

Notes on Contemplative Prayer

"How to Spend the 20 Minutes"

There are numerous ways to pray or meditate in silence. For our Thursday morning gathering at Rockway, I'm assuming that people will engage according to their own practice. Here are a few possibilities from the Christian tradition. Meditation from non-Christian traditions is also welcome.

Lectio Divina

- Slowly read and re-read a passage from the Bible or a spiritual text.
- Sit with the text and allow a word or phrase to emerge.
- Meditate on the word or phrase and the message it has for you.
- Move to dialogue with God...
- What do you want to say to God? What do you hear God saying to you?
- Sit and wait...
- Move to silent contemplative rest.
- When thoughts come, let them go and trust the Spirit working within.
- Finish with notes in a journal.

Ignatian Imaginative Contemplation

- Choose a narrative scene from the gospels.
- Read it slowly. Read the passage again.
- Ask the Lord to guide you as you enter into the scene with your imagination.
- What do you see? What are the sensations sounds and smells?
- Be there in the scene. Who are you? Watch and wait.
- If it seems appropriate, enter into a conversation with Jesus.
- What do you want to say to him? What do you imagine him saying to you?
- Rest in silence, pondering these things in your heart.
- Make notes in a journal.

Centering Prayer

- Choose a simple word to symbolize your intention to be present and available to God.
- Enter into a time of silent stillness.
- When you become aware that you are thinking, or focusing on a sensation or emotion, immediately drop it and let it go.
- Sometimes saying the word softly in your mind, can help with this.
- The key to this prayer is in the movement of "letting go."
- It is a prayer of surrender in the Spirit of Jesus, who surrendered himself to God.
- Do not fret about all the thoughts and distractions. They are simply opportunities to let go and return to naked presence.
- The goal is "objectless awareness." Being present to God without focusing on any particular thing. The Spirit does her work in silence.

*Scott Brubaker-Zehr
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See other side...

Additional Notes

Lectio Divina Sample Texts and Reading

- Psalm 36:7-9, Jeremiah 17:7-8, Isaiah 43:1-3a, Philippians 4:5b-7, parts of Psalm 139, Psalm 130, Psalm 121, Psalm 13, John 16:12-14, Psalm 25:1-5
- "Above all, trust in the slow work of the Spirit
We are quite naturally impatient in everything to reach the end without delay.
We should like to skip the intermediate stages.
We are impatient of being on the way to something unknown, something new...
Give yourself the benefit of believing that the Spirit is leading you, and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself in suspense and incomplete."
Teilhard de Chardin

Ignatian Contemplation Sample Texts

- Mark 10:46-52, John 1:35-39a.

Centering Prayer Sample Words

- Love, Open, Yield, Yes

Practicalities

- Latecomers are welcome and invited to simply join in.
- Washroom is through the foyer hallway and to the right.
- Water, Bibles, pens and paper are available on the foyer table.
- Feel free to bring your own seat or cushion.
- Feel free to walk in the church or use the sanctuary for prayer as well.
- If you need anything, just ask.

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