

PRAYER GROUP

August 19, 2020

A TIME FOR A CHECK-IN

GREETING

Leader: Jesus said,
“Where two or three are gathered in my name,
there am I, in the midst of them.”

LIGHTING THE CANDLE

Leader: We light this candle as a reminder that Jesus,
who is for us the light of the world,
will be with us always,
even until the end of the age.

PRAYER

Reader: Christ, as a light illumine and guide us.
Christ, as a shield overshadow us.

All: **Christ under us; Christ over us;
Christ beside us on our left and our right.**

Reader: This day be within and without us,
lowly and meek, yet all-powerful.

Reader: Be in the heart of each to whom we speak;
in the mouth of each who speaks unto us.

Reader: This day be within and without us,
lowly and meek, yet all-powerful.

All: **Christ as a light; Christ as a shield;
Christ beside us on our left and our right.**

AN INVITATION INTO STILLNESS

Hear and feel the quiet of this place
and this community of people.

Hear and feel your quiet breathing.

Inhale the good gifts that God provides,
and exhale all of the things
that you need to release.

Breathe in strength. *(Pause for breath...)*

Exhale exhaustion. *(Pause for breath...)*

Breathe in freedom. *(Pause for breath...)*

Exhale all that holds you back. *(Pause for breath...)*

Breathe in a new sense of direction. *(Pause for breath...)*

Exhale the paths you no longer want to use.

Breathe in hope. *(Pause for breath...)*

Exhale self-doubt. *(Pause for breath...)*

Breathe in unconditional love. *(Pause for breath...)*

Exhale distrust and hate. *(Pause for breath...)*

In this time of prayer,
may our minds be open to new truth,
and our hearts be receptive to love.

Let us open ourselves to the Spirit of Christ
in our midst.

A READING — *Fyodor Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov*

Love all God's creation, both the whole and every grain of sand. Love every leaf, every ray of light. Love the animals, love the plants, love each separate thing.

If you love each thing you will perceive the mystery of God in all; and when once you perceive this, you will then grow every day to a fuller understanding of it: until you come at last to love the whole world with a love that will then be all-embracing and universal.”

A VIDEO REFLECTION—*John Philip Newell*

PRAYER OF THE DAY *John Philip Newell, Praying With the Earth, 2011*

For everything that emerges from the earth
thanks be to you, O God,
Holy Root of being
Sacred Sap that rises
Full-bodied Fragrance of earth's unfolding form.
May we know that we are of You
may we know that we are in You
may we know that we are one with You
together one.
Guide us as nations to what is deepest
open us as peoples to what is first
lead us as a world to what is dearest
that we may know the holiness of wholeness
that we may learn the strength of humility
that together we may live close to the earth
and grow in grounded glory.

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

(Richard Rohr)

O Great Love, thank you for living and loving in us and through us. May all that we do flow from our deep connection with you and all beings.

Help us become a community that vulnerably shares each other's burdens.

Listen to our hearts' longings for the healing of our world...

THE LORD'S PRAYER

WORDS OF BLESSING *Felicity Collins*

May we always remember that we belong to this beautiful earth, that it will bear our sorrows and share our joys.

May we be deeply rooted in our truth so that we may grow tall and strong as the trees, offering shelter to all who need it.

May we be open to receiving our gifts and share them with others as freely as the rain falls, and be ever thankful.

May we be radiant and natural and fragrant as flowers that flourish, nurtured by love.

May we always be drawn to where the air is good and fresh and life giving so that we may be en-spirited and breathe freely.

May our passion for tenderness and love be kindled and burn with the ferocity of a campfire and the merriment of kindred souls.

May each of us dare to sing our song of praise as the birds sing theirs, so that our songs may rise up together wherever we are.