

*Song: Instrumental reflection*

*(Sweet Hour of Prayer)*

This week we ask the question “How do we know we are alive?” A pulse, a heartbeat, a breath are the normal signs of the presence of life. Joan Chittister, OSB suggests that while there is still life in us, we have the possibility through prayer of aligning our heartbeat with God’s own heartbeat. Then we begin to notice that the world and all created matter is pulsing with life; and each person we meet is inviting us into life-giving communion. We see life from an entirely new perspective. Our eyes, ears, hearts and hands are one. We know what it means to be really alive. We renew the face of the earth.

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*Thank You For Joining Us!*

Prayer Leader:

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## *Heartbeats*



Our prayer is characterized  
by silence ~

*Be still and know that I am God!*

In that silence we listen for a new word.  
God is present in all our lives.  
God cares for us, and  
our life experiences are a source  
of deepening knowledge of God and self.

Inspired by God’s Word in the silence  
we share from our hearts.

## To Ponder: Joan Chittester

– on prayer during the Year of Mercy

Prayer does not make us less aware of the circumstances of life. It makes us even more aware than we ever were before. Why? Because now we see the world as God sees the world. We hear the cry of the poor as God hears the cry of the poor. We are less wrapped up in ourselves, more aware of the needs of others. The acuity of the heart of God comes with the awareness of the presence of God. Once God takes over the heart, there is no one – no child of God in any tradition, anywhere – who does not have a claim on our heart as well as to the heart of God. We become our brother's keeper, our sister's best support. Our own hearts, like God's, begin to beat with a merciful heart for the entire human race.



## Reading: selected verses from Psalm 34

(Nan C. Merrill)

I will bless the Beloved at all times,  
a song of praise will I sing.  
My soul speaks to the Beloved continually;  
Let all who suffer hear and be glad.  
Open your hearts, friends,  
that your pain and loneliness be turned to Love.  
And then, we shall rejoice in the Beloved together.

When I searched for Love,  
the Beloved answered within my heart,  
and all my fears flew away.  
Look to the Beloved, and your emptiness will be filled.  
Your face will radiate Love.  
For when you weep, the Beloved hears  
and comes  
to companion you;  
Your burdens are eased by Love.

Though we are beset with many fears and troubles,  
the Beloved is ever ready to comfort us in our sorrows,  
to strengthen us in our journey to wholeness.  
The Beloved renews the life of all  
who surrender to Love.

Sharing...

a word...

a phrase...

a reflection...