

THE PRACTICE OF CENTERING PRAYER

Centering Prayer is a contemporary form of an ancient Christian prayer practice that takes us gently into a deeper and deeper intimacy with God. We are invited to be still, and silent, with the Divine. We sit down with the intention to consent to both the presence and action of the Holy Spirit within us, inviting Him to heal and transform us.

Begin by Choosing your “Sacred Word”

What special words have power to lift your eyes to God and your heart to the Spirit? In centering prayer, we use a single word to focus on God and prepare ourselves for the gift of God’s presence.

Choose a sacred word that represents your desire for God or God’s yearning for you. A simple word is best, such as Jesus, Lord, God, Father, Spirit, love, peace or beloved. Choose ONE word, not a phrase.

Preparing for Centering Prayer

Begin by asking the Lord to teach you how to still and quiet your soul. Remember that this will take time and practice. Do not strive or fall into self-effort, for your part is to simply open yourself to Him and to the work of His Holy Spirit in you.

For now, simply ask Him to bless you, protect you, guide you...as you spend this time with Him. Know that it is His good pleasure to help you learn to draw near to Him!

Find a position that allows you to be relaxed and alert. It helps to have your neck and spine aligned. Close your eyes and breathe deeply several times. Consciously release any muscle tension you become aware of. Breathe in peace, breathe out tension.

Centering Prayer

Turn your attention to God’s presence. Let yourself be fully aware of God’s love that always surrounds you.

As you become relaxed, silently and gently offer your sacred word to God as a sign of your desire for and consent to God’s presence and action within you. As you become aware of other thoughts, memories, feelings or images, instead of fighting them, gently return to your sacred word.

Remain in this state of rest and receptivity to God for a period of time. (your goal is 20 minutes). End with the Lord’s Prayer or some other prayer from your heart.

Close your prayer time by thanking God for His presence and love.