

Daily Devotions

Daily devotions are one of the most beloved and transformative practices of faith. Devotions are times set apart for *prayer*, *dwelling* in God's Word, *resting* in God's presence and being *called* into God's mission in the world.

The benefit of devotions is how they call us to set aside time in our daily routine to be open to God's guidance and to be fed by God's love.

A BASIC OUTLINE

- ❖ Begin by quieting your body and mind.
- ❖ Pray to be open to God's presence and Word.
- ❖ Read a passage of scripture or other spiritual writing one or more times.
- ❖ Listen for what God might be trying to say to you. What is God's Word of Love for you?
- ❖ Pray and reflect on what God may be saying to you. Then simply rest in God's presence.
- ❖ Reflect on how you have experienced God's presence or silence in the day.
- ❖ Look ahead at the opportunities that God is giving you to share Christ and serve others. Pray for others. in love
- ❖ Pray for Others

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Contemplative Outreach
www.contemplativeoutreach.org/

Centre for Action and Contemplation and
Richard Rohr's Daily Devotions <http://cac.org/>

Pray as you Go Podcast www.pray-as-you-go.org/

Daily Devotional: *Eternity for Today*. Ask at the church office for a copy.

Group/Committee Devotions

- ❖ After settling and a time of silence pray to be open to God's presence and Word.
- ❖ Reflect on how you have experienced God in your ministry.
- ❖ Read a passage of scripture or other spiritual writing one or more times. While reading listen for what God might be saying to you and to your shared work.
- ❖ Allow for some silence and then talk together:
 - What stands out for you?
 - What questions does this raise?
 - What might God be saying to us?
- ❖ Look ahead:
 - What might God be calling us to?
 - What are some of the needs in our Church, Community and World
 - What are the opportunities God is placing before us?
- ❖ Pray for:
 - Those in need.
 - The church.
 - The wider world and community.
 - The ministry you are called to.



DEVOTIONS



DAILY PRACTICES TO
DISCOVER CHRIST WITHIN US

Daily Review

- ❖ Remember that you are in God's presence. Be still and open your self to God. Ask for the Holy Spirit to guide you and give you understanding as you look at your life over the past day. Be gentle and compassionate.
- ❖ Look at your day with gratitude:
 - Give thanks to God for the gifts of that day.
 - Take a special note of what you have received and what you have given.
 - Thank God for all of these.
- ❖ Review your whole day:
 - How was God present? how did you respond to that presence?
 - Notice the detail, your context, how you acted, your motives and your feelings. Notice both the positive and negative. Listen to your emotions.
 - How did you fail? Where were you not at your best, or where was there a barrier to God's presence?
 - When did you give genuine love?
 - Notice your daily habits. What gives life, what drags you down?
 - Look for signs of God's Grace
- ❖ Allow the Spirit to guide you to pray about a particular part of your day. Open your heart in gratitude, in repentance, and to love. Allow your prayer to arise spontaneously from your heart.
- ❖ What are your needs for tomorrow? Ask for God's help and guidance.

Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina means Divine Reading. It is one of the most traditional ways of cultivating one's friendship with Christ. It is a way of listening to scripture and cultivating a living conversation with Christ by allowing the Spirit to suggest topics for conversation. You can move back and forth between the different moments as the Spirit leads.

Four Moments of Lectio Divina

- ❖ *Lectio* - **Read** a passage of scripture once or twice. Listen with "the ear of the heart" for a sentence, phrase or words that stands out.
- ❖ *Meditatio* - **Reflect** - repeat the word, phrase or sentence that was highlighted for you. If you become distracted simply return to this repetition. Chew on these words; let them resound in your heart. Listen receptively for what is being spoken in your heart.
- ❖ *Oratio* - **Respond** spontaneously as you listen to the phrase. A response, prayer of praise, thanksgiving or petition may arise. Offer this up and then return to the repetition of the word.
- ❖ *Contemplatio* - **Rest** in God's presence. Allow yourself to simply "be with God" and to rest in the silence. If you feel drawn back to scripture, follow the leading of the Spirit.

Our Prayer continues into our day. Take the word or phrase highlighted during your prayer time into the rest of your day. Allow it to guide you, rest in it, and watch for what God might be showing you in your life.

Centering Prayer

Guidelines

- ❖ Choose a sacred word (e.g. Jesus, faith, love, peace) as the symbol of your intention to be open to God's presence and action within.
- ❖ Sit comfortably with eyes closed. Settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as a symbol of your consent to God's presence and action within you.
- ❖ When engaged with your thoughts, return ever-so-gently to the sacred word. Thoughts include body sensations, feelings, images and reflections.
- ❖ At the end of the prayer period remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes.

Practical Considerations

Pray for at least 20 minutes. Two periods of prayer each day are recommended.

If you experience slight pains, itches, restlessness, heaviness or lightness, return ever-so-gently to the sacred word.

Your intention, and not the particular word is important, choose one and try not to change it, especially while you are praying.

The fruits of centering prayer are primarily experienced in daily life and not during the prayer time.

Try to avoid analyzing experiences or thoughts that may arise, simply return to the sacred word.

To learn more about centering prayer visit www.contemplativeoutreach.org/