



Rest In Me

Session Notes

July - October 2020

What Each Session Includes...

- We Enter the Silence with a Breathing Prayer, or Chant
- Rest
- Breathe
- Center
- ... *Thoughts may come*
- Silence
- Chime
- Quiet Sharing
- Group Discussion
- Closing & Resources

Integrating Session Topics with the Practice of Silence

Specific topics with accompanying resources are prepared ahead of time for each week of the series. These are used as a secondary resources.

Because our practice is created to open our hearts to the messages of God and the Holy Spirit may bring, the quiet sharing will start with individuals sharing their experience or any topics coming up for them. This is voluntary, Anyone may speak, or pass.

Once that sharing is complete, the group will decide whether to continue on one of the topics that came up during the initial sharing, or move to the prepared topic.

Why we Start with “Love” as the first topic.

We Love Because He First Loved Us ~1 John 4:19



Teacher, which commandment is the most important?
Jesus answered:

“Love the Lord Your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it. Love your neighbor as yourself”

~Matthew 22:37-38



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Session III “Prayer (Overview)”

27 July 2020

Why we Enter the Silence with a Breathing Prayer, or Chant

We will begin our experience with a breathing prayer, a chant. Our breath will connect us bodily with the divine nature of the Sacred One Being that is the source of all breath. Sacred chanting is universally honored and acknowledged in the great spiritual traditions because it moves energy out of the head, into the heart. Many people have absorbed criticism about their voices – “your voice is no good, you can’t sing on pitch” – and have learned to shut down their true voices. The same things that make us protect and cover up our true voices, and therefore also cover up our hearing are the same things that make us shut down and cover up our true self, our hearing to life, and our hearing to God...As we learn we can do it, as we are willing to work through those old messages, a whole new field of healing and reconciliation opens up for us. God is breath. All that breathes resides in the Sacred One Being. From my breath to the air we share, to the wind that blows around the planet, Sacred Unity inspires us all. *God is Spirit and His worshipers must worship in the spirit and in truth.* ~ Jn 4:24

Rest

Lie or sit comfortably for a few minutes, feet shoulder width apart, and place one hand lightly over the heart. Without trying to change anything, simply notice the breath. There are many different moments in the breath’s journey; the feeling of it as it begins to come in, when it approaches fullness, as it briefly turns over, and then, when it begins to go out, when it approaches emptiness, and when it turns over again.

Breathe

Take a few deep, slow breaths, and let all the ideas, thoughts, and conversations swirling around in your head flow out of you as you exhale. Breathe slowly and deeply and you will relax ...slowly and deeply. At each twist and turn of the breath’s journey, our bodies respond in a particular way. We may also notice a presence or absence of sensation, thought, or emotion at a particular stage. We may feel that we want to stay longer in one part of the journey than another – the beginning, the middle, or the end. Simply notice all of these sensations without judgement for a few minutes. Now without particular awareness, take 5 deep and slow breaths. This awareness is not in the mind, it is in the heart

Center

Allow your attention to be in the core of your physical body, in your heart space.

There is spaciousness here to hold all your thoughts in loving awareness and without the need for the mind to cling to them. This space is receptive of a wide spectrum of energy that is not available to what your mind alone can sense. This space has its own subtle, loving energy. where your Being is whole and you are free to be your True Self. It is from this place that we begin our Silence. This silence can be an awareness of being suspended, held, and nurtured in a field of love. It is not in the mind. It is in the heart

.....*Thoughts may come.*

If you find yourself engaged with thoughts, simply release them as soon as you notice, breathe, and return to the heart space, to the awareness of the space of love, to the space of love. In some practices, you may have many thoughts arrive, Our intellect is a gift – and this is a practice. Simply bless and release them as soon as you notice them. The same with emotions or feelings that arise.

Sit

We will sit quietly for 20 minutes,

The leader will ring a chime at the end, and allow everyone to slowly come back to join the group. We will have soft discussion of topics that may have come up for us, always aware of the breath, of speaking from the heart.

Chime

At the end of 20 minutes, a soft chime will ring. Everyone will have a few minutes to slowly adjust from the quiet.



Sacred chanting is universally honored and acknowledged in the great spiritual traditions

*Seek God first.
Allow your attention to be in the core of your physical body, in your heart space, where the breath centers and connects our thoughts, physical sensations, emotions, and awareness and unites us with God*

Guidelines for Sharing after Silence

Emerging from the Silence

As each person emerges from the Silence, the leader quietly explains the next part of the session. We go around the room, one by one. If we choose, we can share a few comments about our experience, or topics that have come up for us. We do not comment on what has been shared, either as the person is sharing, or later, during discussions.

Listening

We simply listen deeply, from the heart, and do not speak. When it is our turn to speak, we try to stay connected to our heart space, and to be conscious of the energy there. We speak “from the heart.”

Sharing

Sharing moves around the room. At the end of sharing, the leader will ask the group whether they would like to discuss one of the topics that came up more deeply, or read from prepared, short readings. Content is prepared ahead of time, and the group may choose to share on the topics that came up, or on the prepared topic. If using the prepared topic

Please keep in mind...

- Participate with utmost clarity, and be mindful of the time
- Listen to others from the heart
- Accept each other completely as we are – non-judgemental
- Seek understanding, not agreement
- Maintain confidentiality and trust
- Speak from your own experience only, your lessons, or your understanding of how God or scripture are working in your life – not about ideas or theology
- Do not comment on what others have shared, give advice, or make suggestions
- Refrain from any interruptions, or from commenting directly to others when they are talking to start a conversation
- Refrain from sharing a second time, until all have had a chance to speak
- It's ok to be silent
- The leader has permission to gently remind the group if the discussion strays from these guidelines

We Love Because He First Loved Us ~1 John 4:19





“Prayer is the true medicine for our suffering.”

In prayer, we too can feel God’s presence. The tenderness of His gaze comforts us; the power of His words supports us and gives us hope

~ Pope Francis
Daily Reflections 21 July 2020

“Prayer is for me an outburst from the heart; it is a simple glance darted upward to Heaven, it is a cry of gratitude and of love in the midst of trial as in the midst of joy!”

~ St Therese de Lisieux
Diary of a Soul

How hard it is to fall in love with someone we don’t know - Prayer helps us know God, fall in love with Him, receive Him.

Would you like to share anything about your own prayer practice?

About anything that has brought you closer to God, or brought you more joy through prayer?

In one of his weekly General Audiences, Pope Francis said of prayer “Some think that to pray is to use many words. I too think of many Christians who believe that praying is to talk to God like a parrot. No! Praying is done from the heart, from inside,” .

“He does not need anything, our God: in prayer he asks only that we keep open a channel of communication with him to always discover ourselves [to be] his beloved children and [that] he loves us so much.”

Do you ever pray without words? If so, would you be willing to share about your practice?

1. <https://www.Vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-05/pope-francis-general-audience-christian-prayer-intimate.html>

Discussion: Passages Taken from a SMMCC Program on Prayer...

Do any of these speak to you and your experience of prayer?

1. Prayer is being with Jesus. Being. (Human BEING, not human DOING). Prayer is believing, letting go of our ideas of what prayer should be.
2. Prayer is remaining open to this inflowing of love, to receiving Him and welcoming Him. In this inflowing of love, God comes into our very soul and works in secret. But the effects on our lives will be marked and the fruits of the Holy Spirit will abound.
3. Prayer is God straining every nerve to convince us how utterly secure we are in the Father's love for us.
4. "On our side, prayer is simply being there: open, exposed, inviting God to do all God wants. Prayer is not *our* activity, *our* getting in touch with God, *our* coming to grips with or making ourselves desirable to God. We can do none of these things, nor do we need to, for God is there ready to do everything for us, loving us unconditionally. We know this in theory; but how many really know it in terms of practical living? We think we have to find our own way." (Essence of Prayer, Ruth Burrows, O.C.D., P. 28)
5. Prayer is almost a sigh before Jesus. In Psalm 5 it says: "give ear to my words, O Lord; understand my sighing. Attend to the sound of my cry. For to You I will pray, Lord; in the morning I will plead before You and wait. Give ear to my words, O Lord... through the abundance of your mercy, will I enter into your house." So prayer is entering into the very house of God!
6. A friend of mine said, "prayer is really you just saying 'yes' to Him... and giving Him permission to be with you. But you have to give him this permission. God will not force Himself into our hearts or overcome our free will. He will continue to send his legions to fight for us, and myriads of people in and out of our lives to call us back to Him. But if our answer is "No", then he lets us live in it, and possibly die in it. And that's why it is true that God sends no one to hell; we choose it for ourselves by our "No."
7. Why would God ever say no to our prayer?....St. Augustine said it could be that we pray badly - without faith, not persevering, not humbly. It could be because we ask for bad things, that is, things which are not good for us, things which can harm us or others.

1. <https://www.Vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-05/pope-francis-general-audience-christian-prayer-intimate.html>



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Daily Reflections 21 July 2020

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Diary of a Soul

Two stories reflecting silence in prayer from the Autobiography of Therese of Lisieux, Story of a Soul

“Those were specially happy days for me when I went fishing with my dear “King,” [her father] as I used to call him. Sometimes I tried my hand with a small rod of my own, but generally I preferred to sit on the grass some distance away. Then my reflections became really deep, and, without knowing what meditation meant, my soul was absorbed in prayer. Far-off sounds reached me, the murmuring of the wind, sometimes a few uncertain notes of music from a military band in the town a long way off...”

“I should have liked at this time to practice mental prayer, but Marie, finding me sufficiently devout, only let me say my vocal prayers. A mistress at the Abbey once asked me what I did on the holidays, when I stayed at home. I answered timidly; “ I often hide myself in a corner of my room where I can shut myself in with the bed curtains, and then I *think*.”

But what do you think about, said the good nun, laughing.

“I think about the good God, about the shortness of life, and about eternity. In a word, I *think*. My mistress did not forget this, and later on she used to remind me of the time when I thought, asking me if I still *thought*...Now I know that I was really praying, while my Divine Master gently instructed me.

“Prayer is for me an outburst from the heart; it is a simple glance darted upward to Heaven, it is a cry of gratitude and of love in the midst of trial as in the midst of joy!”

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2 August 2020

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Responsorial Psalm

PS 145:8-9, 15-16, 17-18

R. (cf. 16) **The hand of the Lord feeds us; he answers all our needs.**

The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness.

The LORD is good to all and compassionate toward all his works.

R. **The hand of the Lord feeds us; he answers all our needs.**

The eyes of all look hopefully to you, and you give them their food in due season;

you open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

R. **The hand of the Lord feeds us; he answers all our needs.**

The LORD is just in all his ways and holy in all his works. The LORD is near to all who call upon him, to all who call upon him in truth.

R. **The hand of the Lord feeds us; he answers all our needs.**

Reading 1 IS 55:1-3

Thus says the LORD: All you who are thirsty, come to the water! You who have no money, come, receive grain and eat; Come, without paying and without cost, drink wine and milk!

Why spend your money for what is not bread; your wages for what fails to satisfy?

Heed me, and you shall eat well, you shall delight in rich fare.

Come to me heedfully, listen, that you may have life.

I will renew with you the everlasting covenant, the benefits assured to David.

Reading 2 ROM 8:35, 37-39

Brothers and sisters: What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Alleluia MT 4:4B

R. **Alleluia, alleluia.**

One does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes forth from the mouth of God

R. **Alleluia, alleluia.**

Gospel MT 14:13-21

When Jesus heard of the death of John the Baptist, he withdrew in a boat to a deserted place by himself. The crowds heard of this and followed him on foot from their towns. When he disembarked and saw the vast crowd, His heart was moved with pity for them, and He cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples approached Him and said, "This is a deserted place and it is already late; dismiss the crowds so that they can go to the villages and buy food for themselves." Jesus said to them, "There is no need for them to go away; give them some food yourselves." But they said to him, "Five loaves and two fish are all we have here." Then he said, "Bring them here to me," and he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing, broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds.

They all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up the fragments left over— twelve wicker baskets full.

Those who ate were about five thousand men, not counting women and children.