

**Dundas Street Centre and
Rowntree Memorial United
Churches**

Forty Days

40

of Wisdom Practice

(Feb 14, 2018)

(Feb 10, 2018)

Dear Friends,

You are invited on an adventure of faith.

You are invited to undertake **40 Days of Wisdom Practice**: a journey filled with discovery and challenge and sustained in every step by the intimate presence of Jesus, the wisdom teacher who guides us on a path of inner transformation.

Are there qualities in you that you don't like, but can't seem to change no matter how hard you try? Do you sometimes find the stresses of your life overwhelming? Do you want to know more fully the joy and abundant life which Jesus promises to us? Do you wish to become more patient with your children, more loving in your closest relationships, more tolerant of others, more compassionate and forgiving?

40 Days of Wisdom Practice is an invitation to open yourself more fully to the transforming power and presence of Jesus by taking on two ancient spiritual practices—*Centering Prayer* and *Lectio Divina*. You will need about 40-45 minutes a day.

If you're already saying to yourself, "I'll never find that much time every day in my busy life," please ask yourself this, "In all my busy life, when have I ever missed a meal?" We have time for what is important to us.

And what can be more important than being transformed by Love for love? What can be more important than opening to the love of God in a way that changes us and makes us more loving—of God, of ourselves, of the people in our lives, and of the world?

So, you are invited to use this booklet for 40 days and to see what happens. Each day there is a scripture reading to nourish your transformation through the practice of spiritual reading known as *Lectio Divina*. Each day there is an invitation to 20 minutes of *Centering Prayer*. Every Sunday after worship during these 40 days, those who wish can gather to ask questions, to discuss, and to share what is happening in your prayer and in your life as you deepen your communion with God. You can also contact me by phone (your phone number) or by e-mail (your e-mail)

It is my belief, that you will notice a change as you move into a deeper wisdom knowing, and that our congregation will be changed as each of us brings to our worship and mission greater compassion, more confident faith, and deeper joy.

Please accept this invitation to an adventure of faith.

Blessings,

FORTY DAYS OF WISDOM PRACTICE

LECTIO DIVINA

Lectio Divina is a type of Bible reading that leads us deep into our own heart-knowing. It's a way of praying the scripture that transcends the mind in favour of feeding on scripture and absorbing it deeply into our own being where it provides nurture and the energy for spiritual growth and transformation.

Four Steps

1. *Lectio* (Reading)

Collect yourself with a moment of silence or a brief prayer.

Read the passage slowly and, if possible, aloud.

Notice what words or phrases draw your attention or pique your interest.

Pause for a moment of silence and then read the passage again.

2. *Meditatio* (Meditation)

Allow your reason, imagination, memory, and/or emotions to begin to work with the passage.

The passage might trigger a memory. It might excite you or confuse you or make you angry. See if you can discover why.

You might be struck by a certain image. Listen to it.

You could enter the passage as one of the characters and dialogue with Jesus or imagine yourself as Jesus and see where it leads you.

Whatever catches your attention, work with it in some way, but remember that this is not biblical research, it's about allowing the text to break open your heart and resonate with your life.

3. *Oratio* (Prayer)

If feelings arise out of this encounter with scripture, sit quietly with them and see if they want to form themselves into a prayer.

Perhaps you are moved to tears of remorse or gratitude. Perhaps you feel a deep intimacy with God. You can put those feelings into words or movement or song, or you can simply let the feelings be your prayer.

Sometimes, no emotion will stir in you. If that's the case, just go on to the next step.

4. *Contemplatio* (Contemplation)

This step is a time of resting in God. It is not a time for thinking, but for being in the presence of the Holy

Make the Centering Prayer practice your contemplation.

CENTERING PRAYER

Centering Prayer¹ is a practice of the heart, a practice of surrender and openness based entirely on letting go of thoughts as they arise. The path of centering prayer leads us to the place where the “Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.” (Romans 8:26)

It is a practice of intention in which our only desire is to be completely open and surrendered to the presence of the Holy One, to be deeply available so that the Spirit can do what God wants within us. In Centering Prayer, we let go of all our ideas of what we want to happen and all our attachment to outcome and simply give ourselves to a gathered, quiet waiting within.

Centering Prayer has its foundation in the self-giving love of Jesus who emptied himself in order to share our human life and death (Philippians 2:9-16). In the same way, we empty ourselves in this practice of prayer—letting go of the mind and its self-talk, interior dialogue, fears, wants, needs, preferences, daydreams, and fantasies. We simply entrust ourselves to the deeper aliveness of our life in God, and let go our thoughts when they arise.

And keep arising they will. So, if you become discouraged, remember that every time your thoughts stray, it is an opportunity to return to God.

Guidelines

1. Choose a sacred word of one or two syllables as a symbol of your intention to be open to God and to consent to whatever God wants to do within you. (The word could be a classic prayer word or phrase such as Spirit, Jesus, Love, or Come, Lord. It could be a word which symbolises your inner receptivity such as Open, Yes, Be here.) Keep this word or phrase for the whole 40 Days and beyond.
2. Sit comfortably with eyes closed, back straight, and both feet flat on the floor. Collect yourself with a short prayer sentence such as “Into your hands I commit my spirit” or in some way that works for you. Centering Prayer begins when you say your sacred word and allow it to ease you into deeper waters.
3. Whenever you notice a thought come into your mind, simply let it go. If you become engaged with your thoughts and carried away into thinking about the past or future, gently repeat your sacred word until it returns you to a state of open availability and then gently drops from your mind.

¹ Based on the practice developed by Thomas Keating.

4. Continue this practice for 20 minutes or more. (You can set a timer or just look at your watch.) At the end of the time, remain in silence with your eyes closed for a few minutes.

Practice Makes Perfect

Any form of spiritual practice needs to be patterned into our lives as a regular habit, for only then can it do the real work of transforming our consciousness. It needs to become a regular, daily expression of our love for God and of our desire to be students of Jesus on the path of wisdom.

Pick whatever time(s) offers the best chance of uninterrupted silence. Thomas Keating suggests two periods a day, one in the early morning and another in the evening, but not right before bed. If the thought of finding two spaces in your day is overwhelming, find one that works and make it your regular practice. If this doesn't seem possible, make a commitment to meditate whenever a window of opportunity opens during your day.

If you begin these practices, they will begin to transform your priorities from the inside out. Centering Prayer, especially, will lead you into the deep silence of wordless, trusting openness to the divine presence whose first language is silence. You will find yourself not wanting to miss this time of being silent in the presence of the One whose love is the power of transformation.

“What goes on in those silent depths during the time of Centering Prayer is no one's business, not even your own; it is between your innermost being and God; that place where, as St. Augustine once said, “God is closer to your soul than you are yourself.”

Your own subjective experience of the prayer may be that nothing happened—except for the more or less continuous motion of letting go of thoughts. But in the depths of your being, in fact, plenty has been going on, and things are quietly but firmly being rearranged. That interior rearrangement—or to give it its rightful name, that interior *awakening*—is the real business of Centering Prayer” and of this **40 Days of Wisdom Practice**.²

May this time be one of transformation and deepening faith and love.

² Cynthia Bourgeault, *Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening* (Lanham, MD: Cowley Publications, 2004), 6

DAY 1

Lectio Divina: **Isaiah 40:27-31**³
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.
God 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.

Centering Prayer

DAY 2

Lectio Divina: **Gospel of Thomas 2**⁴
If you are searching, you must not stop
until you find. When you find, however, you
will become troubled. Your confusion will give
way to wonder. In wonder you will reign over
all things. Your sovereignty will be your rest.

Centering Prayer

DAY 3

Lectio Divina: **Psalm 63:1-8**

³ All quotations from the Holy Bible, unless otherwise noted, are from the New Revised Standard Version (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989 Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States)

⁴ All quotations from the Gospel of Thomas are from Lynn Bauman, *The Gospel of Thomas: Wisdom of the Twin* (Ashland, Oregon: White Cloud Press), 2004

O God, you are my God, I seek you,
my soul thirsts for you'
my flesh faints for you,
as in a dry and weary land where there is not water.
So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,
beholding your power and glory.
Because your steadfast love is better than life,
my lips will praise you.
So I will bless you as long as I live;
I will lift up my hands and call upon your name.
My soul is satisfied as with a rich feast, and my mouth
praises you with joyful lips when I think of you on my bed,
and meditate on you in the watches of the night;
for you have been my help,
and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy.
My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me.

Centering Prayer

DAY 4

Lectio Divina: Gospel of Thomas 3

Yeshua ⁵ says:
If your spiritual guide says to you, "Look, the divine Realm
is in the sky," well then the birds will get there ahead of you.
If they say, "It is in the sea," then the fish will precede you."
No, divine Reality exists inside and all around you.
Only when you have come to know your true Self
will you be fully known—
realizing at last that you are a child of the Living One.
If, however, you never come to know who you truly are,
you are a poverty-stricken being,
and it is your "self" which lies impoverished.

Centering Prayer

DAY 5

Lectio Divina: Genesis 1:26-27

Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image,
according to our likeness; and let them have dominion
over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and
over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth,
and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.
So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God
he created them; male and female he created them.

⁵ Yeshua: the Hebrew and Aramaic (the language of Jesus) name which we translate as Jesus

Centering Prayer

DAY 6

Lectio Divina:

Psalm 8: 1-5

O Lord, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory above the heavens.
Out of the mouths of babes and infants you have founded
a bulwark because of your foes,
to silence the enemy and the avenger.
When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and stars that you have established;
what are human beings that you are mindful of them,
mortals that you care for them?
Yet you have made them a little lower than God,
and crowned them with glory and honour.

Centering Prayer

DAY 7

Lectio Divina:

Genesis 28:10-18

Jacob left Beersheba and went toward Haran. He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. There he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And the LORD stood beside him and said, "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your offspring; and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you. Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place and I did not know it!" And he was afraid, and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

Centering Prayer

DAY 8

Lectio Divina: Exodus 3:1-6

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up." When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground. He said further, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to see God.

Centering Prayer

DAY 9

Lectio Divina: Exodus 3:7-12

Then the Lord said, "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt." But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" He said, "I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain."

Centering Prayer

DAY 10

Lectio Divina: Micah 6:6-8

"With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of

you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

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Centering Prayer

DAY 11

Lectio Divina: ***Psalm 32: 1-7***

Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Happy are those to whom the Lord imputes no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. While I kept silence, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Selah

Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," and you forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah

Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to you; at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters shall not reach them. You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with glad cries of deliverance. Selah

Centering Prayer

DAY 12

Lectio Divina: ***Mark 1:2-8***

As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,
"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;
the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'"

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Centering Prayer

DAY 13

Lectio Divina: ***Luke 4:14-19***

Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone. When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Centering Prayer

DAY 14

Lectio Divina: ***Gospel of Thomas 77***
Yeshua says,
I am the light shining upon all things.
I am the sum of everything,
for everything has come forth from me,
and towards me everything unfolds.
Split a piece of wood, and there I am.
Pick up a stone and you will find me there.

Centering Prayer

DAY 15

Lectio Divina: ***Luke 8:42b-48***
Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years; and though she had spent all she had on physicians, no one could cure her. She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his clothes, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped. Then Jesus asked, "Who touched me?" When all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the crowds surround you and press in on you." But Jesus said, "Someone touched me; for I noticed that power had gone out from me." When the woman saw that she could not remain hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before him, she declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace."

Centering Prayer

DAY 16

Lectio Divina: John 4:7-15

A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

Centering Prayer

DAY 17

Lectio Divina: Gospel of Thomas 90

Come to me
for justice is my yoke,
and gentleness in my rule,
and you will discover the state of rest.

Centering Prayer

DAY 18

Lectio Divina: John 5:2-9

Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew Beth-zatha, which has five porticoes. In these lay many invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me." Jesus said to him, "Stand up, take your mat and walk." At once the man was made well, and he took up his mat and began to walk.

Centering Prayer

DAY 19

Lectio Divina: Matthew 5:1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Centering Prayer

DAY 20

Lectio Divina: Mark 4:35-41

On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, “Let us go across to the other side.” And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, “Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?” And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”

Centering Prayer

DAY 21

Lectio Divina: John 6:32-35

Then Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.” Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

Centering Prayer

DAY 22

Lectio Divina: ***Philippians 2:1-11***

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Centering Prayer

DAY 23

Lectio Divina: ***Gospel of Thomas 6***

His students asked him,
Do you want us to fast? How shall we pray?
Should we give offerings? From what foods must we abstain?
Yeshua answered,
“Stop lying. Do not do what you hate,
because everything lies open before heaven.
Nothing hidden will remain secret, for the veil will be stripped
away from all that lies concealed behind it.”

Centering Prayer

DAY 24

Lectio Divina: ***Mark 1:16-20***

As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, “Follow me and I will make you fish for

people.” And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets.

Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

Centering Prayer

DAY 25

Lectio Divina: ***Matthew 5:13-16***

“You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot. “You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Centering Prayer

DAY 26

Lectio Divina: ***Colossians 3:12-17***

As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Centering Prayer

DAY 27

Lectio Divina: ***2 Corinthians 4:6-10***

For it is the God who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure

in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed;

always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies.

Centering Prayer

DAY 28

Lectio Divina:

Psalm 62:5-8

For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from him.
He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress;
I shall not be shaken.

On God rests my deliverance and my honor; my mighty rock,
my refuge is in God.

Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him;
God is a refuge for us. Selah

Centering Prayer

DAY 29

Lectio Divina:

Psalm 25:1-10

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

O my God, in you I trust; do not let me be put to shame;
do not let my enemies exult over me.

Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;
let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths.

Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my
salvation; for you I wait all day long.

Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love,
for they have been from of old.

Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions;
according to your steadfast love remember me,

for your goodness' sake, O Lord!

Good and upright is the Lord;
therefore he instructs sinners in the way.

He leads the humble in what is right,
and teaches the humble his way.

All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness, for
those who keep his covenant and his decrees.

Centering Prayer

DAY 30

Lectio Divina: Matthew 19:34-40

When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

Centering Prayer

DAY 31

Lectio Divina: Luke 6:27-36

"But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. Do to others as you would have them do to you. "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Centering Prayer

DAY 32

Lectio Divina: Ephesians 1:15-19

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his

power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power.

Centering Prayer

DAY 33

Lectio Divina: **Philippians 4:4-9**

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

Centering Prayer

DAY 34

Lectio Divina: **Psalm 95:1-7**

O come, let us sing to the Lord;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!
For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.
In his hand are the depths of the earth;
the heights of the mountains are his also.
The sea is his, for he made it, and the dry land,
which his hands have formed.
O come, let us worship and bow down,
let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!

Centering Prayer

DAY 35

Lectio Divina: **Proverbs 3:1-6**

My child, do not forget my teaching,
but let your heart keep my commandments;
for length of days and years of life
and abundant welfare they will give you. Do not let loyalty and

faithfulness forsake you;
bind them around your neck,
write them on the tablet of your heart.
So you will find favor and good repute
in the sight of God and of people. Trust in the Lord with all your
heart,
and do not rely on your own insight.
In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.
Do not be wise in your own eyes;
fear the Lord, and turn away from evil.

Centering Prayer

DAY 36

Lectio Divina:

Gospel of Thomas 45

Yeshua says,
Grapes are not harvested from thorns,
nor are figs gathered from thistles—neither produce fruit.
Good people bring goodness out of a storehouse of inner treasure,
while evil ones bring wickedness
out of the repository of evil collected in the heart.
It is from there that they speak.
For it is from the heart's overflow that evil [and good]
enter the world.

Centering Prayer

DAY 37

Lectio Divina:

Mark 10:17-22

As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: 'You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not defraud; Honor your father and mother.'" He said to him, "Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth." Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, "You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

Centering Prayer

DAY 38

Lectio Divina: **Gospel of Thomas 70**

Yeshua says,
when you give birth to that which is within yourself
what you bring forth will save you.

If you possess nothing within,
that absence will destroy you.

Centering Prayer

Day 39

Lectio Divina: **John 21: 15-19**

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” A second time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Tend my sheep.” He said to him the third time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” And he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.” (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, “Follow me.”

Centering Prayer

DAY 40

Lectio Divina: **Psalm 100**⁶

Sing a joyful noise to the Beloved
all peoples of the earth!

⁶ Nan C. Merrill, *Psalms for Praying: An Invitation to Wholeness*. (New York: the Continuum Publishing Company, 1999), 205

Serve Love with a glad heart!
Join hands in the great Dance of Life!

Know that the Beloved of your heart
is the Divine Presence!
Love created us, and we belong to
the Most High;
we are born to be loving expressions
of the Creator's Divine Plan.

Open the gates of your heart with gratitude
and enter Love's court with praise!
Give thanks to the Beloved,
bless Love's holy name!

For Love is of God, and lives in your heart forever,
with faith, truth, and joy
now and in all that is to come.
Alleluia! Amen!