



Praying with beads: A Practice for Ash Wednesday

Begin by getting still, take several centering breaths, and slowly read Isaiah 58:1-12. We will meditate on this Scripture in our practice.

When you are ready to begin, hold the invitational bead and focus on the meditation assigned to it. After a few moments, move on to the Resurrection bead and do the same. Enter the circle of prayer with the first Cruciform bead and slowly work around the circle to the right.

Invitational bead— Focus on God, Our Rock and our Redeemer

Resurrection bead— Focus on Christ, who has restored our relationship with God

1st Cruciform bead: You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high. . . Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:

1st set of Weeks beads: to loosen the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke

2nd Cruciform bead: You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high. . . Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:

2nd set of Weeks beads: to set the oppressed free and break every yoke

3rd Cruciform bead: You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high. . . Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:

3rd set of Weeks beads: to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter

4th Cruciform bead: You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high. . . Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:

4th set of Weeks beads: when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

1st Cruciform bead: Upon returning back to the 1st Cruciform bead, you may choose to continue around the circle again or exit your time of prayer.

Resurrection bead— “If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, and if you spend yourselves on behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed. . . Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard. Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.

Invitational bead- Take a deep breath. Pray for the Holy Spirit to show you how you might “fast” this season of Lent. Ask the Spirit to highlight areas of injustice, oppression, hunger, and need in your midst and to show you how to spend yourselves on behalf of the hungry, needy, and oppressed. Take a moment to sit in silence with the intention to have ears to hear all the God wants to tell you.