

Staying Healthy

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Is the Pandemic meant to be a time of sacredness and holiness?

Spirituality and Prayer

“Be still and know That I am God.”

Isaiah 46:10.

The communal solitude of this time of COVID-19 calls us to a quiet place to deepen our spiritual practices and sense of purpose. As we move into a place of silence, what we need and what we can give, rather than what we fear, comes into focus.

As we search for light when there is darkness, we see an opportunity for communion and a prayerful connection with our Lord in prayer - a renewal at this time of isolation. We are not alone. We are fully seen by our Lord and offered love and mercy.

During times of sorrow and challenge, our faith can begin to lead us out of this darkness as we perceive in the depths of our sorrow, we belong to God. “For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true.” Ephesians 5:8-9.

Creating time, quiet and a place of prayer in our homes or outdoors leads us to a spirituality practice that is deeper and more meaningful.

Where and how we pray can vary. Certainly, there are times when we get down on our knees to pray, while other times we pray silently while cooking a meal, driving the car or doing other work. There are also the silent prayers of gratitude to God when we are out in what I call God’s temple - Nature - trees, sky - birds . . . healing light.

You may want to find your sacred place of prayer in your home or outdoors. If so, choose a quiet place where you feel a fit for a meaningful focused times of prayer. It does not have to be large or fancy. It is best if it is quiet and a place where you will not be disturbed. Some people turn a closet into a prayer room while others find a quiet corner in a small room. Decide what additions would make it feel more conducive to prayer. Maybe a candle, a picture or a small lamp (if indoors) or maybe flowers from your garden. Here, we will have a hallowed place where we can bring all our human pain and joy to God in prayers of supplication and gratitude.

Some faith leaders say to begin our prayer with adoration of our Lord followed by confession of our sins which leads to prayers of thankfulness and then supplication prayers for others and for yourself. Then again, give thanks and pray for God's will. However you pray, speak from your heart and soul knowing God will answer your prayer. "Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer." Romans 12:12.

Prayer and ritual can provide a focus and clarity of vision while quietly kneeling or sitting contemplatively. It is at these most holy and secluded times that we are more likely to sense a deeper meaning, answer, or path that could lead us to begin to feel more whole. Wholeness may happen, in part, as we recognize and feel our challenges and/or blessings while knowing of God's abiding presence and guidance.

As we pray, may we be filled with God's promise of His grace and love. May we find God's love is stronger than our despair. May God bring us clarity of vision. May He renew our spirits to find a purpose to live out God's need for us to be His hands and feet on this earth.

O God,

Your have called Your servants to ventures
Of which we cannot see the ending
By paths as yet untrodden
Through perils unknown.

Give us faith to go out with good courage,
Not knowing where we go,
But only that your hand is leading us
And your love supporting us;

Through you our Lord, we pray.

Amen.

Living Faith
Devotions and Prayers
St. Olaf College (2015).

REFERENCES

1. Charles L. Allen, "Prayer Changes Things" (1964).
2. Chaplin Kerry Maloney, "Spiritual Resources During the COVID-19 Pandemic," Harvard Divinity School (2020).
3. Melvin Kimble, Susan H. McFadden, "Aging, Spirituality and Religion," Fortress Press (2003).
4. Matthew J. Marohl and Katherine E. Fick, "Living Faith: Devotions and Prayers," St. Olaf College (2015).
5. Oliver Sacks, "Gratitude," Alfred A. Knopf Publisher (2015).
6. Wendell Frerichs, "More Real Prayers," Centered Life Publisher, (2005).

RESOURCES

Bible Verses by Topic,
<https://www.biblestudytools.com/topical-verses/>

7 Spiritual Strategies for a Time of Pandemic,
<https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/seven-spiritual-strategies-for-a-time-of-pandemic/>

God Pause, Luther Seminary,
<https://www.luthersem.edu/godpause/>

Faith + Lead Podcasts, Luther Seminary
<https://faithlead.luthersem.edu/resources/podcasts>

"On Being with Krista Tippett"
<https://onbeing.org/series/podcast/>

The first was a story about a man of integrity and a commitment to justice who observes the world around him, filled with greed, injustice, prejudice and hate. He has spent his life trying to do “Good,” but at this moment he is feeling daunted.

He prays.

“God,” he prays, “you tell us
that we should be committed to justice,
to doing good in the world.

And yet, the world today is so awful, so filled with hate and contempt.

How could you have let this happen?

Why haven’t you done something about this?”

And he hears an answer.

“I did do something.”

“I sent you.”