

## Jesus + the Kingdom Living Out God's Dream

### **Our Father**

After praying the Our Father slowly, allow 10-15' for each person to journal or write out their own versions of the Our Father prayer. Jon Foreman's song offers one example of placing this prayer many of us know well into our own words and time.

*Continue the meeting by reading and reflecting on the following passage:*

After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" (Mark 1:14-15) When Jesus said to repent, he was not talking about our behavior. But he was aiming at the idea of the way we must change our thinking. It is the change in thinking that is integral to kingdom living, influencing every aspect of our lives.

Jesus often gets away with giving the kind of advice that is easier said than done. He is allowed to do so because he promises to remain with us in these struggles...all the way to the mystery of the cross and resurrection. While our burdens and hopes will pass away and change with time, what remains constant to us is Jesus' abiding presence in Scripture, in the Sacraments, and in the body of believers. Jesus said that the kingdom is not intended to just be "up there" but also to be manifested down here...to invade this earth. And it is through us, the church, through our community of faith that God aims to achieve this, reflecting the kingdom of God here in our time.

When Jesus taught his disciples to pray, he told them to say, "May your Kingdom come, may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." And so the Kingdom Jesus proclaimed is about something that is meant to be accomplished here, in this world, in a society that his followers are called to embody.

God has a gift for us and it is the gift of the Holy Spirit...living within us to guide us, showing us God's plan, path, and purpose for our life. God wants to reveal God's dream for us, but we have to be willing to be open to being led by the Spirit. Jesus promised we will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes to us, yet we still live as if we are powerless at times. Why? Because we are unwilling to be led...to allow God's Kingdom to live in, from, and through us.