



St. Richard's Hospice
CARING FOR LIFE Reg. Charity No. 515668

A spiritual treasure hunt

The Chaplaincy Department invites you to bring a stone and a flag and undertake a journey in the garden to inspire reflection.

You can take as long as you like, and you can do as much or as little as you wish.



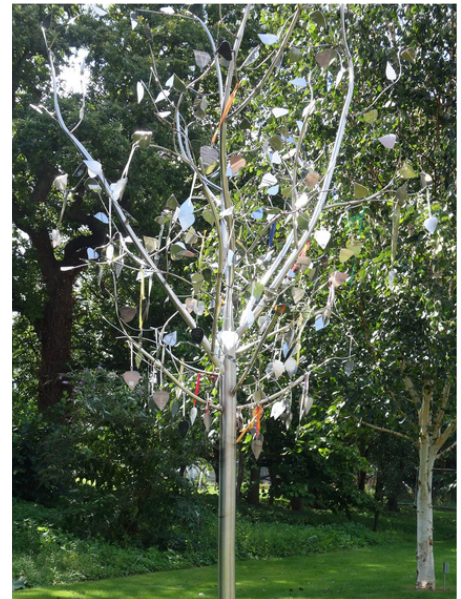


I. Start at the Tree of Life

This tree holds leaves that have been placed in memory of loved ones who have died. It reminds us of loss – loss of health, freedom, relationships, jobs. It reminds us of our own mortality.



There's a rosemary plant in the border by the tree. If you wish, you can pick a piece and take it on your journey.



Ophelia, from William Shakespeare's Hamlet, said:

**"There's rosemary, that's for remembrance.
Pray you, love, remember."**



2. The pond

Journey under the plant arches and pause at the pond.



Stop

Acknowledge your thoughts, feelings and body sensations. Accept them as far as is possible.



Look inwards

Notice the air in your nostrils, your mouth, chest, or belly. Bring your full attention to where the breath is most vivid in your body.

Look outwards

Become more fully aware of the garden: the colours, textures, smells and wildlife.

3. Under the plant arches to the circle

The photograph shows a place where rubbish has collected. This can happen with our minds too.



When you get to the circle you will find a bowl.

Place your stone here as a symbol of laying down your rubbish or burdens.



4. Family statue

Journey from the circle, along the path by the side of the grass to the family statue. The statue reminds us of our connectedness.

Who is important to you? Who made you who you are? Is there someone you are particularly grateful to?



Sunflowers turn according to the position of the sun. In other words, they 'chase the light'. Have you ever wondered what happens on cloudy and rainy days when the sun is completely covered by clouds?

This is what happens: they turn towards each other to share their energy. Nature's perfection is amazing.

Now let's apply this reflection to our lives. May we be supportive and empowering when people face difficulties. And may we have people we can turn to, to renew our energy - especially on the gloomy days.





5. Pergola

Journey to the end of the path next to the visitors' car park and on to the grass by the pergola.

The pergola is a support for plants. Who or what is your support? Do you have a faith or a philosophy in life? If so, you might like to name it out loud or in your heart.

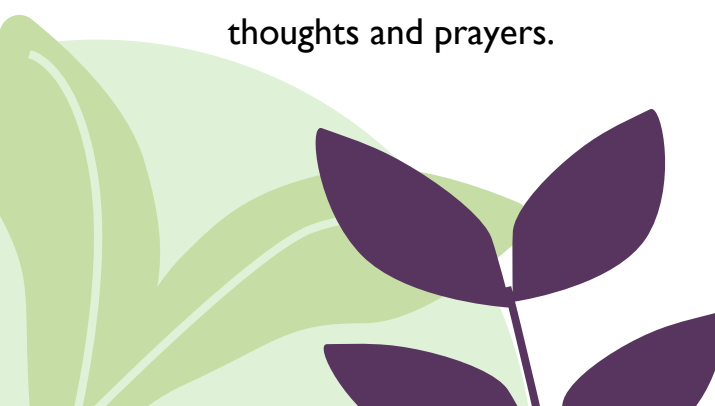
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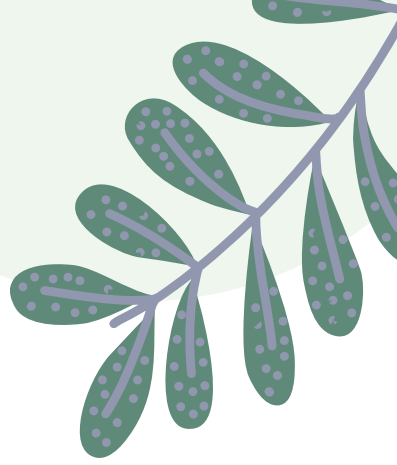
Prayer flags are often found in the Himalayas. They are used to bless the surrounding countryside and to promote peace, strength and wisdom.

Tibetan Buddhists believe the prayers will be blown by the wind to spread good will and compassion.

Ours are not Tibetan Buddhist flags but we have respectfully borrowed the idea from their tradition.

You may wish to tie your flag on the line as a symbol of your innermost thoughts and prayers.





6. Boundary hedge

Proceed along the boundary to the corner and follow the hedge around to the left until you reach the sun catcher. Watch how it works with nature, catching the light and the breeze.



Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.

Albert Einstein



7. Fire pit

In the Christian tradition, fire symbolises the Holy Spirit of God. Whatever your own tradition, you might like to take a moment to read this special blessing:



To come home to yourself, by John O'Donohue

May all that is unforgiven in you,
Be released.

May your fears yield
Their deepest tranquillities.

May all that is unlive in you,
Blossom into a future,
Graced with love.





8. Path from fire pit, down the steps

Before you go down the steps,
pause on the path and repeat the
mindful minute you did at the pond
during step two.

Stop. Look inwards. Look outwards.

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Have patience with everything unresolved in your heart
Try to love the questions themselves as if they were
Locked rooms or books written in a foreign language.

Do not search for the answers, which could not be given you now
Because you would not be able to live them.
And the point is to live everything.

Rainer Maria Rilke



9. Back to the Tree of Life


We finish where we began at the Tree of Life. We started by thinking of it as a place of loss. The symbolism of the tree also has a more positive message.

The leaves on a tree die and fall off in the autumn. The dead leaves nourish the roots and, in the Spring, we see signs of new life again. That is the way of the natural world of which we are a part.



St Richard's Hospice uses the snowdrop as a symbol of hope, the first sign of new life when all seems desolate.





If you feel you would like to finish your Spiritual Treasure Hunt with a prayer, you might like to say the following words written by Reinhold Niebuhr in approximately 1934:

**God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.**

Amen.

Please ask for Clare Griffiths, Lead Chaplain, or Sarah Bruce, Community Chaplain, if your walk has stirred up emotions you would like help with.

Clare and Sarah are also available if you would like to talk to someone about your spiritual or religious care needs.

Chaplains are here for everyone, irrespective of their beliefs.





**Thank you for taking part in the
Spiritual Treasure Hunt**

Please keep this booklet, or recycle after use.



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