



**FUZZY PHOTO? Yes**

**FUZZY FAITH? Hmmmm....**

What does it mean to you to be an adult member of the Church of Ireland, and a Christian?

When we were children, faith may have come to us through parents, Sunday School and/or religion class. Now that we are no longer children, is that enough? As adults, a particularly engaging sermon can be helpful in provoking us to some thought on the subject but maybe you would like to take more personal responsibility to develop an adult faith. If so, this leaflet may be of use to you. It sets out opportunities for growing in faith, most of them very gentle.

Please have a look.

**IN THIS LEAFLET SUGGESTIONS ARE DIVIDED INTO POSSIBILITIES FOR SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT AND FOR KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT: THESE GREATLY OVERLAP, BUT ONE STYLE MAY SUIT YOU BETTER THAN ANOTHER.**

## **SPIRITUALITY IS A SOMEWHAT VAGUE TERM, BUT IT IS CENTRAL TO FAITH. IT LIFTS OUR HEARTS TO GOD.**

### **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT**

The simplest way to develop our spiritual life is by prayer. We all have prayers we learned in childhood but it may be helpful now to use something newer, more meaningful, but simple. Metropolitan Anthony, a major writer on prayer, suggests the repetition of a short phrase, such as “In you, Lord, is my hope.”

Simply being more focused about saying a daily prayer may be what you prefer. The Church of Ireland website ([ireland.anglican.org](http://ireland.anglican.org)) offers a **daily prayer** under the section titled ‘Prayer & Worship’. Two other websites you might find useful are [www.sacredspace.ie](http://www.sacredspace.ie) which suggests a **daily prayer** and, if desired, a bible reading, as well as offering links to a three-minute retreat, and [www.contemplativeoutreach.org](http://www.contemplativeoutreach.org) which offers **help in centering prayer** and other resources.

There are also meditations to be found at [www.soulspark.org.uk](http://www.soulspark.org.uk).

St Ann’s Church, Dawson Street periodically hosts the **Alpha Course** which encourages participants to explore aspects of their ordinary lives in greater depth. See [stann.dublin.anglican.org](http://stann.dublin.anglican.org) or [dublin.anglican.org](http://dublin.anglican.org)

There are also **Contemplative Prayer and Meditation** resources to be found at [livingspirit.org.uk](http://livingspirit.org.uk)

Inside the front cover of the Book of Common Prayer there is a suggested simple structure for **daily prayer**.

Beyond that, training in prayer is available for individuals and groups:

**Christ Church Cathedral** host quiet mornings, retreats (e.g. ‘Retreat in the City’ and pilgrim guides, including use of the labyrinth as an aid to prayer. See [christchurchcathedral.ie/spirituality-programme](http://christchurchcathedral.ie/spirituality-programme)

**The Church of Ireland Ministry of Healing** offers a prayer ministry training course. See [www.ministryofhealing.ie](http://www.ministryofhealing.ie).

There are a number of **centres where a few days may be spent quietly** with or without either participating in community prayer and/or seeking spiritual guidance. These include Glenstal Abbey, Co. Limerick and the Benedictine House in Rostrevor, Co. Down, both used by members of the Church of Ireland.

### **KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT**

Some people may enjoy a structured, more study-focused exploration of aspects of faith. Some resources which facilitate this are:

The Church of Ireland website ([www.ireland.anglican.org](http://www.ireland.anglican.org)) has a section on **'What we Believe'** covering a number of aspects of Christian Faith, available online. Hard copies are also available via the website.

Trinity College runs part-time and evening short courses on a large range of subjects, sometimes including **religion and theology** ([www.tcd.ie/courses](http://www.tcd.ie/courses)).

The Diocese runs a **Certificate in Theology** course. See [dublin.anglican.org](http://dublin.anglican.org) for details.

The Church of Ireland Theological Institute run a **Certificate in Christian Theology and Practice** course. See [www.theologicalinstitute.ie](http://www.theologicalinstitute.ie)

See also Dublin & Glendalough Theology Circle.

The Priory Institute, Tallaght, Dublin 24 runs a wide range of interesting courses ([prioryinstitute.com](http://prioryinstitute.com))

## Some books and links which you might find useful:

Bloom, Anthony (1970) *Beginning to Pray*. Paulist Press. (many others on prayer by Bloom: see [www.mitrass.ru/eng/eng.publ](http://www.mitrass.ru/eng/eng.publ))

Garvey, John (ed) (1986) *Modern Spirituality: an anthology*. Darton, Longman and Todd.

Hughes, Gerard W. (1985) *God of Surprises*. Darton, Longman and Todd.

Noumen, Henri *The Way of the Heart* (1981). Darton, Longman and Todd. (see also [www.henrinoumen.org](http://www.henrinoumen.org))

O'Donohue, John (1997) *Anam Chara: Spiritual Wisdom from the Celtic World*. Bantam Press.

Peyrous, Bernard (2006) *A Guidebook for the Spiritual Life: how should one live with God?* The Columba Press.

Pritchard, John (2014) *Living Faithfully: Following Christ in Everyday Life*. SPCK