**Centering Prayer:**

The bible tells us in Psalm 46:10 to “Be still and know that I am God”. This simple verse sums up centering prayer. In this busy world, how often do you still yourself and know God? It is a basic prayer of communion with the Almighty. Centering prayer is considered one of the mysticism’s of the early church and has been practiced since the early church mothers and fathers began to see its worth. But be assured they did not “invent” the practice, for as we see many prophets and even Jesus himself went away to be alone with God and pray.
So how is centering prayer different from what we think of as prayer and how do you pray a centering prayer? Centering prayer is quieting oneself to be present to God. It is different from what we typically think of as prayer because we do not engage in speech toward God. We are still and present to God. It’s really that simple! It is a contemplative time of prayer for up to thirty minutes, once or twice a day. I recommend you begin with five or ten and gradually build to 20 minutes.

Below are steps to centering prayer:

* Find a quiet place where you won’t be disturbed.
* Take a moment to find a position that will allow you to be comfortable but not fall asleep. I find it helpful to set a timer.
* Begin by choosing a simple word or phrase that will help you recenter when you are distracted. Something short, simple and easy to remember, like “be still” or “come Holy Spirit”. I have had the same word since I began praying and while it may hold meaning for you, its purpose is only to center you.
* Close your eyes and become aware that you are in the presence of God. Taking a few deep breaths, invite God to help you be fully present to Him. As you place your focus on being still and in God’s presence, let go of any distractions, thoughts, noises, body sensation, etc., by focusing on your centering word or phrase. Do this as often as you notice yourself wandering away from stillness.

As you begin to practice this prayer it might seem difficult and unproductive at first. You might feel it “nets” you nothing or that you don’t feel or see any benefits. It becomes easier the more you practice and the benefits are gradual and felt as you experience the unhurried presence of God awakened in the time spent as well as in how you begin to experience and move through your life.

Apps:

* Centering Prayer
* <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/centering-prayer/id844280857>

Books:

* *Open Mind, Open Heart* by Thomas Keatin
* *Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening* by Cynthia Bourgeault
* *Centering Prayer: Renewing an Ancient Prayer Form* by M. Basil Pennington

Videos:

* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3IKpFHfNdnE>