

## A Rain Meditation

Ignatian spirituality teaches us to find God in all things. This meditation encourages us to meditate, reflect, pray with the weather itself - with rain.



You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water.

*Psalm 61:1*

You might find this extract from Thomas Merton helpful.

*The rain I am in is not like the rain of cities. It fills the wood with an immense and confused sound. It covers the flat roof of the cabin and its porch with insistent and controlled rhythms. And I listen, because it reminds me again and again that the whole world runs by rhythms I have not yet learned to recognize, rhythms that are not those of the engineer.*

*I came up here from the monastery last night, sloshing through the cornfield, said Vespers, and put some oatmeal on the Coleman stove for supper. It boiled over while I was listening to the rain and toasting a piece of bread at the log fire. The night became very dark. The rain surrounded the whole cabin with its enormous virginal myth, a whole world of meaning, of secrecy, of silence, of rumor. Think of it: all that speech pouring down, selling nothing, judging nobody, drenching the thick mulch of dead leaves, soaking the trees, filling the gullies and crannies of the wood with water, washing out the places where men have stripped the hillside! What a thing it is to sit absolutely alone, in the forest, at night, cherished by this wonderful, unintelligible, perfectly innocent speech, the most comforting speech in the world, the talk that rain makes by itself all over the ridges, and the talk of the watercourses everywhere in the hollows!*

*Nobody started it, nobody is going to stop it. It will talk as long as it wants, this rain. As long as it talks I am going to listen.*

It is raining and I find a place in which I can experience the rain; maybe outdoors in a coat, under an umbrella or I may choose to get wet, or I might stay indoors by an open window. I choose to be curious and be present to this moment.

I take a while to notice my body and my breath. How am I as I begin?

I let myself be welcomed by the One, whom I might call God, the One who gives the rain, the water that quenches thirst. I linger in this welcome.

I tell God what I am thirsting for.

And so, I enter into this time in the presence of God, taking as long as I need. I engage all my senses and let myself be curious.

I look. I see how light interacts with the rain. I might notice movement or stillness; a huge rain-filled sky or a single drop.

I feel. I experience the rain on my skin, hair, face. I close my eyes and touch the wet surroundings feeling temperature, texture and moisture.

I taste. I might lift my face and open my mouth.

I smell. I take a deep breath and experience the scent of my wet surroundings infuse my body.

I listen to the sounds of a single drop or torrential rain touching the world around me. I notice rhythm, volume, pitch, soft and hard sounds. I take time to listen to my breath and tune into its sound as it mingles with the sound of the rain. I notice as the rhythms of breath and rain integrate.

I tune into the Silence that holds all other sound. Then I tune into the silence within me, simply breathing in and out.

As I continue to encounter the rain, I notice any connections that are made for me; maybe with memories, thoughts, words, music, images, feelings or scripture. I welcome whatever surfaces without judgement.

I might talk with God. We listen and speak. What is said? What do I want? What might God long for?

Finally, I simply rest with God in silence with what is held in the present moment.

When I am ready, I let go of this time.

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I might get a cup of tea and reflect on the rain meditation:

- What was it like to be curious about the rain?
- What caught my attention? I notice what is staying with me.
- How did I feel? I write down some feeling words or maybe I use colours or images to express them.
- I try to name what was most real and felt between myself and God.
- I notice that for which I am grateful.
- I might respond to this time with creativity; through writing, image, movement or another way.

Quotation from *Raids on the Unspeakable* by Thomas Merton, OCSO published by Burns and Oates.

***This meditation was written by Inge Wilson and Judith Irving, spiritual directors at St Beuno's Jesuit Spirituality Centre, North Wales.***