

PRAYER WITHOUT WORDS

Sometimes words just aren't enough. And since God has invited us to love him, not just with our mind or voice, but also with our body, heart and soul, here are a few prayer exercises that could help you discover what it means to pray without words.

Physical Prayer

It's been said that more than 50% of communication is body language, so how might that be true in our spiritual lives? Physical expression can be a powerful way to demonstrate (or discover) our prayers, through expressions like extending our hands, getting on our knees, or closing our eyes. Here's a simple exercise called "Welcome & Release Prayer" you could try:

1. Place your hands on your chest. Take some deep breaths and pay attention to what you feel and think as you hold your hands against your beating heart and breathing lungs. Welcome any thoughts, feelings and sensations (the good and the bad).
2. After a few quiet moments, slowly move your hands away from your chest, inhaling and exhaling a few times. Hold your palms open, facing up right in front of your chest. In this posture, invite the presence of God and his love into whatever thoughts and feelings have come to mind. Sit with this for a few moments.
3. Finally, spread your arms out with your palms still facing up, and slowly raise your hands above your head. As you move, breathe in and out several times and release your cares, concerns, feelings and sensations to God, trusting that he is in control and that his love will be present in all of these things.

Sensory Prayer

[Romans 1:20](#) says, "For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature." God speaks through his creation and so nature serves as a powerful spiritual pathway and space in which we can interact with him and learn to pray, even if we don't say anything at all.

A nature prayer walk can be a great way to connect with God on a sensory level. As you head out on your walk breathe in your desire to meet with God through his creation. As you breathe in deeply of the air that sustains your life, thank God for his unceasing generosity. Then make time and space to focus on each of your senses as you walk slowly and deliberately on the earth God created, delighting in what you see, feel, hear, smell and maybe even taste.

Centering Prayer

We live in a noisy and chaotic world. So in the midst of the clanging chaos, God invites us to ["be still and know"](#) that he is God. But how many of us ever practice being still? It's not easy and it is very counter-cultural.

Centering Prayer is a way of cultivating our relationship with God by focusing on a single word to help us be with him beyond our rambling thoughts and emotions. Here's a few steps to try it out:

1. Find a quiet and comfortable place to sit where you won't be disturbed. You may want to turn your phone on silent. You may also want to try setting a timer to give you a guide and a goal. 5-10 minutes could be a good start, although some people practice this prayer for 20 minutes at a time.
2. Sit with your eyes closed and begin by focusing on your breathing. Allow your slow, deep breaths to express your intention to be with God, aware of his presence and resting in his love.
3. Now choose a single word that represents your desire to be with God. Some common words are love, grace, peace, God, Jesus, or Spirit. As you take deep breaths, allow this word to be the guide of your attention, helping you stay centered on God.
4. As you get comfortable, just be still and rest in God. You don't need to keep thinking of or repeating your word. But you can bring it back to mind if other thoughts, concerns or to-do lists come to mind. Do your best not to pay attention to them, saving them for later as you recall your word of prayer.
5. When the timer goes, finish with a deep breath, taking a moment to transition back into the rest of your day.

For an introductory guided experience of Centering Prayer, check out [The Liturgists: Vapor \(Track 3\)](#).