

1. The bottom of the well



The Celts revered the well as a sacred space because it is the source of water, the cradle and assurance of life itself. Yet that source of life is only reached by descending into the depths of a deep, dark shaft.

Not all of our memories are charged with the energy of joy. Some carry energy that feels destructive and negative. Yet these 'wells' of our lives may be the very place from which we draw living water.

Take some time now to look deep into some of the times in your life when you have felt at

the bottom of the well. Without any kind of judgement, of yourself or of others, just acknowledge your memories and let them be there. Write down or draw what comes to mind.



2. A place of turning

One thing is sure, that at the bottom of the well there is no other way than 'up'. A well, then, is not just a source of water but also a place of turning. The well of despair and destructiveness can become something life-giving, and in ways we cannot possibly predict – or even believe in – when we feel our lives have reached rock bottom. It is this potential for miracle that can make it into sacred space. The place of our abject poverty can become a place of resurrection.



The story of Joseph in the Old Testament is one such example of God bringing something good out of a painful situation. The experience of the woman who encountered Jesus at the well, described in John's Gospel, is another example.

Look back at the difficult times in your life that you wrote about earlier. With the wisdom of hindsight, write down anything positive that came out of those experiences.

Think about your life now. Can you see the potential for a change, for turning to the light at the top of the well?

3. Meeting Jesus at the well

Jesus told the Samaritan woman at the well, 'Whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst'. What do you think Jesus meant by this?



Take some time now, in your imagination, and let Jesus take you to the edge of any well in your own life and show you the new possibilities that might flow out of His living water. What form might these new possibilities take for you?

Pour yourself a cup of water and drink.

4. Going deeper with God

The Celts revered wells as sacred space because they enable us to draw life-giving water from the depths of the earth. What life-giving water could you draw from your own depths?

Spiritual writer Metropolitan Anthony says that on our spiritual journey we need to turn inwards, to find the deepest place within ourselves where we and God can meet.

In our everyday life we do not often commune

with this deeper part of ourselves but there are times when we are aware of it, and we may indeed find



that God is speaking to us at this depth. We may become aware of this when we are touched by a beautiful piece of music, a poem or a painting, or have a fresh realization of the wonder of the sky, mountains, rivers and trees.

Bring to mind the things in life that take you to a deeper place and give you a sense of God. Light a candle and as you do, offer up to God a prayer of thanks for all of these things that call you to go deeper with God.

5. Autumn leaves

In autumn, trees let go of their leaves. They can teach us about the promise that lies at the bottom of the well, about the place of turning.

Just as trees let their leaves fall to the ground, so we find that at any time in our lives, some of the things we have cherished are dying. Some of our fallen leaves may represent losses we have suffered through no fault of our own; others may have resulted from wrong choices or actions.



But along with the leaves, seeds and fruits are falling to the ground, to bring new life in the spring. There is often a direct connection between what has been lost and the new seed that is growing from it. For example, the loss of some particular security may have forced us beyond our comfort zone and drawn us into an unexpected new level of confidence.

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If a relationship has died in your life, reflect on the difference that relationship made to both of you while it was still alive, and how those fruits might grow now into something new for you.

Take a sheet of paper and write on it anything helpful and life-giving that has blessed you during these reflections today. Place it somewhere you will see it as a reminder of how God has spoken to you today.

The choice is ours – to stay buried in our sorrow at the bottom of the well, or let the bucket of life draw us back to the waiting world, enriched, not diminished, by our experience of the darkness. If we can make the choice for life, then the bottom of the well will have become for us a sacred space.

THE END
