

LIVING AND DYING WELL OPEN GATE RETREAT DAY ONE.

TELL YOUR STORY

A grave digger said 'I feel sad that so many people are lowered in the grave I have dug who have never told their story'.

Read pages 1-43 of the book.

Write down:

Your first good memory and your first bad memory.

Review your life: Fill in pages 32-35.

What are you most thankful for?

What are you most thankful for?

What are you most disappointed by?

What do you need to share? With whom? Do it now.

LIVING AND DYING WELL OPEN GATE RETREAT DAY TWO

An old man dreamed he was at an airport departure lounge about to embark on the departing plane. An official said 'You cannot embark because you have too much excess luggage'. He returned to the airport lounge and sorted things out in various airport lounges. Then he walked a second time to the departing plane and entered it clothed in nothing but a leotard! On days 2-5 we shall do some sorting out in a different lounge each day.

AIRPORT LOUNGE ONE: MEMORIES, SCENTS AND SOUNDS.

Read pages 67-103

Create an actual or mental photo album of people and places that mean most to you.

Place a picture or photo on the wall near you.

Place this in your bedroom as you consider your move from this world to the next.

What are your favourite flowers? ,,,

Depending on the time of year, place plants or scents that you can see and smell.

What are your top five favourite pieces of music? Assemble CD's and place these in a rack by a CD player by your bedside.

Listen to one of these.

LIVING AND DYING WELL OPEN GATE RETREAT DAY THREE

AIRPORT LOUNGE OF FORGIVENESS AND HEALING OF MEMORIES

Read pages 117-122

As in your mind you enter this lounge, choose a comfy lounge chair, and write down a festering or buried hurt, and the name(s) those who have hurt you whom you need to forgive. Imagine they are present. Explain to them how you feel or write to them a letter. If and when you are ready say 'I forgive you'.

Now write down some people you think you may have hurt. In your heart invite them to forgive you.

If they are alive and it seems appropriate, email or write to them saying sorry.

Provide yourself with a little container of oil. Make the sign of the cross on your forehead, or heart or hands and repeat these words as if they are from Jesus: 'I forgive you your sins, I heal your wounded memories, I set you free to soar with me.'

(Christians in a sacramental tradition may, of course, choose to make a confession to a priest).

LIVING AND DYING WELL OPEN GATE RETREAT DAY FOUR

AIRPORT LOUNGE OF POEMS, WRITINGS, YOU TUBES AND PRAYERS THAT INSPIRE

Read pages 123 -153 of the book.

Assemble, write out and lace by your bed five favourite poems to read or listen to.

Look up five favourite Scripture passages, especially words of Jesus, that you wish to recall on your death bed. Print or write these out and have by your bedside.

Now do the same with prayers.

Now do the same with songs. Have a CD of these beside you.

Repeat some of these over and over again until they sink into you.

LIVING AND DYING WELL OPEN GATE RETREAT DAY FIVE

INSPIRED FINAL PASSING OVERS

Read pages 161 – end.

What are the deepest things in your heart you wish you had said to estranged and to close loved ones?

Record these or write them or phone them.

If you have not done this, make or supplement your funeral arrangements in the light of the final 'pull-out forms' (you can cut them out).

After reflecting on these pages, write down what heaven means to you.

Which of the inspiring deaths recorded in the book, or otherwise known to you, inspires you most?

Which inspiring words would you most like to say during your passing over?

Which inspiring words would you most like to be said during your passing over.

You are called to The Endless Adventure.

If you wish, write in an email to revd.ray.simpson@btinternet.com one question, one thing you have learned or one thing you cherish in the light of this DIY Covid retreat.