

PRAYER GARDEN



As part of our Hope in the Future programme, parishes, schools and families might like to start work on a Prayer Garden to give thanks to our Creator and establish a quiet place for prayer and reflection.

Many communities across the diocese have already created a Prayer Garden and have experienced several spiritual and wellbeing benefits from these spaces. Such projects help raise awareness of our need to care for our Common Home, help strengthen links between Home, School and Parish, and create a place to encounter God in His creation.

Continue reading for helpful advice on creating your own Prayer Garden.



Suggested Steps:

1. Identify a lead or team for this project and invite representatives from the parish and school for a time of prayer and planning. Where possible, there should be a range of ages, backgrounds and experience in the group. Safeguarding guidance should be followed at all times with under 18s accompanied by school staff or parents/carers. A risk assessment for this project should be completed following Health and Safety guidance. For more information and support with this, please email formation@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

2. Decide on a the scale of the project. Choose a site and discuss timescales, budget and existing resources. It is important to bear in mind the current terrain of your site - for some this will be softscape, for others this will be hardscape, both can provide beautiful spaces.

Helpful Resources

<https://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/safeguarding/>

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/science/pdf/conservation-and-biodiversity/wildlife/plants-for-pollinators-garden-plants.pdf>

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/advice/gardening-for-wildlife/plants-for-wildlife/>

<https://www.ecobricks.org/>

www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/diocese/environment/around-the-diocese/

<https://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/gardening-for-wildlife/>

<https://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/parish-garden-project-inspires-a-future-of-sustainability/>

<https://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/holy-trinity-garden-project/>

<https://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/community-garden/>

3. Create a detailed Action Plan with the necessary steps. This may include drawing a ground plan marking out different areas, choosing and sourcing vegetation and materials, and calling on volunteers or contractors to carry out the work. Remember to prioritise plants for pollinators and other wildlife, and think about reusing or repurposing materials, instead of just buying new items.

4. A first step for the implementation stage of the project may be marking out the site/various areas according to the plan.

5. Next, you will need to prepare the groundwork of the space, and prepare the ground to plant any vegetation.

6. If you are using any raised beds, these will need to be built. These can be built using Eco-Bricks (recycled milk cartoons, filled with single use plastics) and secured using 2,1" wood and covered in material. Take a look at our Helpful Resources box for more information.

7. You may wish to add in prayer stations, statues, crosses or displays with prayers and information about caring for our Common Home.

8. Once everything is finished and the site is safe for visitors, you may like to arrange an opening of the Prayer Garden, inviting members parishioners, pupils, staff and families. Take a look at the next page for a suggested blessing.

9. Finally, don't forget to share photos of your finished gardens with the diocese on social media. You can find us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter at @salforddiocese

Blessing for a PRAYER GARDEN

The following is provided as a suggestion and may be adapted. Please discuss this blessing with your parish priest.

Opening Hymn

·He's got the whole world in his hands
·All things bright and beautiful

Sign of the Cross and Greeting

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

R/ Amen.

The Lord be with you.

R/ *And with your spirit.*

Opening words and reflection

Scripture

·Genesis 1-2:2

·Daniel 3:50-90

Blessing (with Holy Water)

All powerful God, you created all things, and you are present throughout the universe and in every creature, You embrace with your tender love all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love, so that we may have the strength and courage to protect all life and the beauty of our world, preserving it from pollution and destruction.

Fill us with your peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one,

And caring for the Earth, our common home.

Teach us to discover the worth of every creature on this earth,

Let us protect those at risk and in danger,

Encourage us as we seek justice, love and peace.

Stay with us each day, with the power of your grace.

We ask you now to bless this garden, ✠ in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, may all who come here, experience your love.

We ask this through Christ our Lord,

Amen

The priest moves around the garden, sprinkling it with Holy Water.

The Our Father

Let us say together the words our Saviour taught us. Our Father...

Final Blessing

The Lord be with you.

R/ *And with your spirit.*

May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.

R/ Amen.

Go in peace

R/ *Thanks be to God.*

Closing Hymn

·How Great Thou Art

