

A Breathing Prayer

As a means of entering into prayer, the rhythm of our breathing can be a useful tool. This is so for several reasons. On a practical level, since we're always breathing, it is a constant presence in our lives. This fact calls to mind, secondly, the connection between breathing and God, since God is the giver of all life. Finally, because we "breathe in the good air and breathe out the bad," the rejuvenating process of breathing calls to mind a deeper, spiritual cleansing that comes through prayer (moving from *willfulness* to *willingness*).

Instructions: Sit somewhere comfortably and quietly where you will not be disturbed. Breathe somewhat more deeply than usual, becoming more conscious of the air entering your lungs when inhaling—and then, after a brief pause, also the air that leaves when exhaling. As you develop this rhythm, focus your mind upon God, guided by the following reflection (repeat several times):

Breathe in the breath of God

Breathe out your cares and concerns

Breathe in the love of God

Breathe out your doubts and despairs

Breathe in the grace of God

Breathe out your fears and frustrations

Breathe in the breath of God

Breathe out your tensions and turmoil

Breathe in the love of God

Breathe out your haste and hurry

Breathe in the grace of God

Breathe out your waste and worry

Sit quietly before the Father who gives life and love to all creation

Sit in adoration before the Son who redeems us from all our sins

Sit in peace filled with the breath of the Holy Spirit who renews every fiber of our being

Sit in awe before the Glory of the One God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit