

INFINITUM
THE
WELCOMING PRAYER .

INTRODUCTION

Welcoming prayer is the practice that actively lets go of thoughts and feelings that only serve the false self not the self that God created us to be. This prayer acknowledges painful emotions rather than avoiding them and then brings them into the presence and light of Christ. As we accept the circumstances and our feelings in the present situation and give them over to the power of the Holy Spirit we are liberated from their hold on us.

This prayer is a practice of surrender that can be practiced at any time in everyday life - stuck in a traffic jam, wonder about how I talked to my spouse, sit down at my desk, as I stand in line at the check-out, as well as during a regular prayer time at home.

It is a very simple way of keeping ourselves in a place where we are centered on God and God's invitation into freedom in every moment, rather than being pulled out of Presence into our false, busy selves.

In this practice we create what Cynthia Bourgeault calls "an attitude of inner hospitality". By welcoming what is, we anchor ourselves fully in the now - a place where God is always present, for us, and acting in love. It is a way of honouring what is true in us, about us, and offering that truth - whatever it is - to God's healing presence.

We open ourselves to how God wants to be with us in this now; we open ourselves to what God wants to do in us and for us in this now. The point is not to get rid of the emotion, or condition, or circumstance. Nor is the point to wallow in our distress. The point is that we not allow emotions and conditions and circumstances to overwhelm reality and chase us out of God's Presence.

THE WELCOMING PRAYER .

I gently become aware of my body.
I gently become aware of my interior state - thoughts,
feelings
I allow myself to focus, feel, and sink into
the feelings, emotions, thoughts, sensations
and commentaries in my body.

I welcome and consent to the presence and action
of the indwelling Spirit of God
in the feelings, emotions, thoughts, commentaries,
or sensations in my body by saying,
"Welcome"
"Here I am God - angry, confused, all my muscles
in a knot again
Do you see me? Please come."

"I let go of my desire for:
safety and security,
esteem and affection,
power and control.
I let go of the feeling to change the situation."

I let go of the desire to change any situation,
feeling, condition, person, or myself.

I open to the love and presence of God
and the healing action of grace within me.

Personal - Gratitude Meditation

This prayer from Walter Brueggemann is rich and provocative. It causes us to consider our personal response to God and His creation.

Print out the prayer and use it on a regular basis this month

As you do this you will find words and phrases that resonate and disturb you. Let that process lead you to more prayer and further Bible passages. The prayer may also inspire you to journal around it or produce art and music.

Observe how your thinking and practice changes throughout the month on account of reading it.

On Generosity

On our own, we conclude:
there is not enough to go around

We are going to run short
of money
of love
of grades
of publications
of sex
of beer
of members
of years
of life

We should seize the day
seize our goods
seize our neighbours goods
because there is not enough to go around

And in the midst of our perceived deficit
you come
you come giving bread in the wilderness
you come giving children at the 11th hour
you come giving homes to exiles
you come giving futures to the shut down
you come giving easter joy to the dead
you come – fleshed in Jesus.

And we watch while
the blind receive their sight
the lame walk
the lepers are cleansed
the deaf hear
the dead are raised
the poor dance and sing

We watch
and we take food we did not grow and
life we did not invent and
future that is gift and gift and gift and
families and neighbours who sustain us
when we did not deserve it.

It dawns on us – late rather than soon-
that you "give food in due season
you open your hand
and satisfy the desire of every living thing."

By your giving, break our cycles of imagined scarcity
override our presumed deficits
quiet our anxieties of lack
transform our perceptual field to see
the abundance.....mercy upon mercy
blessing upon blessing.

Sink your generosity deep into our lives
that your muchness may expose our false lack
that endlessly receiving we may endlessly give
so that the world may be made Easter new,
without greedy lack, but only wonder,
without coercive need but only love,
without destructive greed but only praise
without aggression and invasiveness....
all things Easter new....
all around us, toward us and
by us

All things Easter new.

Finish your creation, in wonder, love and praise. Amen.

- Walter Brueggemann