



## FINDING A STILL CENTRE

In the midst of our busy lives

A quiet place in the heart of our community

September 6th, 2020

### Living in God's Strength-Inescapable love

**Welcome:** Again, as we are separated by space and perhaps time, we meet knowing God is with us.

**Music on arrival:** Reflexionem: Eventide (Hawes) Performed by Voces 8

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dVkf1uZxPaQ> ( View in full screen)

### Opening Prayer:

Recognising the uncertainty of our times we pray:

We call on the power of God  
to meet us in our helplessness:  
GOD IN OUR THINKING, GOD IN OUR SPEAKING

We call on the clarity of God  
to meet us in our confusion:  
GOD IN OUR ACTION, GOD IN OUR STILLNESS

We call on the mercy of God  
to meet us in our brokenness:  
GOD IN OUR WAKING, GOD IN OUR SLEEPING

We call on the mercy of God  
to meet us:  
GOD IN OUR MEETING, GOD IN OUR PARTING  
"We call on the power of God" from *Iona Abbey Worship Book*. p. 177.

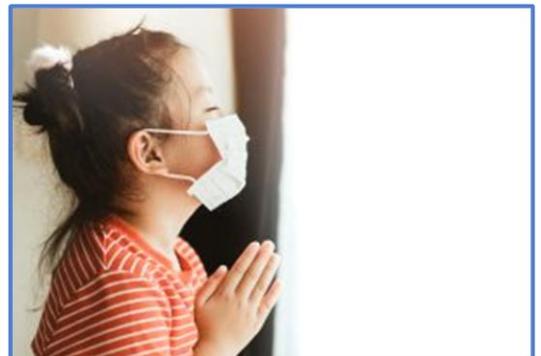
### Reading:

"If there is anywhere on earth a lover of God who is always kept safe, I know nothing of it, for it was not shown to me. But this was shown: that in falling and rising again we are always kept in that same precious love."

Julian of Norwich<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Julian of Norwich (1342-1416), a mystic who wrote "Revelations of Divine Love", spent many years as a recluse at St. Julian's church, Norwich. Julian would probably have experienced the horror of the bubonic plague during her early years. She described a series of visions relating to profound mysteries of the Christian faith.



## **Lectio Divina:** Romans 8, 35, 37-39 (NRSV)

### **Context:**

The disciple Paul writes to the Church in Rome, most likely from Corinth near the end of his third missionary journey. Unable to visit Rome, he sends the letter, said by some to be the most comprehensive and systematic statement of faith in the Bible. These verses are part of a larger section on holiness. In a setting in which hostility to the faith is often fierce and ruthless, Paul subtly acknowledges this. Neither does he rule out the existence of forces which can neither be understood or controlled. His emphatic assurance to readers is that no human nor other powers can destroy God's love. Despite everything, the bonds between God and his people; that which matters most, cannot be broken!

**<sup>35</sup> Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? <sup>37-39</sup> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

*You may choose to read the passage 3 times with 5 minutes between each phase. First phase: read with focus on the passage and context. Second phase: meditate on how the passage speaks to you and your life. Third phase: contemplate, pray, and rest in the presence of the Holy.*

**Centering Prayer and time of silence** *You may choose a sacred word or phrase to repeat rhythmically and repetitively, to lead you into a silence of up to 20 minutes.*

**Music for meditation:** Lux Aeterna (Elgar) performed by Voces 8

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=voces+8+elgar&docid=608021267339479714&mid=1BDE9292B8F9A9E7A1CA1BDE9292B8F9A9E7A1CA&view=detail&FORM=VIRE> (View in full screen)

### **Closing Prayer:**

O Lord, Jesus,  
You know us all by name,  
poor and rich.  
You feel like us.  
You have been in a family  
faced by many challenges.  
Being in refuge in Egypt,  
You have tasted the bitterness of the world.

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Lord hear our prayers  
at such times of hardship.  
Provide for our daily needs.  
Give us peace which the world cannot give.  
Open new doors  
for us, your friends  
to see your love for ever and ever.  
Amen.

"You have tasted the bitterness", Sr. Vicky Waraka, Mundri, Sudan  
From *Lifting Women's Voices* p.25

### **Blessing:**

May the God of Love,  
who is forever kind  
and who gives us  
unfailing courage and a firm hope,  
encourage and strengthen you  
always to reveal the love of God.

God is faithful.  
God will strengthen and hold you.  
Open your heart wide  
to receive all that God has for you.

Do not grow weary of doing good  
and the God of peace  
will keep you.

"Love's Keeping" Phil Dwyer from *Awakening the Spirit-Poems of Divine Love*. p. 51

We invite you to enjoy this musical blessing as our meditation concludes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZQPifs2kjo>

Aotearoa/New Zealand Churches join together to sing "The Blessing"



### **Image Credits**

Little girl praying: [https://www.thenivbible.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/3.00.20\\_Covid\\_Prayer-1024x683-1-300x200.jpg](https://www.thenivbible.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/3.00.20_Covid_Prayer-1024x683-1-300x200.jpg)

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