



## The Welcome Prayer

*Welcome, welcome, welcome.  
I welcome everything that comes to me today,  
for you Lord are with me.  
I welcome all thoughts, feelings, emotions, persons,  
situations and conditions.  
I let go of my desire for power and control.  
I let go of my desire for affection, esteem,  
approval, and pleasure.  
I let go of my desire to change any situation,  
condition, person, or myself.  
I open myself to the love and presence of God  
and God's action within - Amen.*

It's easy to be unaware of God's presence in day-to-day situations. It can also be challenging to readily consent to God's existence and action in our physical and emotional reactions to the emotions we experience daily.

### Purpose

The Welcome Prayer is one way to deepen our relationship with God through consenting to God's purpose in the ordinary activities of our day.

### Background

Unlike many ancient spiritual practices, The Welcome Prayer is attributed to Mary Mrozowski of Brooklyn, New York, a 20<sup>th</sup>-century contemporary leader of centering prayer.

Inspired by the writings of an early 18<sup>th</sup> century Jesuit priest and spiritual director, Father Jean Pierre de Caussade, Mary came to recognize:

*"To welcome and to let go is one of the most radically loving, faith-filled gestures we can make in each moment of each day. It is an open-hearted embrace of all that is in ourselves and the world."*

If you struggle with bad feelings, this prayer method provides a structured way to embrace that awareness, accept and release it, and move forward.

### 3 Phases

Cynthia Bourgeault labels this prayer's three movements as

- 1) *Focus and sink in*
- 2) *Welcome*
- 3) *Let go.*



### **Focus and sink in.**

The objective is to feel the feeling, not to obsess on or magnify the sensation. Permit yourself to let the emotion be what it is. Don't fight it. Just acknowledge: I'm feeling sad, angry, disappointed, lonely – whatever the feeling is.

Remember, the word “feel” can mean a physical or emotional sensation. Settle in and “feel.” Notice your body. Are you tense, anxious, or passive? The purpose is to observe, not to alter the feeling.

### **Welcome.**

*Welcome, welcome, welcome.  
I welcome everything that comes to me today,  
for you Lord are with me.  
I welcome all thoughts, feelings, emotions, persons,  
situations and conditions.*

Acknowledge your feeling helps you recognize where you are, providing a starting point for you to move forward. Now, affirm that what you are sensing is just where you are by welcoming that feeling or emotion while acknowledging God's presence at the moment.

If you're aware that you are angry: “*Welcome, anger.*” If you are overwhelmed by fear: “*Welcome, fear.*” Resentment, weariness, frustration – whatever the troubling feeling is, *welcome that feeling.*

**Note:** The Welcome Prayer is a method to address your “feelings and emotions” not problems, physical hardships, illness, or injustice. Suppose you find yourself needing relief from the struggle of a problem or disease. In that case, the Welcome Prayer helps you consent to the feelings and emotions stirred up by the hardship, illness, or injustice that triggers them.

It's common to resist accepting where we are physically or emotionally, “when where we are” is not a comfortable place. An honest acknowledgement of what we feel is not passive. Accepting the feeling for what it is – a feeling – frees us to respond effectively.

A health issue can create fear. The feeling of anxiety can immobilize us. Acknowledging God's presence at the moment by welcoming the fear releases us to be free to deal with the matter.

### **Let go.**

*I let go of my desire for power and control.  
I let go of my desire for affection, esteem,  
approval, and pleasure.  
I let go of my desire to change any situation,  
condition, person, or myself.  
I open myself to the love and presence of God  
and God's action within - Amen.*



The Welcome Prayer encourages us to acknowledge and accept God's presence and action within us. Then we become free to relinquish our desire for power and control, our need for affection, esteem, approval, and pleasure. We no longer have reason to change others or ourselves. We are fully free to receive all that God brings to us.