

God in Nature

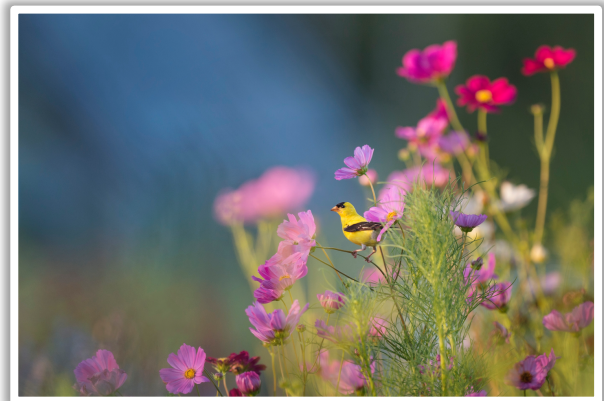
A Spiritual Practice



Nature as Spiritual Practice

Barbara Brown Taylor, in *An Altar in the World*, writes: “People encounter God under shady oak trees, on riverbanks, at the tops of mountains, and in long stretches of barren wilderness. God shows up in whirlwinds, starry skies, burning bushes, and perfect strangers.” How has God been present to you in nature?

Prayer can be as simple as a walk in the park, it all depends on how you approach it. As Mary Oliver says, “Attention is the beginning of devotion.”



O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom have you made them all; the Earth is full of your creatures. Ps 104:13

Water Exercise

1. Slowly read Psalm 42:1 three times (found under the image to the right) and ask yourself, Where am I spiritually thirsty? Journal.
2. Mindfully pour yourself a glass of water; listen to the sound it makes, observe how it flows and fills the glass.
3. Take a sip of the water and observe the feel, taste and temperature of the water in your mouth, and as it slips down your throat.
4. Reflection: Water is essential for life. We are connected to each other through water. We are made new through the waters of baptism.



*As the deer pants for streams of water,
so my soul pants for you, my God. Ps. 42:1*

Water Bowl

Pour some water in a bowl. Observe the sound it makes. Drop a few grains of salt into the water saying, “Let me be salt, light and healing water in the world.” Reflect on your ministry and calling.



Anointing

Dip your fingers into the bowl of water and trace the sign of your baptismal cross on your forehead, asking God to renew you in your calling. Do the same over your lips, your heart, and in the palm of your hands.

Prayer Walk

1. Find the prayer route map.
2. Dress appropriately for the weather.
3. Begin with prayer: “Walk with me, O Lord, and grant me a sense of your presence through all of creation. Amen”
4. Walk slowly and notice the nature around you.
5. Stop frequently and draw closely to trees, plants, items on the ground, waterways, significant markers.
6. Pray for the people you encounter and those in homes and offices you pass by.
7. Give thanks for this location and the many peoples that have stewarded this earth, especially the Indigenous peoples.
8. End with prayer: “Thank you for your presence on this pilgrimage. Enable me to carry your healing into the world and to steward the gift of your creation. Amen”



Then the Lord God formed the human from the dust of the ground, and breathed into its nostrils the breath of life; and the human became a living being. Genesis 2:7