

# FILLING

A practice about opening up to God



In this exercise we notice where we feel spiritually empty and, if we would like to, we can open ourselves to the flow of God's life-giving spirit. In baptism and in John's Gospel, water is used to show how God's Holy Spirit brings new life, healing and deep refreshment. Jesus says: *"those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life"* (John 4:14). Christians believe that the more we open ourselves to be filled with God's Spirit, the more he can do in and through us; the Holy Spirit becomes a "well" or a "spring" within us, renewing, refilling and re-sourcing us.

# Filling

1. You might like to close your eyes. Smile and breathe deeply. Breathe slowly, counting to three as you breathe in and three as you breathe out:

IN ... 2... 3... **PAUSE** OUT... 2...3...

## **KEEP SILENT (FOR ABOUT 30 SECONDS)**

2. Look at the water flowing over the bowl.

## **POUR WATER OVER AN UPSIDE-DOWN BOWL**

Do you see how the upturned bowl does not collect the water? The water just drips into the large bowl beneath.

## **PAUSE**

I wonder where, in your own life, you might feel a bit like this upturned bowl? Where might you feel hard, empty, unreceptive or cold in your relationships with family or friends, or in your feelings? What comes to mind?

## **KEEP SILENT (FOR ABOUT 30 SECONDS)**

Now turn the bowl over.

## **POUR WATER INTO THE BOWL**

3. Do you see how the bowl receives so much water? It even overflows like a spring or fountain.

I wonder where in your own life you need to be filled or

refilled? Where you would like to receive and overflow with refreshing and life-giving water?

Where do you feel “thirsty” for good things like spending time alone or with loved ones, playing and laughing with friends, or making beautiful things?

## **KEEP SILENT (FOR ABOUT 30 SECONDS)**

4. A song in the Bible imagines that we are like a thirsty deer at a stream. This song, called Psalm 42, says: “As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God.” What are you longing or yearning for in your life, like the thirsty deer longing for water? Take time to find your deepest need today.

## **KEEP SILENT (FOR ABOUT 30 SECONDS)**

5. Now slowly drink a refreshing glass of water. As you do so, you can invite the Holy Spirit to quench your deepest thirst, to meet your deepest need today.

As you drink you can also invite the Holy Spirit to give you a gift. This might be a picture in your head, or a word or phrase. Sometimes the Holy Spirit suggests words from the Bible or from holy music.

## **KEEP SILENT (FOR ABOUT 30 SECONDS)**

You might like to finish this exercise by saying, “Come, Holy Spirit.” Amen