

JESUS Centered

The Salvation Army National Prayer Focus 2022: Jesus Centered AUGUST 21 – SEPTEMBER 11 2022

Access all the resources here:
mysalvos.org.au/NationalPrayerFocus2022

The Salvation Army Australia invites you to join in 22 days of prayer for our National Prayer Focus from Sunday August 21 to Sunday September 11. Our 2022 theme is 'Jesus Centered', and has three key ways to get connected:

National Prayer Focus 22 Daily Devotionals

'The Salvos Field Guide Devotional: Recognising Jesus in our everyday'

This freely available 22-day devotional can be read online, downloaded or printed. Featuring 22 short reflections from Salvos, the devotional has thought-provoking questions, worship-song suggestions and first-hand story about how these Salvos recognise Jesus in everyday of life. There are four accompanying sermon outlines for each of the Sundays in National Prayer Focus 2022, available on the site.

National Prayer Focus 22 Nightly Online Meetings

Find the link for National Prayer Focus Online meetings live or recorded here: mysalvos.org.au/NationalPrayerFocus2022

Join us from Sunday August 21 to Sunday September 11 for 22 nightly online prayer meetings. These will be 45 mins in total, featuring a variety of ways to pray, artists and ideas for being Jesus Centered, and involve times of group prayer. The meetings and associated artistic creations will be uploaded after each night.

Paperback 'Jesus Centered: Focusing on Jesus in a distracted world' by Steve Brown

The Salvation Army Australia's National Prayer Focus 2022 is based on 'Jesus Centered: Focusing on Jesus in a distracted world' by Steve Brown. 'The Salvos Field Guide Devotional' does not require you to be familiar with the book, but if you would like to purchase a copy to continue your prayer journey, The Salvation Army Salvationist Supplies have copies available at a discounted rate while stocks last. Email trade.melbourne@salvationarmy.org.au to order.

There will also be a Salvos Field Guide Devotional for Kids made available from July 31, with simple activities and reflections to engage the children in our lives in prayer.

The Salvation Army Australia's National Prayer Focus 2022 will be a powerful time of connection, rejuvenation and joy as we seek God and seek good together. The National Prayer Focus 'Salvos Field Guide' daily devotions and corresponding nightly online meetings will provide a deep and valuable prayer resource as we walk forward into the future. We expect remarkable things as God's people stop, listen and lean into what God is saying. May we recognise Jesus in our everyday, as we place Jesus as the centre of all we do.





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Sermon outline

National Prayer Focus Week 4

SUNDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2022

Theme: We can be Jesus Centered in every way in our everyday

Bible reading: Romans 12:1-2 The Message and Hebrews 1:1-3 NIV

Introduction

The final week of our journey of 'centering Jesus' in The Salvation Army Australia's National Prayer Focus. Where to from here, and what do we take with us as we walk forward into the future?

**To begin your sermon, reflect on some of the key learnings you 'take away' from the four weeks of praying together. If you joined in reading 'The Salvos Field Guide' or the nightly meetings, share your experience or anything surprising or comforting you found. If appropriate, ask others who have taken part in the National Prayer Focus to share their experience, by prior ask or on the spot feedback. Use their words to cut/shape the next part.*

Main point 1: Jesus is in our everyday. What does this mean?

The National Prayer Focus Salvos Field Guide had stories and reflections from everyday Salvos from around Australia. Read one or two extracts that you found helpful aloud again.

'Every day' is exactly that – daily finding the aspects of God revealed around us. When something is 'every day' we can take it for granted or wait for a special season for God's grace. But God says right now is where we can take Jesus's words and apply them. Is this true in your experience? What might you need to recognise Jesus today?

ILLUSTRATION:

Give an example of something you have done 'every day', and then found fresh insight or revelation from God one day. Was it visiting a barista, or serving a client, or feeding the birds – when Jesus suddenly revealed himself afresh?

Main point 2: Jesus wants us to be holy – extraordinary in the ordinary.

Holiness seems like a scary or inaccessible word to some people. To be 'set apart' for God's purposes. Yet Jesus says that every day vessels can reveal his glory, and that we are to part of his temple made from stones. Ephesians 2:19-22 says 'Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.' What could be more ordinary than a crowd of strangers and unknowns, or a pile of stones?



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We find in the two passages Hebrews 1:1-3 NIV and Romans 12:1-2 the idea of ordinary becoming extraordinary. Jesus made all things in the universe, is the radiant glory of God – and is in turn making us extraordinary by his grace and revelation. How might this look in our everyday spiritual walk and interactions with others?

John 14:26 says 'But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.' Holy Spirit makes all things possible for us, to follow Jesus, to know what to do and say, and to learn at all times.

ILLUSTRATION:

Tell a story of a time you felt or experienced holiness. It can be as relatable or supernatural as you like – but make sure to draw the line between that experience and how you can keep seeking to bring that holy experience into a daily act or exercise, even if the 'feeling' isn't daily.

APPLICATION:

Who are the people you see God's holiness exemplified in? What do we do when we don't 'feel' holy? How does Jesus meet us in our shortcomings? What do we do when we've tried and tried to be holy, but it feels so far away? What does an 'everyday' understanding of holiness – extraordinary set-apartness look like (express a lesson you've learned'. Find a quote that you feel sums up holiness, and another scripture that brings the whole ball of wool to life.

Main point 3: Jesus at the centre of our lives.

As we have journeyed together with intentional prayer over the last four weeks, The Salvation Army Australia has sought God and sought good. Amos 5:14 says 'Seek good, not evil, that you may live. Then the Lord God Almighty will be with you, just as you say he is.'

As we look to the future, let us consider these points:

Purpose: What is your 'purpose' as a follower of Jesus?

Provision: What does God promise to provide you, in this leg of your journey?

Possibilities: What possibilities in the future are opening up: for you, your community and for those who might see God through you?

This could be a time of writing together, or time in silent reflection and prayer, or speaking in groups. Purpose, provision and possibilities give us hope for the future as a movement and as individual people.

Application: Reflect on your answers to these questions. What surprises you? What gives you hope? What do you need from your community to arm yourself for the tasks ahead? What might you need to let go?

Review

God has given us all we need to follow Jesus. Our Holy Spirit teaches us, guides us and leads us. Jesus is in our everyday, all around us. As we listen to the stories in the room, the 'Salvos Field Guide', the online nightly meetings and stories of faith in the Bible, we see the extraordinary in the ordinary. Staying close to community, leaning on one another, being teachable and looking for the possibilities draw us into deeper revelation of God and God's mission for the world.



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Challenge

To finish the National Prayer Focus 2022, Jesus Centered, we invite you to share your Purpose, Provision and Possibilities insights with others. Make a commitment today to not just throw away the piece of paper or reflect on this time with fondness – but use it as an excuse for action, drawing close to Jesus and renewed vigour to seek God and seek good for others. Ask others what their 'purpose, provision and possibilities' were, share them with friends and other Salvos and loved ones – together we are casting a vision for the future, as a Jesus Centered movement who recognises Jesus in our everyday and seeks to serve God in all we do.



Rosy Keane is the The Salvation Army Australia's National Secretary for Spiritual Life, a follower of Jesus into uncharted spaces, a poet and lover of beautiful things. Rosy moved to Melbourne from New Zealand in January and is inspired by what God is doing through the Salvos in Australia. Rosy believes the Holy Spirit promises breakthrough when we listen to God's intimate, wild whisperings.