

Centering Prayer

Engaged Catholic Prayer

Below you'll find our prayer for May ---

Centering Prayer

Centering Prayer is a method of silent prayer that prepares us to receive the gift of experiencing God's presence within us, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than consciousness itself. The source of Centering Prayer is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The focus of Centering Prayer is the deepening of our relationship with the living Christ. This method of prayer is both a relationship with God and a discipline to foster that relationship. It moves us beyond conversion with Christ to communion with Christ. We get accustomed to language of God in silence.

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 Him.**

Centering Prayer is *not*: a technique, a relaxation exercise, a form of self-hypnosis, a charismatic gift, a para-psychological experience, limited to the “felt” presence of God, discursive meditation, or affective prayer.

1. **Choose a sacred word** as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within. Examples: Lord, Jesus, Father, Spirit, Kyrie, Jesu, Abba, etc

- The sacred word expresses our intention to be in God's presence and to yield to the divine action. Stay with the sacred word, do not change it during the prayer.

2. **Sit comfortably and with eyes closed, settle briefly, then silently introduce the sacred word** as the symbol of your consent to God's presence and action within.

- Sit with both feet flat on the floor. Wiggle until you are comfortable. Keep the back straight. We close our eyes to let go of what is going on around

3. **When you become aware of thoughts, return ever-so-gently to the sacred word.**

- Thoughts” is an umbrella term for every perception including sense perceptions, feelings, images, memories, reflections, and commentaries. Thoughts occurring during prayer is normal.
- Return ever-so-gently to the sacred word when a thought pops up.

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

- The additional 2 or 3 minutes give the mind time to readjust to the external senses and enable you to bring the atmosphere of silence into daily life

During this prayer, please *avoid* analyzing: your experience, judging your repetition of the sacred word continuously, having no thoughts, making the mind a blank, feeling peaceful or consoled, or achieving a spiritual experience.

The minimum time for this prayer is 20 minutes. The end of the prayer period can be indicated by a timer, provided it does not have an audible tick or loud sound when it goes off. The principal effects of Centering Prayer are experienced in daily life, not in the period of Centering Prayer itself. Physical Symptoms may include slight pains, itches, or twitches in various parts of the body or a generalized restlessness. Pay no attention, or fixate on the sensation---just return to the sacred word.

You are invited to learn how to pray Centering Prayer & pray it on **May 16 @ 1pm or 6pm**

Another resource to help you--

americamagazine.org/issue/379/article/centering-prayer

May you continue to grow in love with our Lord!

Betty Schwandt, Pastoral Associate