

Pilgrimage afternoon

On certain days, we have some short pilgrimage walks happening. On these days, there are two further events in the Lady Chapel

At 3.30pm, there will be a **Contemplative Prayer** time in the Lady Chapel. This is meditative prayer in silence, and you will be led into the silence together.

At 4.30pm, there will be a **special Pilgrimage Service** in the Lady Chapel and we would be delighted if you can join us.

A prayer before leaving:

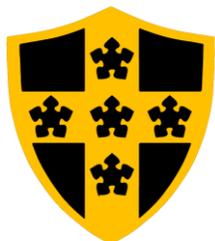
God of all our journeys, thank you for the time I have spent here.

Bless all those for whom I have prayed and be with me as I continue in my life. May I know your presence within, especially when I need strength, support of courage. Help us all to grow in Christ and to give more love, light and life into this world. Amen

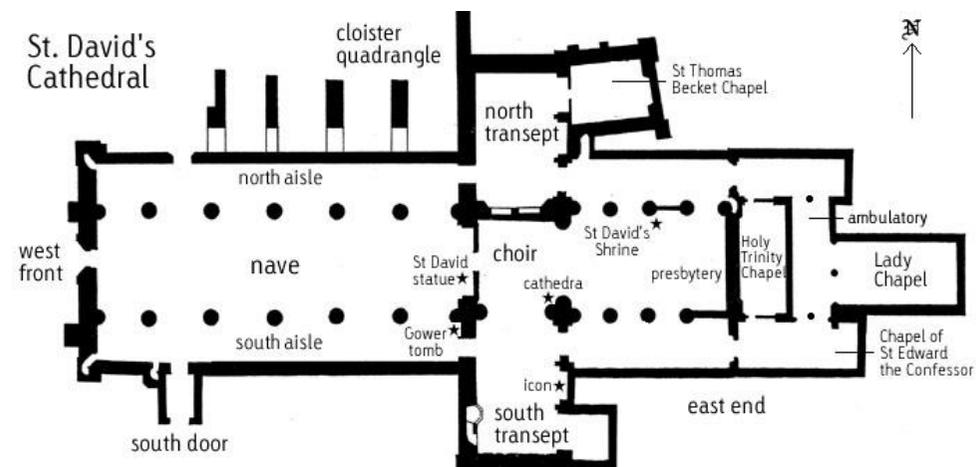
A prayer of St Paul for us all:

“I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.”

(Ephesians 3:16-19)



St Davids Cathedral: a Pilgrimage Within



This cathedral is an ancient and hallowed place, in a sacred valley that has been prayed in for at least 1400 years since St David settled here. Since the early middle ages it has been a place of pilgrimage, a holy destination, a site of sacred encounter.

Prayers of the centuries

*Let the stones cry out, though clouds of doubt
May seek to flout the prayers of the centuries.*

*The stones declare, in blue-grey glare,
That lives have dared to pray for centuries.*

*The touching place, the sacred space,
Where many have gazed upon God's face
In the prayers of the centuries.*

Let the stones cry out. Rev'd Don MacGregor

The essence of pilgrimage is to go on a journey, and we hope you can take some time to have a prayerful, reflective journey around the cathedral. Please take your time to proceed slowly around – below is a suggested route and some thoughts for the journey.

For reflection on your slow walk around.

1. Sit in the **Nave** for a while, taking it in. Look up and around. Notice the sloping floor and pillars and the solid stone. The master builders had to make many adjustments as they built it. *What adjustments have you made in your life? Has the Master Builder had any input?*
2. Walk up the **South Aisle**. Have a look at Bishop Gower's tomb. Notice that there is much graffiti carved into it, dating back to the 1500s. *What has been carved into your life that has left its mark? Remember the lessons you have learnt and give thanks.* Next to Bishop Gower's tomb is the statue of St David.
3. In the **South Transept**, gaze for a moment at the 17th century icon on the wall for a while. It comes from the Eastern Orthodox tradition and shows the Prophet Elijah being fed by ravens sent by God to sustain him in. *In what way do you feel sustained by God? Does Christ Jesus feature in your journey through life? Can you turn to him?*
4. Walk round and into the **Choir** (or Quire). St Davids cathedral is unique in that the reigning sovereign is a member of the Chapter and one of the stalls bears the Royal Coat of Arms. The back of some of the stalls bear the coats of arms of the nobility. The underside of the misericord seats have some fascinating carvings of faces and situations. Note the intricacy of the woodwork, a labour of love. Look upwards to the top of the tower. This is a place of uplifting music and song in worship. *Think of something that makes your heart sing. Enter into it and feel the joy of that. Lift up your heart to God and give thanks.*
5. As you come out of the Choir, note St Davids shrine on the left and the High Altar ahead (we come to those later). Proceed up to **Holy Trinity Chapel**, behind the High Altar. This tiny chapel has a beautiful roof and an altar made of medieval carved stone fragments. Pause to sit here for a moment in this place with its deep roots of prayer. *You might like to think and pray for those who live and work here, those who visit, and your own reasons for visiting.*
6. Go to the **Lady Chapel** at the east end of the Cathedral. It honours Mary, the mother of Jesus for her godly qualities of strength, nurturing, willingness and constant love. *How do you see God working in your*

life? In what ways have you changed? Have you, like Mary, offered your life to God?

7. Come down the north side and you will see the icons of St Non and St Justinian on the reverse side of the Shrine. Enter into **the Shrine** area and sit to look at the three icons of St David, St Andrew and St Patrick. As he was dying, St David said "Do the little things you have heard and seen through me." *What little things could you do that would make the world a better place? Ask God for the strength to do them.*
8. The North Transept and **St Thomas à Beckett Chapel**. This chapel is a quiet space for prayer. *Take time to offer your thoughts and prayers to God through Christ Jesus.*
9. Coming back to the Nave, you will see **the Labyrinth** laid out on the floor near the West door. Labyrinths were a feature of many medieval cathedrals - one of the best remaining examples is found in Chartres Cathedral in northern France. Unlike a maze they have only one path - there are no dead ends. People walk the labyrinth slowly, as an aid to contemplative prayer and reflection, as a spiritual exercise, or as a form of pilgrimage.

Labyrinth – a mnemonic

Life is one turn after

Another on an endless succession of

Blind but purposeful steps.

Yet the walk goes on,

Revealing depths of

Insight, intuition and internal

Notes not dreamt of in the

Tuneless times, but bringing alive the

Harmonies in the sacred stillness

You may also like to look at the **Cloisters area and the Treasury**. Go through the doors by the giftshop to access them.