

FOR LEADERS OF

CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY

Using Centering Prayer with Older Children and Youth

The method of Centering Prayer is like a trellis. It is the nature of a flowering rose to reach up toward the sun and blossom. Without a trellis, a climbing flower falls back on itself and becomes a knotted mass but, with the support of a trellis, it flourishes.

The Trappist monks who composed this method recommend, in our noisy world, that we do centering prayer for 20 minutes in the morning and 20 minutes at night. This may seem difficult and it requires discipline to find the time and place for it. But the fruits of centering prayer are abundant—increased love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23)

1. Sit with your eyes closed. Let yourself settle. Let go of all the thoughts in your mind and the tensions in your body. Begin to rest in the love of God who lives within you.
2. In your mind find one word—one word that suggests God's presence with you. Let the word be gently present. Let this word speak of God's love to you.
3. If thoughts arise in your mind, gently return to your word, the symbol of your intention to let go and rest in God's presence.
4. If thoughts begin to stir again, gently return to the word. Use the one word as your only response to thoughts, questions, or anxieties that come to your mind.
5. If thoughts fade away and you find yourself restfully aware, simply let go even of the word and rest in God's presence.
6. At the end of your prayer time, slowly come out of your silence. You may express to God your thanks, or you may pray for others in need of God, or you may recite The Lord's Prayer.
7. Say, "In a moment I will say 'Amen' and you will open your eyes, refreshed by God's spirit."



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