

Serving the Kingdom Daily Office
Week of May 25-31

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

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 these words of Jesus spoken after washing his disciples' feet. Listen to these words. Wade into them and begin to listen for the Lord's specific invitation to you today.

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

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.

Take a moment to 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.

Who is God moving you to serve?

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?

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 to rest in the presence of the Lord.

Prayer for the Kingdom

Would you now pray this prayer from Mother Teresa.

Dear Jesus, help us to spread your fragrance
everywhere we go.
Flood our souls with your spirit and life.
Penetrate and possess our whole being so utterly
that our lives may only be a radiance of yours.
Shine through us and be so in us
that every soul we come in contact with
may feel your presence in our soul.
Let them look up and see no longer us, but only Jesus.
Stay with us and then we shall begin to shine as you shine,
so to shine as to be light to others.
The light, O Jesus, will be all from you.
None of it will be ours.
It will be you shining on others through us.
Let us thus praise you in the way you love best
by shining on those around us.
Let us preach you without preaching,
not by words, but by our example;
by the catching force –
the sympathetic influence of what we do,
the evident fullness of the love our hearts bear to you. 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 with me to the Word of God from First John.

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

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. Pause now and listen to the Lord. What is God saying to you in this passage today?

Would you take a moment now and respond to God in prayer?

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