DERRY DIOCESAN CATECHETICAL CENTRE

Guided Meditation: Simon of Cyrene Carries the Cross

Before you and your family begin: One person reads slowly
(welcome everyone and ask them to relax and follow the instructions below)

Place your feet firmly on the floor, side by side.
Place your back against the back of your chair, and imagine your spine extending down into the floor, anchoring you safely to it.
Close your eyes and clasp your hands loosely on your lap.
Imagine that you are seated on a headland overlooking the sea.
The sun is shining warmly on your face…… you are breathing in clean, invigorating sea air…… and it is filling you with a sense of well-being.
Listen to the breathing of the sea as it goes in and out……..in and out……
Now your breathing fuses with the breathing of the sea……, and you are one, breathing together…… breathing in through your nose to the count of six…… and breathing out through your mouth to the count of eight.
(Breathing exercise for minimum of three breaths from this point.)

Setting the scene (read very slowly)

Imagine that you are walking up a stretch of wide stone steps in Jerusalem. You hear noises…. sounds of shouting and screaming……some women are crying in the distance…. you hear angry voices……you move towards the sounds…… and suddenly you see a woman …… she hurries up the hill …… she is carrying a cloth in her hands…… At that moment you feel a hand on your shoulder…… it is a Roman soldier…… you are afraid…… what did I do wrong……. you try to think if you have broken Roman law…… nothing comes to mind……. There is no more time to think…. because the soldier pulls you into the middle of the crowd…. and points to a man carrying a cross…… he signals that you are to carry the cross for the man….

You look at the man……. He is bleeding and exhausted……. You feel pity for this man but at the same time you are worried about carrying his cross …. What if the Romans crucify you also!

You reach out for the cross slowly…… the man looks up and smiles at you…. you feel better……he doesn't seem like someone who has broken the law… you start to move forward…. you feel the weight of the cross on your shoulders…… you say a big thank you to the gods that you are only carrying for a short distance…. who is this man, you wonder…Very slowly you remember…… as you were coming into the city a week ago this man was being called King by the crowd …….the man people said would save everyone……what has happened… and now he is hated and abused…… You want to understand…… to talk to the man but you have no time to act … for a soldier pulls you out from under the cross and pushes you into the crowd…… you are swallowed up by people and when you turn around the man and his cross have gone.

Now read the Bible extract below.

Luke 23: 26

The soldiers led Jesus away, and as they were going, they met a man from Cyrene named Simon who was coming into the city from the country. They seized him, put the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus

At the end invite everyone participating to slowly 'awake'