

Women of Wisdom



Some fifteen years ago, I began to meet regularly with several women to support each other in prayer. Called 'Women of Wisdom' we committed to prioritising prayerful listening to balance our never-lost-for-words conversation. The format was simple and has been adapted here for private reflection.

1: Breathe

Sit with your back straight and your feet firmly grounded on the floor. Settle yourself, close your eyes and breathe deeply.

In Hebrew, the words for breath and spirit are the same: ruah. Breath is an archetypal symbol of spirit – our own and the Divine Spirit.

The air we breathe is also the air we share with all God's creatures. Physiologically, the inhale is active and caused by the contraction of the diaphragm, while the exhale is a relaxation.

As you breathe, consciously bring your attention to God's presence. With each in-breath, receive God's spirit into your being. And with each out-breath, surrender any defensiveness or resistance you may be holding in your heart.

Continue to breathe deeply and repeat a short prayer inviting the Holy Spirit into your dialogue:

Come Holy Spirit.

Come Now.

Come as you wish.

2: Listen

When settled and focussed, read your chosen text (scripture, spiritual reading) slowly, allowing the words to resonate. Reread it, willing it to penetrate your heart.

Choose a verse, phrase or even a single word that has attracted your attention.

Write or draw it into your journal. Note the reference.

Contemplate again: What is God saying to you in this passage? Make any notes as appropriate.

3: Respond

Write to God the prayer of your heart in response to his revealed wisdom.

Do not concern yourself with grammar or eloquence; you are not writing for an audience, you are simply facilitating the expression of your heart, infused by God's Spirit.

Write as if you are having a conversation with a trusted friend, one who loves you and knows you deeply.

Your prayer can be freeform and completely spontaneous, or if you feel somewhat lost for words, a helpful format is the Trinity Prayer which moves through three prayer types:

- a) Gratitude to our Father, the author of creation.
- b) Sorrow to Jesus, our Saviour, for the times we have failed to love.
- c) Requests to the Holy Spirit, our divine helper and source of grace.

Conclude with a Glory Be:

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end,

Amen.

For a Women of Wisdom group format,
visit www.CathFamily.org/voxdei