

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

*Openings, 2nd Edition: A Daybook of Saints, Sages,
Psalms and Prayer Practices*

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An Invitation

Speak of your own “restless heart” and your search for the Divine.

What drew you to this book?

January

What are your current spiritual practices? How are they feeding your soul?

Do you find breath prayers, a mantra or centering prayer to be a discipline that leads you into the presence of God? What helps bring you to stillness?

February

Several African American persons were lifted up in this month known as Black History Month. Who was a surprise for you?

Who would you wish to add and why?

Speak of your successes or struggles with journaling as a spiritual practice. What word of encouragement would you offer to those who struggle (including yourself)?

March

March 15 expresses the tension of asking for a gift to be granted and at the same time yielding our wills to God. How do you live with that tension in intercessory prayer?

What are your joys or struggles with intercession?

What woman would you add to the list of saints and sages for Women’s History Month and why?

April

Psalm 46 commands us to “Be still and know that I am God.” Discuss your struggles and successes with stillness and silence.

How do you understand the difference between stillness and silence?

How has your use of posture, gesture and movement in prayer been enhanced or challenged in the readings?

May

How do you express your gratitude?

How was gratitude modeled as you grew up?

Which meditative practice do you use? Which might you try?

Psalm 63 is often used in the morning. What psalm or hymn, prayer or poem is your companion in the morning?

June

Recall a significant retreat you have been on. What made it special?

What are you planning (or would you like to plan) for your next retreat?

Who is a spiritual companion for you, or who might be a soul friend?

What is the difference between a coach, a counselor and a spiritual director? What is your experience with each?

July

What memories or experiences do you recall from your childhood that have impacted your current spiritual practices?

How do you practice taking a Sabbath day or Sabbath moments?

August

What are the ways you pray for peace, work for peace and live peaceably?

How have you offered hospitality to others?

How have you received hospitality that touched your soul?

September

Who have been some of your teachers of spiritual practices?

Who would people find most surprising on your list?

What obstacles have you encountered in your spiritual practices?

How have you moved through them?

How do you deal with distractions and busyness in your prayer life?

October

What discernment tools have you used in making decisions?

Which are solitary and which are more communal?

Who would you invite to ask you questions about a decision?

What questions do you think might clear the path to greater understanding?

November

Who would you add as one of your saints or sages? Who shows you the way to live more in harmony with the Holy and more engaged in bringing love and peace to the world?

What are the elements of your rule of life?

What are the daily, weekly, monthly and occasional practices that keep you centered and alive?

December

December is often a month of darkness and waiting. How do you wait in the midst of all the expectations and traditions?

What times of darkness have you gone through?

What did you learn? How did those times shape you?

What or who helped you make it through?