

Centering Prayer

Often, when we are feeling the lack of intensity in our lives, when the daily grind of existence has gotten to us and we aren't able to raise our eyes or our hearts into a place that feels expansive, we say that we feel distant from God, that God is far away from us.

God is not absent in those moments. God is everywhere in the world; it's just that we have lost our connection to that world. To find God again does not often require us to renounce our worldly possessions and enter a monastery, or to give our lives to a new cause for justice, or even to lock ourselves into a closet to pray.

More often the task to which we are called is simply to show a kindness to someone who has irritated us, or to touch the face of a spouse or child or loved one from whom *we* have been absent. It is the concrete practice of love that will wake us up from the sleep of our self-enclosure.

O Holy One, we hear and say so many words.

Your word of love, of grace, of forgiveness, is the word we need.

Speak now, and help us listen.

And if what we hear is silence, let it quiet us; let it disturb us; let the silence reveal our need for communion.

Let it break our pride, shrink our certainties, enlarge our wonder.

Call us out of ourselves, so that we might be more fully alive, more like you.