

## **“God’s Pathway of Light”**

Some people wonder: how can God know and care in a unique way for me and for every other human being when there are so many millions of people on earth, not to mention the many millions who’ve gone before us and will come after us?

Some time ago, I was standing on the cliff path at Canford Cliffs overlooking the bay. It was a bright sunny day. The sun seemed to be marking on the sea a pathway of light, leading straight to the point where I was standing. The sun’s bright beam seemed to be meant just for me. Then I realised that it wouldn’t matter where I was standing on the rim of the bay from the Hengistbury Head to Old Harry Rocks, I would still see the sun’s pathway seeming to come only to me.

I saw this as a way of understanding how God comes to each one of us, to every person, in a directly personal way. Use this image to meditate on the way God’s loving care is always reaching out to you.

Begin by sensing God’s presence by relaxing into the breath God is giving you. Notice the touch of the air coming into you.... Feels how it flows in through your nose or mouth and down into your lungs..... Feel the gentle sensation of your lungs getting larger as the air is breathed in and smaller as the air is gently breathed away. Continue to be aware of the flowing in and flowing out of God’s breath. Now let your breathing help you to slow down, by comfortably lengthening your breathing out just a little bit.... As you do this, feel your breathing beginning to slow down. As you feel your breathing slowing down, feel the rest of your body slowing down with it. Let any tension or tightness around your body melt away with each breath. Notice the area around your neck..... if there’s any tension or tightness there, each time you breathe out, let this tension flow down your arms and out through your hands into the floor, and let your arms and hands become looser and more relaxed with each breath. Sometimes, there’s tension and tightness in our tummies. If so, each time you breathe out, let this tension flow away down your legs and out through your feet into the floor. As it flows away, feel your tummy become more relaxed. If there’s any tension in any other part of your body, let it melt away with the flowing out of each breath.

Then remain with the gentle rhythm of your breathing. If you find in your breathing a sense of God’s inner peace and quietness, just enjoy it for the next few moments.

Now, imagine you are standing somewhere on a cliff. You are looking out over a calm sea in a large bay. It’s a bright day, with a blue sky and a bright sun. The sun throws a shining pathway of light across the sea to you, with, as it seems, warmth and a blessing just for you.

Let the light enfold you in its glow and fill you with its well-being. Bask in its warmth. Let it flow over, around and through you. Feel surrounded and infused with its energy. Be enriched with its radiance, and filled with the joy of its healing grace.... And sense that through this light you are touched by the hand of God, the Creator.

There are others also, standing at different points around the bay. They, too, see the pathway of light seeming to come only to them, and to touch only them with its power and goodness.

No matter where we stand around the bay, the light reaches out and touches us, as if we are its only intended destination.

In the same way, God reaches out to you as if you are the only one who matters. Jesus said that God knows and cares for every sparrow and that, for God, we are worth more than many sparrows. (Luke 12, vv.6-7) God knows and cares for each one of us more closely than any other person can know us or care for us. So, do not be surprised that, like the path of light across the water, God seems to come only to you.

Sometimes, it is difficult to see the light; difficult to feel the presence of God. The sky is cloudy, the sun is hidden. The path of light has disappeared. It seems to make no difference where we stand on the edge of the bay. No matter how hard we look, the light of God seems to have disappeared. We feel alone and cast adrift in the darkness of our troubles. With the poet we cry out, "How much longer will you forget me, Lord? For ever? How much longer will you hide yourself from me?" (Psalm 13 verse.1)

In difficult times like this, how can we know that the sun still shines? Sometimes, we seem to have to wait an unbearably long time.... And then, far out to sea, a shaft of light breaks through the cloud and throws a ray of light across the water. Its beauty and brilliance bring reassurance that the source of light is still there and we may once again feel its pathway bringing to us strength and divine energy.

In the dark times, God says to us through Isaiah, "Do not be afraid. I have called you by name – you are mine. When you pass through deep waters, I will be with you; your troubles will not overwhelm you." (43 vv.1-2) Feel the light of God's presence shining on you once more. Give thanks for the constancy of God's Light which still shines, even when we lose faith and seem unable to find God in the darkness of our clouded sight.

Now, spend a few moments blessed with idea that, like a prism, we can reflect God's Light to others. We can do this through all we think and say and do. List in your mind some of the good things the Light of God has brought you, shown you and taught you so they can shine through you to others.

Finally, pray that God will show you how you can reflect His light to others, using these words of Charles Wesley's hymn.

*O Thou who camest from above  
The fire celestial to impart  
Kindle a flame of sacred love  
On the mean altar of my heart*

*Jesus, confirm my heart's desire  
To work and speak and think for Thee;  
Still let me guard the holy fire  
And still stir up the gift in me.*

*There, let it for thy glory burn  
With inextinguishable blaze,  
And trembling to its source return  
In humble prayer and fervent praise*

*Still let me prove Thy perfect will,  
My acts of faith and love repeat;  
Till death Thy endless mercies seal,  
And make the sacrifice complete.*