



THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Formation in the Christian Contemplative Life

"The Method of Centering Prayer"
Centering Prayer Guided Meditation
Audio excerpt from
The Spiritual Journey Prologue

Thomas Keating

Gong [Three chimes: A call to prayer]

Please sit comfortably on the chairs you are on and close your eyes, slowly letting go of the environment, the immediate physical situation you're in. Letting go also of your interior preoccupations or thoughts, or even what I just have been talking about. Maybe for 10 or 15 seconds, just do nothing, just as if you were going to sleep or something. Then when you're quiet, ever-so-gently, introduce the sacred word that you've chosen, and then repeat it a few times but always with great calm. You don't repeat it fast. You don't try to pronounce it exactly. You just let it sit ever-so-gently on the horizon of your consciousness as the expression of your intention to spend this time completely open to God and his loving, enfolding activity.

Then when thoughts come down the stream of consciousness and they attract you in some degree or maybe repel you and you experience some aversion, then once again, ever-so-gently, ever-so-gently, return to the sacred word as if you were laying a feather on a piece of absorbing cotton. That's a good description. Or, as if the sacred word was a drop of dew descending on a blade of grass, that gentleness, so that there's no effort to push thoughts away. There's simply an acceptance of whatever is going by and the insinuation of your basic intention of the will.

Gong [One chime begins 20 minutes of silence for Centering Prayer]

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

When you feel ready, please slowly open your eyes.