

Safe Place Exercise

To begin, find a quite place where you can sit in a comfortable position where there are no distractions. Then take several deep breaths, letting them out slow. After a few moments, close your eyes and invite the Holy Spirit sanctify your imagination, to help you visualize a physical environment that is peaceful and calm. You may visualize yourself beside a quiet stream, the ocean or a lake, in a forest or a meadow, or surrounded by mountains-anywhere that exudes beauty and tranquility.

Allow yourself, now, in your imagination, to take a few moments to be aware of your surroundings, simply taking in what you sense visually, tactilely, and auditorially. Rest there for as long as you like, enjoying all the surroundings. If you experience some dissonance or distraction, simply ask the Holy Spirit to take it away in the name of Jesus.

When you are ready, invite the Jesus to join you in that place. Allow yourself to sense his presence. There is no right or wrong way for him to appear or be revealed. You may even perceive his physicality to the point of being in bodily form.

Once there, notice the warmth of his love. Let it soak into your being. Sense, if you can, Jesus looking directly at you. Do not turn away from his gaze. Listen for his voice. Allow yourself to be in his presence for several minutes.

What are you feeling emotionally? What do you feel that God is feeling as he looks with tenderness and compassion at you? He may respond with words or maybe actions. Either way, experience his acceptance and delight in you.

When you are ready to conclude the exercise, simply spend a few moments in thanks and praise. Take a few deep breaths, letting them out slowly.

➤ Remember that people have different reactions to this exercise. There is, in fact, no right response, only a true one.

I would encourage you to practice this Safe Place exercise for a few minutes each day for six weeks. Practically, this exercise may lead you to a deep awareness of being known and cared for by your Heavenly Father. Initially, this may take place only during the meditation. Eventually, however, you will find that you can quickly access the positive images, feelings, sensations, and words you hear during moments of discomfort in everyday life, altering your response to an anxiety-provoking event.

In conclusion I would also encourage you to journal afterwards. Write out what you have sensed, heard, and experienced emotionally. Conclude your journal entry with words of thanksgiving and praise.