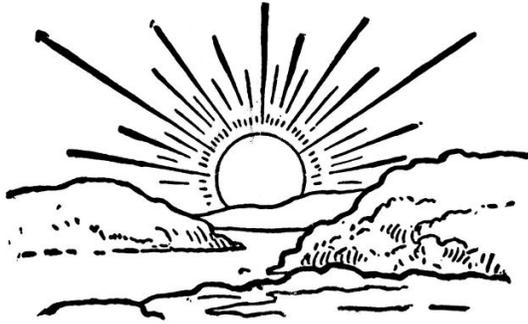


## **B. The Deer's Cry:**

An 8th Century Irish prayer for the morning

*One legend is that St Patrick was being pursued. He and his company were singing this prayer of protection. Those wishing him harm saw only a herd of deer pass by! Deer are well known for their ability to conceal themselves! Patrick and his company were protected.*



### **I arise today**

Through the strength of heaven;

Light of sun, Radiance of moon,

Splendour of fire, Speed of lightning,

Swiftness of the wind, Depth of the sea,

Stability of earth, Firmness of the rock.

### **I arise today**

Through God's strength to pilot me;

God's might to uphold me,

God's wisdom to guide me,

God's eye to look before me,

God's ear to hear me,

God's word to speak for me

God's hand to guard me,

God's way to lie before me,

God's shield to protect me

*Christ shield me today Against wounding*

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,

Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,

Christ on my right, Christ on my left,

Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,

Christ when I arise, Christ to shield me.

Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me.

### **I arise today.**

Through the mighty strength of the Lord of creation. **Amen**

***Also available as a recording on our website.***

## Day Two: Tuesday 2nd February: Be Still



**How did you get on** with your preparation yesterday? If you feel that you did not fully encounter the exercises for yesterday, then do pause and don't worry about being a day behind.

Were you able to use the prayer this morning? (The Deer's Cry B on page 4). Was it helpful for you? Sometimes it is difficult to find the words we need in prayer. Using given words or songs can be helpful in prayer but equally using no words, gesture, marks, images can be useful too. Don't limit yourself! When praying you might find that you want to respond or record your prayer, you might find that doodling helps, or holding something. See what works for you.

**Today we experience silence.** Some of us are more comfortable with silence than others. Don't worry if it takes some practice to be silent and to focus.

We are using a short text **Psalm 46:10**. If thoughts come into your mind - welcome them, accept them and then return to your focus. You might have distracting thoughts: use the same technique of noticing, welcoming and then return to your focus - don't fight what surfaces whilst you are praying.

*Be still, and know that I am God Psalm 46:10*

1. **Introductory activity:** eat a raisin mindfully (or small piece of chocolate or fruit) see 'C. Mindful Eating' on page 6.
2. **Read aloud one of the versions of the poem:** 'D. Let Your God Love You' on page 7 to introduce a time of silent prayer.
3. **In quiet and silence** meditate on the verse 'Be still and know that I am God' using the principles that you used when eating the raisin - use sheet E on page 8.

*If you only have time for one thing today - go straight to number 3*

**Take some time at the end of the day to review your day using a written or recorded examen.**

**Experience: A new kind of silence on retreat:** *I remember on my first retreat the challenging experience of eating in a communal dining room with other people whilst being intentionally silent. It was something I had never encountered before - it did not compare for example with eating alone in a railway station cafe whilst waiting for a train. The silence was intense, my senses heightened - every sound seemed to boom, touch was magnified, taste exploded, smells - even of ordinary things were perceived, things even looked different! It was like seeing the world for the first time.*

*This was where I discovered banana butties for breakfast - a food I always associate with being on retreat! Holding a cold knife, choosing my fruit, peeling open the banana, silently requesting my neighbour to pass the butter... not just my sensation of taste was intensified!!*

*At another retreat I was sat with a bishop, who just could not be silent - he could not help breaking into conversation! Sometimes our world is so full of sound, people, noise that we struggle to stop to hear God.*

**Today I invite you to stop to listen...**

*How comfortable are you with silence? What helps you be silent? What distracts you? Can you be silent when with someone else?*

**Further reading? [The Sound of Sheer Silence: 1 Kings 19:11-13](#)**

## C. Practice: Eating One Raisin: Mindful Eating.



**Richard Rohr says:** *Because the rubber of transformation meets the road in practice, in actual encounters with real life, I continue to encourage you to try something new: change sides, move outside your comfort zone, make some new contacts, let go of your usual role and attractive self-image, walk or take a bus instead of drive, make a friend from another race or class, visit new neighborhoods, go to the jail or to the border, attend another church service, etc. Without new experiences, new thinking is difficult and rare. After a new experience, new thinking and behavior comes naturally and even becomes necessary.*

**Today's practice, Eating One Raisin, encourages us to do something we have probably done hundreds of times but in a new way.** *It comes from* The Mindful Way Through Depression: Mindfulness is not paying more attention but paying attention differently and more wisely—with the whole mind and heart, using the full resources of the body and its senses.

### **Holding**

First, take a [*single*] raisin and hold it in the palm of your hand or between your finger and thumb. Focusing on it, imagine that you've . . . never seen an object like this before in your life.

### **Seeing**

Take time to really see it; gaze at the raisin with care and full attention. Let your eyes explore every part of it, examining the highlights where the light shines, the darker hollows, the folds and ridges, and any asymmetries or unique features.

### **Touching**

Turn the raisin over between your fingers, exploring its texture, maybe with your eyes closed if that enhances your sense of touch.

### **Smelling**

Holding the raisin beneath your nose, with each inhalation drink in any smell, aroma, or fragrance that may arise, noticing as you do this anything interesting that may be happening in your mouth or stomach.

### **Placing**

Now slowly bring the raisin up to your lips, noticing how your hand and arm know exactly how and where to position it. Gently place the object in the mouth, without chewing, noticing how it gets into the mouth in the first place. Spend a few moments exploring the sensations of having it in your mouth, exploring it with your tongue.

### **Tasting**

When you are ready, prepare to chew the raisin, noticing how and where it needs to be for chewing. Then, very consciously, take one or two bites into it and notice what happens in the aftermath, experiencing any waves of taste that emanate from it as you continue chewing. Without swallowing yet, notice the bare sensations of taste and texture in the mouth and how these may change over time, moment by moment, as well as any changes in the object itself.

### **Swallowing**

When you feel ready to swallow the raisin, see if you can first detect the intention to swallow as it comes up, so that even this is experienced consciously before you actually swallow the raisin.

### **Following**

Finally, see if you can feel what is left of the raisin moving down into your stomach, and sense how the body as a whole is feeling after completing this exercise in mindful eating. [2]

[1] Adapted from Richard Rohr, "The Eight Core Principles," *Radical Grace*, vol. 25, no. 4 (Center for Action and Contemplation: Fall 2012), 44-45. No longer in print. See [cac.org/about-cac/missionvision](http://cac.org/about-cac/missionvision).

[2] M Williams, J Teasdale, Z Segal, and J Kabat-Zinn, *The Mindful Way through Depression: Freeing Yourself from Chronic Unhappiness* (Guilford Press: 2007), 55-56.

**D. LET YOUR GOD LOVE YOU**

Be silent. Be still.

Alone:

Empty before your God.

Say nothing. Ask nothing.

Be silent. Be still.

Let your God look upon you,

That is all.

God knows. God understands.

God loves you with an enormous love.

God only wants to look upon you with his love.

Quiet. Still be.

Let your God - Love you.

The more one experiences God,

the smaller one becomes.

The less one speaks,

the more God speaks.

**LETTING GOD LOVE ME (personalised)**

I will be silent. I will be still.

Alone:

I will Empty myself before myGod.

I will say nothing. I will ask nothing.

I will be silent. I will be still.

I will let God look upon me,

That is all.

God knows. God understands.

God loves me with an enormous love.

God only wants to look upon me with his love.

I will be quiet. I will still be.

I will let my God love me

The more I experience God,

the smaller I become.

The less I speak,

the more God speaks.

*(adapted from "In God's womb: a spiritual memoir" by Edwina Gateley)*

### ***E. Meditation: Be Still***



*Approach this text in the same way that you ate the raisin! Write down the text from Psalm 46:10 '**Be still and know that I am God**' or use the picture above.*

*You can do this exercise in your mind or you could use coloured pens or pencils as you pray: writing the words or doodling or decorating the page. Let your imagination flow and don't worry about getting it right or drawing something that will look 'good'.*

#### ***Holding***

Take the text, write it down or find it in a bible and focus on it. Imagine that you have never read it before. What does it say to you? You may have previous associations with this verse - acknowledge them and lay them aside so that you are free to...

#### ***Seeing***

Take time to really see the verse; read the verse with care and your full attention. Let your eyes explore every part of it. What is it saying to you today?

#### ***Play with the verse***

With the raisin you smelled, placed and tasted it. I invite you to play with the verse in a similar way:

1. Repeat the whole phrase over several times.
2. Read the phrase in two segments of 4 words,
3. Read the phrase in three segments of 3 words
4. Read the phrase in four segments of 2 words
5. Finally focus slowly on single words - Be, Still, Know, I, Am, God.

Each time turn the phrase or word over and explore it.

Try writing it down or closing your eyes as you say it

Notice your responses and capture any key thoughts in words, images or doodles. Maybe you can create an image using a photo?

What might God be saying to you today?

**Finally:** Return to the whole verse, relish it saying it again slowly at least 3 times to close.

## F. Be Still and Know: Print and Colour Template

If you need something else to help you focus you might like to try colouring an image.

