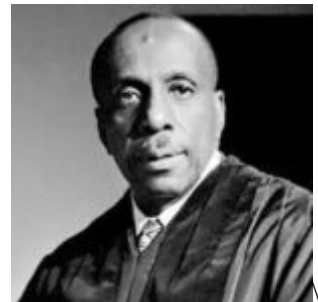


Grounded with God: Retreat at Home
Trinity Sunday, June 7th 2020, 11am-4pm

How good it is to center down!

How good it is to center down!
To sit quietly and see one's self pass by!
The streets of our minds seethe with endless traffic;
Our spirits resound with clashing, with noisy silences,
While something deep within hungers and thirsts for the still moment and the resting lull.
With full intensity we seek, ere thicket passes, a fresh sense of order in our living;
A direction, a strong sure purpose that will structure our confusion and bring meaning in our chaos.
We look at ourselves in this waiting moment—the kinds of people we are.
The questions persist: what are we doing with our lives?—what are the motives that order our days?
What is the end of our doings? Where are we trying to go? Where do we put the emphasis and where are our values focused? For what end do we make sacrifices?
Where is my treasure and what do I love most in life?
What do I hate most in life and to what am I true? Over and over the questions beat upon the waiting moment.
As we listen, floating up through all of the jangling echoes of our turbulence, there is a sound of another kind—
A deeper note which only the stillness of the heart makes clear.
It moves directly to the core of our being. Our questions are answered,
Our spirits refreshed, and we move back into the traffic of our daily round
With the peace of the Eternal in our step.
How good it is to center down!

—
Howard Washington Thurman was an African-American author, philosopher, theologian, educator, civil rights leader, and mentor to Martin Luther King Jr. This prayer comes from his book, Mediations of the Heart, p.28.



Brief Centering Prayers

In the early centuries of the Christian Church, it was common practice to call to mind phrases of scripture to ground oneself in the midst of trials and struggles. Phrases to which we are drawn, from scripture or another source, can help us to be recollected and grounded in the midst of circumstances that might otherwise overwhelm us. Here are some suggested passages that may ground you in prayer:

O God make speed to save me; O Lord make haste to help me.

Glory to God whose power working in me can do infinitely more than I can ask or imagine.

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Lord have mercy; Christ have mercy; Lord have mercy.

My grace is sufficient.

Come Holy Ghost, my Soul inspire.

O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you.

In the time of my trouble I will call upon you.

You are my refuge and my strength



Trinity (Andrei Rublev)

St Patrick's Breastplate

I bind unto myself today
The strong name of the Trinity,
By invocation of the same
The Three in One and One in Three.

I bind this today to me forever
By power of faith, Christ's incarnation;
His baptism in Jordan river,
His death on cross for my salvation;
His bursting from the spiced tomb,
His riding up the heavenly way,
His coming at the day of doom
I bind unto myself today.

I bind unto myself the power
Of the great love of cherubim;
The sweet Well done in judgment hour,
The service of the seraphim,
Confessors' faith, apostles' word,
The patriarchs' prayers, the prophets' scrolls,
All good deeds done unto the Lord
And purity of virgin souls.

I bind unto myself today
The virtues of the star lit heaven,
The glorious sun's life giving ray,
The whiteness of the moon at even,
The flashing of the lightning free,
The whirling wind's tempestuous shocks,
The stable earth, the deep salt sea
Around the old eternal rocks.

Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me.
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

I bind unto myself the name,
The strong name of the Trinity,
By invocation of the same,
The Three in One and One in Three.
By whom all nature hath creation,
Eternal Father, Spirit, Word:
Praise to the Lord of my salvation,
Salvation is of Christ the Lord.

Praying with Scripture

A prayer as you begin:

Lord, Jesus Christ, you are the word incarnate
and my true teacher.

Let your spirit be present as I read and reflect upon your word.
Open my heart and mind to understand your revelation,
that I may be rooted and grounded in your love,
and grow into your likeness. Amen.

A passage from Trinity Sunday:

Why do you say, O Jacob,
and speak, O Israel,
'My way is hidden from the Lord,
and my right is disregarded by my God'?
Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.
He gives power to the faint,
and strengthens the powerless.
Even youths will faint and be weary,
and the young will fall exhausted;
but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint.

Isaiah 40. 27-31

Practising the Presence of God

‘It is not needful to be in a church to be with God. We can make a chapel of our heart to which we can from time to time withdraw to have gentle, humble, loving communion with him. Everyone is able to have these familiar conversations with God, some more, some less, he knows our capabilities. Let us make a start’.

Brother Lawrence (1614-1691)

When I Am Among the Trees

When I am among the trees,
especially the willows and the honey locust,
equally the beech, the oaks and the pines,
they give off such hints of gladness.
I would almost say that they save me, and daily.

I am so distant from the hope of myself,
in which I have goodness, and discernment,
and never hurry through the world
but walk slowly, and bow often.

Around me the trees stir in their leaves
and call out, “Stay awhile.”
The light flows from their branches.

And they call again, “It’s simple,” they say,
“and you too have come
into the world to do this, to go easy, to be filled
with light, and to shine.”

Mary Oliver, *Thirst* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2006) 4.

Patient Trust

Above all, trust in the slow work of God.

We are quite naturally impatient in everything to reach the end without delay.

We should like to skip the intermediate stages.

We are impatient of being on the way to something unknown, something new.

And yet it is the law of all progress
that it is made by passing through some stages of instability—
and that it may take a very long time.

And so I think it is with you;
your ideas mature gradually—let them grow,
let them shape themselves, without undue haste.
Don't try to force them on,
as though you could be today what time
(that is to say, grace and circumstances acting on your own good will)
will make of you tomorrow.

Only God could say what this new spirit
gradually forming within you will be.
Give Our Lord the benefit of believing
that his hand is leading you,
and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself
in suspense and incomplete.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ
excerpted from *Hearts on Fire*