

through slowly, listening to what God is saying to you. Don't worry about the meaning of words or where and when they were said; just listen as though they were being said to you now.

Read the passage several times and you will find that a particular word, phrase or idea 'hits' you as being important. Repeat this to yourself until it starts repeating itself inside you rather like a tune sometimes gets into your head and keeps popping up without your thinking of it.

This phrase or idea is what God seems to want to say to you today so let it keep repeating inside you and when it is time to move onto the next thing, just thank God very simply for being with you, for giving you this thought, and ask him to stay with you.

Your phrase will probably keep popping up in your mind throughout the day, just like the song, so turn to God when it does and give him a smile of gratitude!

### **LET GO AND LET GOD**

When we sit in silence, or when we use Centering Prayer or Lectio Divina, we do so in the confidence that God is present in all places and at all times. God meets us in daily life, and it is there, not in our period of prayer, where the fruits of the prayer are found.

### **Julian Meeting**

The Julian Meeting is an opportunity to share a time of silent prayer with others.

It meets on the first and third Monday of the month, 7.30-8.30pm at;

The Garden Room,  
18 Southdown Rd,  
Shoreham-by-Sea  
(go round through side gate directly to the room in the garden)

If you would like to come, please phone first, as we sometimes have to alter our arrangements;

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## **An Introduction to Quiet Prayer**

## IN A BUSY WORLD

We often think of prayer as ‘saying something to God’, but when we feel the need for God’s presence, we do not always want to use words. Sometimes, when we are in the middle of all that goes on in the world, in our own lives or in the lives of family or friends, we need to find a place just to ‘be’. We may even need to find peace against the background of world news.

At the same time we want to bring all that we are worried about and all that concerns us into the presence of God. To sit quietly with God is not to hide from the world, but to bring the world to him – our own lives and the lives of others.

## WITH A BUSY MIND

It is not easy to sit in silence with God, but if we feel that is what we want to do, then there are simple ways which can help us to find stillness.

- We can sit comfortably and allow our body to relax.
- We can feel our weight on the chair and our feet on the ground.
- We can listen to the sounds around us, and out to the farthest sound.
- We can listen beyond the noises that we can hear, to the silence that contains them.
- We can pay attention to our breathing, keeping it natural, but feeling the breath going in and out of our bodies.

## LISTENING

Sitting in stillness with God is not only about the silence, but also about listening for his promptings – what he might be trying to say to us. We are unlikely to hear that with our ears, but after sitting in silence we may realize something that we had missed up to now, or reach a new understanding.

## CENTERING PRAYER

There are ancient forms of prayer which have been found, down the years, to help one to sit in silence with God, and to listen for what he might be saying to us. One of these is Centering Prayer.

Centering Prayer usually uses a word that people choose for themselves as a focus. It is usually a short word and one that has meaning for them.

GOD  
FAITH  
LOVE  
JESUS  
TRUST  
PEACE  
HOPE

In choosing a word, and in using Centering Prayer, we are acknowledging that we want to come into the presence of God, and want him to work within us. The word is spoken and repeated within with gentle attention, and when thoughts or feelings arise we do not try to expel them, but calmly turn our attention back to our chosen word.

Centering Prayer is not meditation on the word itself. We do not need to think about the word during our prayer time. We just say the word quietly within, and without intensity. The goal of the period of prayer is just to spend time with our loving creator. That is the whole goal.

We are not trying to attain any particular spiritual state, nor to have any particular experience while we pray. We are simply paying attention to the word with the intention of coming into the presence of God and allowing him to work within us.

We can use this method of prayer for as short a time as we wish, but the usual length of time for Centering Prayer is 20 minutes. If we find this form of prayer is helpful, it can be used twice a day. After our period of prayer, we sit quiet for a few moments.

## Lectio Divina

Another form of quiet prayer is Lectio Divina, a Latin phrase meaning ‘divine reading’.

In this way of prayer we sit in God’s presence and listen to what he is saying to us, beginning with a *short* passage from the Bible, which is a collection of stories of how God has spoken to his people.

When you have taken up a comfortable position in a quiet place, choose a short passage from the Bible and read it