

## DEEPER SPIRITUALITY: BEST PRACTICES

# Solitude

Integrating solitude and silence into your life may take a few days or even weeks of experimentation and reflection—

be patient with the process.

See reverse side for some best practices that can help:



# Solitude

## **Identify your sacred space and time.**

- Consider time and the physical space, whether home, outdoors or in your office.
- Consider whether there are any spiritual symbols or icons that help you be present to the spiritual reality of God's presence with you.
- Experiment! Pay attention to what works and what doesn't until you find the best time and place for you.

## **Begin with a modest goal.**

- Start with 60 seconds or 5 minutes.
- 10, 15 or 20 minutes of time spent in actual silence is a good goal.
- You can always increase the time as your capacity for silence increases.

## **Settle into a comfortable yet alert physical position.**

- Sit in a comfortable straight back chair, feet flat on the floor, hands in your lap.
- Relax your body and calm your breathing.

## **Ask God to give you a breath prayer that expresses your openness and desire for God.**

- Choose a prayer phrase that expresses your desire or need for God.
- No more than six or eight syllables so that it can be prayed very naturally in the rhythm of your breathing.
- Pray this prayer several times as an entry into silence.
- Pray it also as a way of dealing with distractions.

## **Close your time in silence.**

- Express gratitude for God's presence with you.
- Pray The Lord's Prayer.

## **Be patient with the process.**

- Resist the urge to judge yourself or your experiences in silence.

Adapted from *Invitation to Solitude and Silence* by Ruth Haley Barton. Second edition ©2010 by Ruth Haley Barton. Used by permission of InterVarsity Press.

