



## Taizé Evening Prayer

*By Mike Reiling*

Taizé Evening Prayer originated at an ecumenical Christian monastery at Taizé in the southeastern part of France.

The monastery was founded in the 1940s by Brother Roger who became the long-time prior of the monastery. The monastery at Taizé is known for its unique style of prayer, and for being a place of pilgrimage for young people from all over the world.

### **Elements of Taizé Prayer**

There are two specific elements to all Taizé Prayer — silence and contemplative singing.

Contemplative singing involves using short, easy to learn chants — often only a single phrase or two — repeated many times. The chants are contemporary in origin. The songs are written just for the services and are often sung in Latin as a universal language usable by all the visitors.

Silence is the second unique element. In addition to short silences after the readings and chants, at one point in service, there is a meditative period of 10 minutes of silence.

Brother John, a monk of the Taizé Community, describes Taizé prayer “as a time to rest in God, to let the words listened to and sung penetrate one’s being.”

Taizé Evening Prayer includes two short Bible readings and petitionary prayer. The entire prayer is usually conducted in semi-darkness, with a visual focus on Christ as Light, often using a lit Paschal Candle in the center of the gathering. There is no preaching or teaching during the service, which lasts about an hour.

Participants at Taizé Evening Prayer are usually seated, with the exception of the Light Service. At this point in the prayer, all are invited to come forward to light a candle from the Paschal candle and place it nearby.

### **Taizé at Centering Space**

Taizé Evening Prayer at Centering Space is held outside on the grounds behind Lakewood Catholic Academy. Weather permitting, we often have a small campfire as our center light.

In addition to the official Taizé music, we use a variety of chants from contemporary composers.

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at Centering Space**

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### ***Join us at Centering Space***

*Throughout the year at Centering Space, we host a variety of programs, including several Taizé Evening Prayer sessions. Please check our Events Calendar for upcoming programs and registration information.*