

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 saying to you. What is God's Word of Love for you?
- ❖ Pray and reflect on what God is 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 with love.

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

- ❖ Begin with a period of silence. Allow time for people to settle. Then pray that we might be aware of God's presence and open to God's Word.
- ❖ Read a short passage of scripture or other spiritual writing one or more times. While you read, 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?
- ❖ Reflect on how you have experienced God in your ministry.
- ❖ 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 community and world.
 - 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 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, your actions, your motives and your feelings. Notice both the positive and negative. Listen to your emotions.
 - 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 your 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 word that stands out.
 - ❖ *Meditatio* - **Reflect** on a word, phrase or sentence that was highlighted for you. Repeat it over and over until its essence begins to be released in your heart. If you become distracted simply return to this repetition. Listen receptively for what is being spoken in your heart.
 - ❖ *Oratio* - **Respond** spontaneously as you listen to the phrase. A prayer of praise, thanksgiving, a petition or other responses 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.
- Carry your prayer into your day by allowing the word or phrase highlighted during your prayer time to guide you. Use it to help you rest. Watch for what God might be showing you in your life.

Centering Prayer

Guidelines

- ❖ Choose a sacred word (such as Jesus, faith, love, peace) as a symbol of your intention to be open to God's presence and action in your life.
- ❖ Sit comfortably with your eyes closed. Be still. Silently introduce the sacred word as a symbol of your consent to God's presence and action within you.
- ❖ When you are engaged with your thoughts, gently return to your sacred word. Thoughts include body sensations, feelings, images and reflections.
- ❖ At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with your 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, gently return to the sacred word.

Your intention, not the particular word is important. Choose one word 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/