

## CENTERING PRAYER

# LIVING THE WORD

## CENTERING PRAYER

**a prayer method which uses a simple phrase or word to 'centre' the mind so that our 'head' and our 'thoughts' can be stilled and focussed on God**

Quietly being 'present' with God is at the heart of prayer. Sometimes when we try and pray and be focussed upon God, we find distractions come our way. One prayer approach shared by many in the christian prayer journey is the use of a particular phrase that can bring the mind to the heart—so that we do not experience that feeling of being 'divided' and distracted—but rather 'centered'. Hence the origin of the phrase 'centering prayer'. We allow our minds to be used and occupied—giving it a word or phrase— and with its gentle repetition allow ourselves to focus and become still and centered again.

- Place yourself in a relaxed position
- Breathe in and out slowly—consciously bringing yourself to a point of readiness to be with God
- When the stillness and silence begins, the mind begins to want to do something. Choose a meaningful word that leads you to God (Love, peace, healing, courage, Jesus) or a scriptural phrase ("Jesus, have mercy on me" Mark 10:48), "for God, everything is possible" (Mark 10:27) or some favourite phrase that may be especially meaningful for you... try and find some!
- When you find yourself in the presence of God, still, sitting in his presence, and aware, you may just remain in silence, or begin speaking with God. When distractions begin, center yourself back in prayer with your word or phrase—and begin again!

You may like to write down scripture phrases or words that you find helpful.

## GIVING IT A GO

- Try centering praying for a week to get used to it.
- Don't be confused or worried if distractions keep popping up in prayer. Gently responding to distractions and training your mind to 'be still' is the first and great step in the prayer journey inward.
- With perseverance your body and mind become adapted to times of prayer and stillness. It becomes easier.

Finding a centering prayer or phrase:

- Has a word of scripture been special for you lately?
- Is there a special grace or need that you have in your life at the moment?