

THOUGHTS TO GUIDE YOU AS YOU PRAY



Concentrate on this image for a moment or two as you allow your breath to slow.

Begin your prayers by focusing your thoughts on the bare cross, considering its emptiness, the starkness of the bare wood against the sky. Reflect on the cross as a form of punishment and thus on what the empty cross means both literally – suffering has been endured and has ended –and personally for you – salvation is yours, Christ suffered and died for YOU!

Acknowledge Christ's gift and give thanks.

READ:-John 20: 1-18

Now: “dress” the cross with flowers. You might do this figuratively in your mind's eye or with craft materials create a cross covered in flowers.

For each flower added say a prayer of thanks for a blessing during this weird and wonderful Eastertide, so maybe...

- for your home as a place of safety,
- for key workers who will continue their efforts to care for all, even on Easter day,
- that there is food for all if we are willing to take only what we need,
- for God's presence with us all throughout this difficult time and always,
- for bird song, silence and reduced pollution which can be better appreciated now there's no traffic!

With each prayer of thanks observe the transformation of the bare cross as it comes **ALIVE** with colour.



Finally as you look at your creation reflect on its beauty and on the sacrifice Jesus made, that we – God's creation – might live. Look back at the reading from John, the final gospel and the only one where Mary recognises the risen Jesus as the gardener. Reflect on the role of a gardener, and consider why John included this detail? Then seek God's guidance on what message Jesus, the gardener, might have for us **RIGHT** now? (*Illustration – Rembrandt's 1638 depiction of Christ the gardener, recognised by the Magdalene*)

