

Prayer Stations

Think about creative ways of helping people to pray—particularly those with no background of prayer.

By the font, for example, you could have thoughts about water—refreshing—cleansing—and so on. Invite visitors to reflect on the importance of water in their own lives and, perhaps, their desire for refreshment and renewal.

Have a holding cross and a sheet inviting people to hold it—perhaps to tense their hand and let their stress go into the cross and then to relax. (Note—be prepared for the crosses to disappear!)



For more ideas contact either
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Gem Churches

**Creating quiet spaces
in the midst of busy lives**



Gem Churches

Many people remember times when churches could be left open all day and feel regret that this cannot happen now.

'Gem Churches' are an idea to help us to rethink how we might make it possible in a time when a haven of peace would be welcomed by many

people. It may be possible for a deanery to decide on one Gem Church for their area—or parishes might work out a rota for opening.



Let people know you are open!

If the rota option is chosen, think of ways in which you can ensure people know that the church is open. A note on the door? A pavement sign just outside? A note on your parish website?

Stewards

Good stewards are important—and not just from a security point of view. People offering a praying presence help to create an atmosphere of peace that others can enjoy. Ideally, they should also have some knowledge of the church and its history so that they can answer questions. If possible, they should be good listeners for people who need that particular ministry... but also aware when that might not be needed!

Information

Many people will call into the church simply to find peace and quiet. However, look around your church as it might appear to a person who knows nothing about faith or churches. Where might it be useful to have a small piece of information? By the font, perhaps? A special painting or statue? Do not write an essay—just offer enough to engage someone wandering around the building. A child's 'Church Trail' might also be an idea.

Praying in the Church

Some places find it a blessing to have Exposition during the church's opening times. Have a leaflet or a few prayer books available for people who are not familiar with this kind of prayer. Try not to get too irritated if visitors do not appreciate what is happening! Consider having the Blessed Sacrament in a chapel or side altar that is set aside for Silent Prayer.



Reaching Out



Many of the people who drop in will be people who are not familiar with churches and prayer. Offer a few resources that might help them to feel welcomed and to learn a little more about faith and prayer.

Prayer leaflets

Find or make attractive leaflets of basic Catholic prayers.

Have prayer leaflets or cards for people who might be facing illness—bereavement—choices.

Prayer Intentions

Have a book for prayer intentions. Or, be a bit more creative and have a prayer tree or other way for people to leave their intercessions in the church. Find a way to assure them that the community will hold their intention in their prayer. It seems to be a universal desire to light candles in prayer. If you have a candle-stand ensure that it is stable. An alternative might be a tray filled with sand in which people can place a tee-light.

