ON THE FINISHED PAPER.**

Remember, it is not the finished artwork which matter, it is the process which matters.

If you have time, take another piece of paper and repeat the process.

We will discuss how you felt about it at the end.