# Practice

## Begin your daily prayer rhythm with silence and a breath prayer

Contemplative prayer is difficult because our mind is so distraction-prone, but the basic steps are simple.

- Find a quiet, distraction-free place to pray.
- Get seated comfortably, but where you can breathe properly and not slouch.
- Breathe slowly (five seconds on the inhale, then five on the exhale) from your belly. Relax. Become present to your body. And to the moment. Then, open your mind to God.
- You may just want to remain here, in loving attention to the Trinity. Remember: You're not trying to pray words here. It's your heart to God's heart; this prayer is will to will, love to love.
- Or you may want to combine a prayer word to your breath to keep your attention fixed on God. Examples include:
    - "Father or "Abba" or "Jesus"
    - "The Lord is my shepherd (on the inhale), "I lack nothing" (on the exhale)
    - "Lord Jesus Christ "(on the inhale), "have mercy on me" (on the exhale)
    - "In you I live" (on the inhale), "In you I delight" (on the exhale)
- When distractions come, just gently set them aside the moment you realize your mind has wandered and come back to your breathing and prayer word.
- Remain in God, receiving his love and giving yours back in turn.

In the beginning, 1-2 minutes of this is a huge success, and 5-10 minutes is a home run.

# Reflect

As you come to the end of this Practice, take five to ten minutes to journal out your answers to the following three questions:

01 Where did I feel resistance in prayer?

02 Where did I feel delight?

03 Where did I most experience God's nearness?

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Optional resources to enhance your experience of this Practice:



Listen

**Rule of Life** podcast on Prayer
(Episode 04)



Read

***Praying Like Monks, Living Like Fools***
by Tyler Staton
(Chapters 09-10)

May Jesus teach you to pray — to commune and communicate with our Father — and lead you into a deeper life of union with the Spirit.