

## St. Timothy Centering Prayer 7.26.15-Prayer for Spiritual Growth

“The Holy Spirit preaches here, and one word of the Spirit’s sermon is far better than a thousand of our prayers.”

- **The Gathering Bell** signals our intention to Silence & Stillness as we rest in God’s presence.
- **Call to Prayer:** Heavenly Father, you have called us to grow in grace, to increase our understanding of your love and to develop a close relationship with you. This is what we want to do. We pray to come to know you more and more each day. Thank you for your word of truth and for the indwelling of your Holy Spirit, who has promised to guide us. Help us to walk in spirit and truth so we may grow spiritually. AMEN

### LECTIO DIVINA

- **Scripture: Ephesians 3: 14-19: Paul’s Prayer for Spiritual Growth:** For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

- **Silence and Stillness**

- **Reflections:**

**Martin Luther:** “This life therefore is not righteousness, but growth in righteousness, not health, but healing, not being but becoming, not rest but exercise. We are not yet what we shall be, but we are growing toward it, the process is not yet finished, but it is going on, this is not the end, but it is the road. All does not yet gleam in glory, but all is being purified.”

**Thomas Merton:** Self-reliant spirituality, from a Christian perspective, stifles growth,

because it allows little or no room for grace. Many people throw themselves bravely into a long, grim struggle with themselves, hoping to find Christ, but finding mostly self-disapproval. This means not only that they have not found Christ, but that they have not even found themselves. No wonder they don't smile! No wonder they have no joy!

It's not that spiritual growth involves no work on your part. Of course it does. But the most important part of that work is simply desiring God with as much sincerity as you can muster. Sincere desire opens you to God's outpouring of grace, which among other things will help you to better know yourself and to trust in God's love for you despite your flaws. By cooperating with that grace, you will gradually be able to surrender more and more of your self-centeredness, and place yourself in the hands of Christ.

- **Sending Prayer:** **Ephesians 3: 20-21:** Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. GO IN PEACE