

# Christian Prayer 1b

## *Relaxing our body, being still before God.*

### *We are body and spirit; spirit and body*

Religious traditions across the world make use of simple techniques of attending to our bodies to integrate our whole self and enter into a meditative state. These techniques are available to Christians too, so that we can experience our spirit at home in our God-given bodies as we seek to be ourselves before the living and loving God.

### *A stillness exercise ★*

*I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. (Isaiah 41.10)*

**Beginning the exercise.** Sit comfortably - legs uncrossed; feet flat on the floor; back straight; arms by our sides, our hands comfortable on our laps..

- And begin to be aware of your body, what it is feeling, what it is ‘saying’? Often we don’t listen, and don’t notice. Right now, try to empty your mind of everything else. Just be aware of your body.
- Let’s take a tour of it.
- Let’s start with the feet that have carried you around all day. Can you feel your toes. You might need to flex them to remember where they are. How do they feel?
- And the rest of your feet. Can you feel the pressure of socks or your shoes. What do you feel?
- And your ankles? Again you might like to gently flex them to remember what they feel like as part of your body? And how are they feeling? Relaxed? Aching?
- And your lower legs, your calves? Can you feel those? Are the muscles tight or relaxed? Can you feel them against the chair? Or your clothes?
- And your thighs? Tight, tired, or relaxed? Just be aware, notice how they feel. And your backside. How is that feeling?
- And your stomach? How is that? And your chest? How is that?
- And your shoulders? Often tension settles here. Just gently roll your shoulders, and notice how they are? Are they tense, tight, or relaxed? Let them relax.
- And your upper arms? And lower arms?
- Your wrists? And the palms of your hands? Tense, or relaxed? Let them relax. And your fingers.
- Back to the shoulders? Relaxed or tensing up? Let them relax.
- And your neck. How is that feeling?
- And your face? And your head, the top of your head, relaxed, poised? Let it relax.
- And let’s quietly do that journey again, and this time especially trying to let go of tension and stress. Relaxing in ourselves, relaxing in the presence of God
- **Bringing the exercise to a close.** *People can sometimes be very relaxed because of this technique. Bring the exercise to a close with a gentle announcement, or a gentle bell (as on the accompanying PowerPoint. Allow 30 seconds or so afterwards, for people to come together again.*
- You might end the whole exercise by leading people in praying the ‘Glory be’.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit  
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen.

- ★ The exercise is written as a script. You can read it to a class. But leave lots of pauses, to allow people to get comfortable, to notice how they are feeling etc. Maybe allow 10 seconds or more after each bullet point.

The accompanying PowerPoint includes the script read for you, (it lasts 7 minutes and includes the sound of a concluding bell.. All you need add is the closing ‘Glory be...’ When you are familiar with the technique you might like to delete the spoken version and just retain the slides.

