

Serving the Kingdom Daily Office
Week of May 18

Morning

Intro

Welcome to the Practice of the Daily Office. In this season of disruption and uncertainty, we invite you to join us in a rhythm of prayer. How might our days be grounded more deeply in God's presence if we pause each morning, mid-day, and evening for silence, scripture, and prayer?

Silence

Let's begin in silence.

Take a deep breath.

Remember, right now, you are in God's loving presence. However you are beginning this day, whatever emotions you are feeling, the Lord is with you. Psalm 139 says there is no where we can go to escape God's loving presence.

Take another deep breath. God is closer than the air we breathe.

Take two minutes of silence to rest in the presence of the Lord.

Scripture and Listening Prayer

Now I invite you join me in a time of prayer. As we seek to cultivate spaces for the kingdom of God to grow in this world, let us watch and listen for opportunities to serve those around us.

Remember, God longs to partner with you to bring about God's kingdom purposes in the world. Consider that truth for a moment. The creator of the universe is inviting you to join the work of living the kingdom into every corner of human existence. How does this make you feel? Do you feel honored or grateful? Maybe you are anxious or you feel the weight of this invitation. Perhaps it is some other emotion or a mixture of emotions.

Take a moment, and offer a prayer based on your feelings.

Now let's ground our prayer in this passage from Paul's letter to the Philippians. Read these words. Wade into them and begin to listen for the Lord's specific invitation to you today.

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Now I invite you to continue listening to God. Who in your life might God be moving you to serve? Be open to whomever God brings to mind. It may be someone obvious, or maybe you will be surprised.

Notice who God is bringing to mind. Is it someone in your home or a neighbor? Maybe it is a family member outside your home. Is God bringing to mind a specific friend? Perhaps God is inviting you to serve someone you find difficult or would consider an enemy.

Take a moment and listen. Who is God moving you to serve?

Now, would you now consider how God might be inviting you to serve this person? Is there some way you might show God's love to her or him? Maybe God is helping you notice a need of theirs that you can meet. How can you honor his or her dignity and a beloved image bearer?

Take a moment and listen for How God is inviting you to serve.

Finally, I invite you to get specific and make a plan for your act of service. How will you do it? When will you serve the person God brought to mind? Remember, the spiritual practice of service is not about us. How will you be sure to focus your serving remains on the other person? You might even consider how you could serve them in secret.

When you have decided, would you offer a prayer, inviting God's kingdom to come, God's will to be done as you serve.

Prayer

May your kingdom come, Lord. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Mid-day

Silence

We pause now in mid-day. Perhaps much has happened already today, or maybe the day has begun slowly. However, this day is unfolding. Let us begin our mid-day prayer in silence. Take a deep breath. Remembering what Paul says, "In God we live and move and have our being."

Take another deep breath.

Take two minutes of silence are yours to rest in the presence of the Lord.

Prayer for the Kingdom

Would you now pray this prayer for the Kingdom of God from St Francis?

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:

where there is hatred, let me sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek

to be consoled as to console,

to be understood as to understand,

to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,

it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Amen.

Evening

Silence

This evening we pause once again to recognize and rest in the loving presence of God. Take a deep breath. In Matthew 28, Jesus promised, “surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Take another deep breath.

Take two minutes of silence to rest in the presence of the Lord.

Scripture

Now, I invite you to read the Word of God from the Gospel of John.

This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you slaves, because a master doesn’t confide in his slaves. Now you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me. You didn’t choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using my name. This is my command: Love each other.

Read this passage again. Is there a word or a phrase that stands out? Is the Holy Spirit drawing to your attention any particular part of this passage?

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Consider what God has for you in this passage. Listen to the Lord. What is God saying to you in this passage today?

Take a moment and respond to God in prayer?

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.