



FINDING A STILL CENTRE

In the midst of our busy lives
A quiet place in the heart of our community
September 5th, 2021

Music: VOCES8 performs William Byrd's double motet 'Ne Irascaris Domine' and 'Civitas Sancti Tui' . (URL found on page 3)

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

Opening prayer:

Loving God, you have made us in your own image,
diverse, beautiful and precious in your sight.
May we see that same precious beauty in every person,
a unique creation beloved of you.
May we celebrate the life we can bring to each other.
Give us the courage to stand unequivocally for justice,
for truth, and for the reconciliation
and hope that is ours through Jesus Christ.
Help us to dismantle racist agendas.
Help us to transform unjust structures.
Help us to decolonize our Christianity.
Help us to love you with all our heart, soul and strength.
Help us to love one another as you commanded us to do.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord

Amen.

Archbishop Fereimi Cama, Archbishop Richardson, Archbishop Don Tamihere

Lectio Divina: Romans 5:1-5 (A Guidance sheet can be found on page 3)

Context

Paul's letter to the Church in Rome is thought to be the last written of Paul's authentic letters, written probably 57-58 CE (Christian era).

The date of this letter is indicative of the context, in that the ban of the Jews from Rome by Emperor Claudius had been lifted. When Jewish members of the church returned there was some ethnic discord as the Gentile Christians had grown in number and prominence. Paul speaks directly into this uncomfortable setting. He desires to put each group in their proper place..... on equal footing on the one foundation of faith. For Paul no one is above another as it is by faith alone that we are 'made right' with (or justified by) God. In these verses Paul recognizes their struggles and pain felt (sufferings) and points toward hope in the power of God's Holy Spirit.

Since then it is by faith that we are justified, let us grasp the fact that we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have confidently entered into this new relationship of grace, and here we take our stand, in happy certainty of the glorious things he has for us in the future.

This doesn't mean, of course, that we have only a hope of future joys—we can be full of joy here and now even in our trials and troubles. Taken in the right spirit these very things will give us patient endurance; this in turn will develop a mature character, and a character of this sort produces a steady hope, a hope that will never disappoint us. Already we have some experience of the love of God flooding through our hearts by the Holy Spirit given to us.

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+5%3A1-5&version=PHILIPPS>

Centering Prayer and time of silence: (A guidance sheet and information for letting go can be found on p3-4)

Music: VOCES8 perform "The Deer's Cry" by Arvo Part: (URL found on page 5)

Closing Prayer: The Night Prayer

Lord,
it is night.
The night is for stillness.
Let us be still in the presence of God.

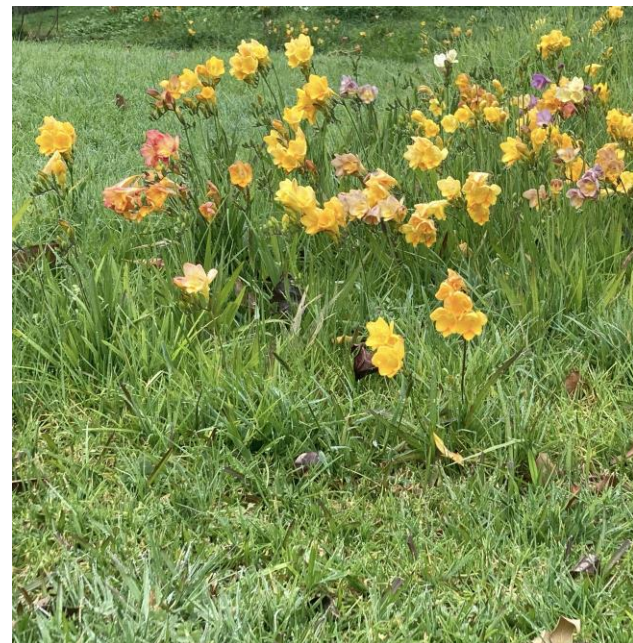
It is night after a long day.
What has been done has been done;
what has not been done has not been done;
let it be.

The night is dark.
Let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our own lives
rest in you.

The night is quiet.
Let the quietness of your peace enfold us,
all dear to us,
and all who have no peace.

The night heralds the dawn.
Let us look expectantly to a new day,
new joys,
new possibilities.

In your name we pray.
Amen.
A NZ Prayer Book p 18



URL VOCES8 performs William Byrd's double motet 'Ne Irascaris Domine' and 'Civitas Sancti Tui' .

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?view=detail&mid=262C18A77648BA04E692262C18A77648BA04E692&q=voces%20%20outube&shtp=Gmail&shid=e05d68b2-43a3-4a82-bfb5-14843712b2bf&shtk=Vk9DRVM4OiAnTmUgSXJhc2NhcmIzIERvbWluZScgJiAnQ2I2aXRhcyBTYW5jdGkgVHVpJyBieSBXaWxsaWFtIEJ5cmQ%3D&shdk=Vk9DRVM4IHBlcmZvcm1zIFdpbGxpYW0gQnlyZOKAmXMgZG91YmxlIG1vdGV0I0KAmE5IIElYXNjYXJpcyBEb21pbmXigJkgYW5kiOKAmENpdml0YXMgU2FuY3RpIFR1aeKAmSBpbIB0aGUgR3Jlc2hhbSBDZW50cmUgaW4gTG9uZG9uLiBBdWRpbyBhdmFpbGFibGUgYXQgaHR0cHM6Ly9vcmlmNmNvL2VuZDRweWsgVGv4dCBOZSBpcmFzY2FyaXMsIERvbWluZSwgc2F0aXMgZXQgbmUgdWx0cmEgbWVtaW5lcmIzIGluaXF1aXRhdGlzIG5vc3RyYWUuIEVjY2UsIHJlc3BpY2UsIHVvcHVsdXMgdHV1cyBvbW5lcyBub3MuIENpdml0YXMgc2FuY3RpIHR1aSBBmYWN0YSBlc3QgZGVzZXJ0YS4gU2lvbiBkZXNlcnRlIC4uLg%3D%3D&shk=%2Fj%2BeKd8eluCi1fnU%2BmDYIKntqsShQWHhW92TRpoj%2FA8%3D&form=VDSHOT&shth=OVP.0nvH8Gc34ZjllMwX6rZIQgHgFo>

Guidance sheet for Lectio meditation

Begin by taking a moment to adjust your posture so you are comfortable yet upright, notice your breath....as it comes and goes...
Sit with each phase for 5 minutes.

1: As you read the text for the first time simply notice what strikes you, (*positively and/or negatively*) **about the reading itself.** What stands out or resonates? Mull over what strikes you most about the passage itself? What might your responses as a listener of this time be?

2: Meditatio (Meditation)

As you read the text for the second time notice what resonates this time, as you allow the passage to speak to you and your life today? How might this relate to you? Notice your responses, your thoughts and feelings. What comes to your mind? Allow yourself to dwell meditatively and compassionately on whatever arises.

3) Oratio (Prayer) and **Contemplatio** (Contemplation)

In this third phase after you read the text, silently share your thoughts, and responses with God responding simply with heart and mind. Speak to God quietly within, about any new word spoken and any desires it has stirred in you. Is there any action the Spirit may be calling you to consider? Listen for God's response. True

prayer calls for honesty with ourselves and transparency before God. Rest in quiet awareness of God's presence.

Guidance for Prayer of the heart

Centering Meditation, or Prayer of the Heart, simply sitting quietly with an open heart, in God's presence for 20 minutes.

1) In preparation

-pay attention to your breathing, simply noticing your breath come and go.

-choose a word, or a phrase, as your 'sacred word' for this evening.¹

This '**sacred word**' gives an anchor for the mind, to help you let go of all that gets in the way of deeply opening to God.

You may invite a word, image or phrase to arise within you. A fresh image of God may draw you, perhaps a word or phrase from the opening prayer. Give yourself a moment now to choose your sacred word or phrase for tonight.

2) Begin by silently saying your sacred word or the phrase you have chosen, rhythmically and repetitively within.

3) When distractions or thoughts arise, simply notice them and let them go gently. Simply return to your word or phrase in an attitude of consent, or saying Yes to God. Imagine the distractions are clouds floating gently across the sky and let them go.

4) Should the word or phrase drop away, rest effortlessly in the silence and loving presence.

'Learning to Let Go'

The theological basis for Centering Prayer lies in the principle of kenosis, Jesus's self-emptying love that forms the core of his own self-understanding and life practice. . . .

Centering Prayer is a devotional practice, placing ourselves in God's presence and quieting our minds and hearts, but as Cynthia Bourgeault explains, it doesn't only work on that level. What the desert abbas and ammas, the author of the Cloud of Unknowing, and even Thomas Keating could not have known when he formally started teaching the practice five decades ago, was that it works on a physiological level as well, strengthening neural pathways, and making "letting go" that much easier. When it comes to releasing our strong preferences, especially our desire for power and control, it seems safe to say that some practice of kenosis (the act of letting go) is necessary for any movement forward.

The gospels themselves make clear that [Jesus] is specifically inviting us to this journey and modeling how to do it. Once you see this, it's the touchstone throughout all his teaching: Let go! Don't cling! Don't hoard! Don't assert your importance! Don't fret. "Do not be afraid, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom!" (Luke 12:32). And it's this same core gesture we practice in Centering Prayer: thought by thought by thought. You could really summarize Centering Prayer as *kenosis in meditation form*. . . .

Every time we manage to let go of a thought in Centering Prayer, "consenting to the presence and action of God within," the gesture is actually *physically embodied*. It's not just an attitude; something actually "drops and releases" in the solar plexus region of your body, a subtle but distinct form of interior relaxation. . . . **And in time**, this gentle and persistent "inner aerobics," undertaken under the specific banner of Centering Prayer and in solidarity with Jesus's own kenotic path, will gradually establish that "mind of Christ" within you as your own authentic self.

Richard Rohr's Daily meditation 14.08.21

URL VOCES8 perform "The Deer's Cry" by Arvo Part:

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=voces+8+utube&&view=detail&mid=ACC86DC9F3E091520B24ACC86DC9F3E091520B24&&FORM=VDRVRV>