

Centering Prayer

Be Still and Know that I am God. (Psalm 46:10)

Centering Prayer is a receptive method of silent prayer that prepares us to receive the gift of contemplative prayer, prayer in which we experience God's presence within us, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than consciousness itself. This method of prayer is both a relationship with God and a discipline to foster that relationship.

Centering Prayer is not meant to replace other kinds of prayer. Rather, it adds depth of meaning to all prayer and facilitates the movement from more active modes of prayer - verbal, mental or affective prayer - into a receptive prayer of resting in God. Centering Prayer emphasizes prayer as a personal relationship with God and as a movement beyond conversation with Christ to communion with Christ.

Centering Prayer Guidelines

Choose a sacred word as a symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within. Use a word of one or two syllables such as God, Jesus, Love, Peace, Let Go, Faith, Stillness.

Sitting comfortably and with eyes closed, settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God's presence and action within. Imagine laying your sacred word as gently as you would a feather on a piece of absorbent cotton.

When different thoughts come to your mind, return ever-so-gently to the sacred word.

At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes.

Centering Prayer is based on the wisdom of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount: *When you pray, go to your inner room and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.* (Matthew 6:6). It familiarizes us with God's first language which is SILENCE.

