



## Devotional Activity – Easter Week 3A

Week of 26 April 2020

### The Breath Prayer: “Stay With Us, Jesus”

*“Let everything that breathes praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!” (Psalm 150:6)*

Review the story of the walk to Emmaus – Luke 24:13-31

It is a lovely telling of the Risen Christ becoming known to two disciples as they walk the road, discuss the scriptures, and share a meal together. Jesus is present with them all along the way, though Cleopas and the other disciple do not comprehend it. As Jesus breaks bread with them, their eyes are opened, and they recognize that Christ has been present with them all along the way. *“Were not our hearts burning within us?...”* they realize, as they reflect back on what has taken place.

“Stay with us, Jesus,” has been our prayer during Sunday’s worship. We yearn to know the Risen Christ’s presence with us on our own journeys. Our invitation this week is to become attuned to God’s presence throughout the day, as we learn the ancient practice of “breath prayer.” Breath Prayers are simple to learn – for anyone of any age – and can be life-giving. It is known that deep breathing is a beneficial means of reducing stress. In this time of continued confinement, when our anxieties and worries are heightened, what a beautiful invitation it is - to breathe deeply while also becoming more fully aware of the Spirit of God dwelling in and through us.

It has been said that all breath is a type of prayer. Over the centuries, Christians have practiced “breath prayers” as a simple, rhythmic means of praying, inviting Christ’s holy presence throughout one’s day.

A Breath Prayer is a simple, short phrase, which can be expressed in just one breath. It is then repeated as you slowly inhale and exhale. Breathing becomes praying, and in so doing, body and spirit are calmed, and we become more aware of the divine presence.

Choose a name for God and a brief phrase that expresses your prayer desire (usually between 6-12 syllables long – *a few examples are shown*). Get in a comfortable position, and shut your eyes. Breathe in slowly and deeply through the nose. As you inhale, pray the first half of the prayer phrase. As you slowly exhale through the mouth, pray the second half of the phrase. Imagine, as you gently repeat your prayer, that you are breathing in God’s love and care and breathing out your worries and concerns.

Inhale:	Exhale:
Loving God...	Stay with me...
Holy One...	Abide with me...
Holy Spirit...	Give me peace...
Precious Lord...	Help me forgive...
Risen Christ...	Calm my fears...
Jesus, Lord...	Teach me joy...
Abba, Father...	Guide my path...
Lord Jesus Christ...	I give you thanks...
	I trust in you...
	Have mercy on me...

Try using a Breath Prayer before each meal and before going to bed. Learn together as a family, and encourage each other to practice at other times as needed to help calm or focus.

*Thank you, Jesus, for being present with me always. Amen.*