

Holy Fire

Spiritual Habits for Everyday Life

Centering Prayer

In the Bible there are many references to fire. It is a sign of the presence of God, where Moses is called, where Daniel and his friends are saved, where Jesus gathers his friends to be with them and teach them. Fire cleanses, warms, protects and illuminates but it is also beautiful, wild, untamable and mysterious.

You have been invited to gather around a fire
(it might be real, it might be imagined).

Feel its warmth, watch the flames.

God is here, this is Holy Ground.

Opening Prayer (say together)

We meet in the name of God, our maker, redeemer
and friend. Amen

In the warmth of the fire may we find peace.

In the flames of the fire may we find mercy.

In the light of the fire may we find blessing.

As we gather in this place may you bind us
together in love.



Centering Prayer

Christian contemplatives consider prayer as a gift from God and this is a way to receive this gift. It moves beyond conversation to union with the Holy One who dwells within. Centering Prayer is simple in principle but difficult to do and takes practice. It is worth the practice as it is transformative—the fruit of Centering Prayer emerges slowly in daily life not during the time of prayer itself.

Centering Prayer is based around four steps. If one of you could gently lead the group through the steps leaving plenty of time in between.

Step 1 Select a sacred word

In silence be aware of God's presence within you and see if a word comes to mind, mull it over and see if it seems good to you.

Having chosen a word don't change it during this prayer period.

Step 2 Settling into silence

Find a comfortable place to sit (you might prefer to lie down)

Close your eyes

Takes some deep breaths—in and out slowly

Gently introduce your sacred word

Step 3 Staying in silence

Thoughts, feelings, outside distractions will emerge...this is normal

Notice them but don't engage them in conversation, take a few deep breaths and return gently to your sacred word

Step 4 Emerging from silence

In your own time set your sacred word down

Spend a few moments noticing what was going on in your mind, feelings and body.

Pray together something like the Grace or the Lord's Prayer

Open your eyes and move your body.

You may want to share your experience and challenge each other—

How are you going to use Centering Prayer in your everyday life?