

## Spiritual Practices

"...the things (Christians) do in community that form them in God's love for the world."

Diana Butler Bass, *Christianity for the Rest of us*



Spiritual Practices are a part of our 'practice' of being Christian.

They require regular 'practice', in order to be woven into the fabric of our lives.

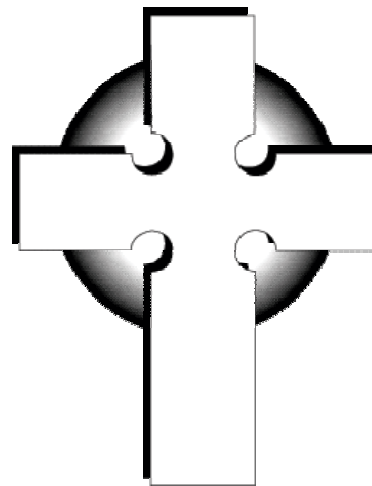
They give strength and beauty to the fabric of our lives.

They are a place where we turn inward to our spirit heart and outward to our community and the world

They are both communal and personal in nature.

*Christianity does not ask us to live in the shadow of the Cross but in the fire of its creative action.*

*Teilhard de Chardin*



## Five Oaks

[www.fiveoaks.on.ca](http://www.fiveoaks.on.ca) or 519-442-3212

Five Oaks is committed to offering ongoing programming in the area of Spiritual Practices. They also offer a Spiritual Practices certificate Series (which is already underway for 2010), Spiritual Accompaniment opportunities, silent retreats and a variety of excellent programming in this area.

## Toward Daring Discipleship



February 2010  
Lent - Spiritual Practices



LENT is often defined as a time of preparation -  
But - preparation for what?  
Good Friday? Easter?

The 40 days in the wilderness were for Jesus a time of preparation for his public ministry

Can we engage our Lenten journey as a time of preparation for our ministry -  
our living of our faith in God's world?



## FOUR SPIRITUAL PRACTICES FOR THE LENTEN JOURNEY



### The Practice of Humility

All of you should wrap yourselves in the garment of humility 1 Peter 5:5



“The word *humility* comes from *humus*, the Latin word for “earth.” A person who is humble ... knows the stuff—earth— of which they’re made. .” (Chittister, p.25)

Humility acknowledges our participation in the human condition and the created order. It allows God to be God. It is not about self hatred, doubt or humiliation. It is the freedom to embrace our human limitations and our oneness with creation, as those both beloved by ... and created in the image of ... God.

To practice humility is to practice gratitude and to practice gratitude well, is to practice humility. With true humility comes kindness, compassion and hope.

#### Resources:

**Print:** Chittister, Joan. *Seeing with our Souls: Monastic Wisdom for Every Day.* Franklin: Sheed and Ward, 2002.

Buber, Martin *Ten Rungs: collected Hasidic sayings.* New York: Citadel Press, 1947.

Kurtz, E and Ketcham, K. *The Spirituality of Imperfection.* New York: Bantam, 1992

**Online:** <http://www.nyym.org/spark/spqp.pdf>

### The Practice of Forgiveness

Then Peter came and said to Jesus, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy times seven." Matthew 18:21-22  
□

The practice of forgiveness is a constant turning toward God in decision to allow God to soften our hardheartedness, heal our woundedness and give us new life.

#### Resources:

**Spirituality & Practice: Forgiveness:** <http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/practices.php?id=9>

**Practicing our Faith: Forgiveness:** [http://www.practicingourfaith.org/prct\\_forgiveness.html](http://www.practicingourfaith.org/prct_forgiveness.html)

### The Practice of Compassion

**Compassion clothes the world with the robe of God and divinely adorns it. (Meister Eckhart)**

The ground of compassion is love and the working of compassion keeps us in love. (Julian of Norwich) And those who follow compassion find life for themselves, justice for their neighbor, and glory for God. (Meister Eckhart)

#### Resources (print and online):

Doyle, Brendan. *Meditations with Julian of Norwich.* Santa Fe: Bear and Co., 1983.

Fox, Matthew. *Meditations with Meister Eckhart.* Santa Fe: Bear and Co., 1983.

**Spirituality & Practice: Compassion:** <http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/practices.php?id=4>

### The Practice of Gratitude

“If the only prayer you say in your entire life is ‘Thank you,’ that would suffice.” Meister Eckhart



Seeing life as a gift and God as the Source of that gift in all its forms is the essence of gratitude - a state of being that can become as natural as breathing [http://essentials-of-purification.lightomega.org/2009/08/gratitude-as-spiritual-practice\\_04.html](http://essentials-of-purification.lightomega.org/2009/08/gratitude-as-spiritual-practice_04.html)

To practice gratitude, seek a discipline that will allow you to pursue it daily in prayer, perhaps with the aid of a Gratitude journal, or through the **Examen**.

The **Examen** is an ancient discipline which leads us to us reflect upon our lives day by day, and to find the hand of God present in our lives.

#### Resources:

**Print:** Linn, *Sleeping with Bread: Holding what gives you life.* Mahway: Paulistpress, 1995.

#### Online:

**Ignatian Spirituality.com:** <http://ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer/the-examen>

**Spirituality & Practice: Gratitude:** <http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/practices.php?id=11>