



Take Time Out for Beauty

Ritual Setting When possible, gather outdoors near water. If indoors, create a soft atmosphere with soft lighting, gentle music, and seating in a circle.

slowly and deeply — close your eyes and focus on one object or source of beauty in your own life at this time.

Allow some quiet time for reflection.

Gathering Invite participants to prepare for the time together by quieting and breathing deeply. Listen to gentle music or to the sound of moving water.

Please keep before you this gift of beauty during our time together.

Materials Display a vase of varied types and colors of flowers. Have a fountain with the sound of flowing water.

Listen now to this reflection on Beauty.

Introduction

Have one person lift high and walk through the group with the vase of flowers as the opening prayer is proclaimed.

Flowers

Mother God,

We bring before you our gift of flowers.
Colorful, of glorious shapes and design,
they dance together in splendid beauty.
Each one is unique in shape and
fragrance.

They bring joy to the eye--
they decorate the earth with color
and movement,
they are a sign of your gracious creativity
and a reflection of your beauty.

May these flowers, so pure and lovely,
remind us, Mother God,
of our own loveliness
and our own ability to shine and dance.

Bless, O Mother
of all life, our gift of flowers.

“There was no path So I trod one” by [Edwina Gateley](#).

Reflection

Presider

We gather today to pause for a space to hold close the beauty in our lives. You are invited to breath

Reading

“Beauty does not stand alone in the universe, isolated and remote, under glass and precious for its rarity. Beauty is the bridge to justice. It’s the lost beauty of nature that warns us against pollution. It’s the beauty of a child’s face that brings us to see the ugliness of racism. It’s the beauty of life that brings us to rage against the injustice that obstructs it for anyone. Beauty is the glue that holds the world together.

To bring peace, to nurture hope, to wage justice, then, it is necessary to teach beauty or nothing is too valuable to be destroyed. We may well be spending far too much time teaching skills and productivity and efficiency and



far too little time on music and art and poetry and flowers and literary appreciation. To raise a child well, we must seed a place in their souls for beauty. To live life fully, we must learn to take time out for beauty. To build buildings that do not become ghettos, we must be willing to spend as much time on their beauty as we do on their function. Unless we make beauty the centerpiece of our lives, we are not really living, we are only breathing. If in

this millennium we really want justice, we must learn to cultivate beauty.”

Joan D. Chittister, OSB

Pause for quiet reflection.

Presider

Bring back the beauty in your life that you focused on earlier. Does this say to you that “beauty is the glue that holds the world together?” Is “beauty the centerpiece of your life?”

Allow time for any shared reflections.

Beauty in Poetry

As the following poem is recited, gift each one present with a flower from the vase displayed.

Pied Beauty

Glory be to God for dappled things--
For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced-fold,
fallow and plough;
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.
All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled
(who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour;
adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise him.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

Gifting others with Beauty

Invite each person to gift another with the flower received and to pray a blessing of beauty for that person.

Conclusion

Poem-Prayer

All present pray together.

Beauty is before me
And beauty is behind me
Above and below me hovers the beautiful
I am surrounded by it
I am immersed in it
In my youth I am aware of it
And in old age I shall walk quietly
The beautiful trail
It is finished in beauty
It is finished in beauty
It is finished in beauty
It is finished in beauty
It is finished in beauty.

Navaho Prayer



Song

“Sing Out, Earth and Skies” by
Marty Haugen

Invite all to join in dance or other movement expressive of beauty.

Acknowledgments

“Take Time Out for Beauty” ritual: [Marguerite Samz, OSM](#);
from [Hill Connections](http://hillconnections.org) (<http://hillconnections.org>), a web site linking [Contemplation](#) and [Social Justice](#).