



Happy  
Fall  
Y'all

Reflection Day

Fall



## Day of Reflection - Itinerary

Welcome to our fall reflection day. We gather in distant places, we are united in our prayer and in our different corners of the country where we are all experiencing the same season, fall.

Around us we witness the changing of the seasons from the heat and shades of green to the quiet turning of colors of the leaves to the radiant array of color. In its beauty, fall offers us a gentle transition to the frost of winter. During autumn we are reminded of the final preparations prior to the cold months of winter. As birds prepare to migrate south, squirrels prepare their winter hideouts with nuts, and leaves dance as they fall gracefully, we are invited to enjoy the beauty of the season and not rush in anticipation of the hibernation of winter. This time is one of completion, from the harvest that is picked from the womb of the earth to the dance of falling leaves that rot and become compost.

Today we are invited to reflect on the season of autumn. Take some time to walk on this brisk autumn day, listen to God speaking through the crushing of the leaves under your feet, migrating birds or the music of the wind. Following, you will find some prayers and reflection of the season that might help during a day of reflection.

We invite you to get together with someone and share the fruits of your contemplation.

Wishing you fall blessings!



## Prayer of Acceptance

The summer ends, and it is time  
To face another way.

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WENDELL BERRY

**E**ternal One who circles the seasons with ease, teach me about  
Earth's natural cycle of turning from one season to another.  
Remind me often of how she opens herself to the dying and  
rising rotations, the coming and the going of each of the four seasons.  
Open me today to the teachings of the season of autumn.

*When I accept only the beautiful and reject the tattered, torn parts of who I am, when  
I treat things that are fallings apart as my enemies,*

walk me among the dying leaves, let them tell me about their  
power to energize Earth's soil by their decomposition and their  
formation of enriching humus.

*When I fear the loss of my youthfulness and refuse to accept the reality of aging,*

turn my face to the brilliant colors of autumn trees, open  
my spirit to the mellow resonance of autumn sunsets and  
the beauty of the changing land.

*When I refuse to wait with the mystery of the unknown, when I struggle to keep  
control rather than to let life evolve,*

wrap me in the darkening days of autumn and encourage me  
to wait patiently for clarity and vision as I live with uncertainty  
and insecurity.

*When I grow tired of using my own harvest of gifts to benefit others,*

take me to the autumn fields where Earth shares the bounty of  
summer and allows her lands to surrender their  
abundance.

*When I resist efforts to warm a relationship that has been damaged by my coldness,*

let me feel the first hard freeze of autumn's breath and see the  
death it brings to greening, growing things.

*When I neglect to care for myself and become totally absorbed in life's hurried pace,*

give me courage to slow down as I see how Earth slows down  
and allows her soil to rest in silent, fallow space.

*When I fight the changes of unwanted, unsought events and struggle to keep things just  
as they are instead of letting go,*

place me on the wings of traveling birds flying south, willing to  
leave their nests of comfort as they journey to another  
destination.

*When I fail to say "thank you" and see only what is now, instead of what is,*

lead me to gather all the big and little aspects of my life that  
have blessed me with comfort, hope, love, inner healing,  
strength, and courage.

Maker of the Seasons, thank you for all that autumn teaches me.  
Change my focus so that I see not only what I am leaving behind, but  
also the harvest and the plentitude that my life holds. May my heart  
grow freer and my life more peaceful as I resonate with, and respond to,  
the many teachings this season offers to me.

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# Falling Leaves

O falling leaves of autumn,  
What mysteries of death you proclaim  
To my unwilling self

what eternal truths  
You disturb  
In the webbings  
Of my protective heart

what wildness  
You evoke  
In the gusty dance  
Of empty winds

What mellow tenderness  
you bravely breath  
in your required surrender

what challenge  
you engender  
through your painful twists  
and turning

what howl of homelessness  
you shriek  
with your exile of departure

what daring task  
you evoke  
as you feed the hungry soil

o falling leaves of autumn  
with each stem  
that breaks  
with each layer of perishing

you teach me  
what is required  
if I am to grow  
before I die.

- Joyce Rupp

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# Some questions for reflection

1. What is most satisfying and fulfilling for you at this time of your life?
2. How have you experienced the dying of autumn in your personal growth?
3. As trees let their leaves go, what do you need to let go to provide room for new life?
4. What message do you hear as you encountered fall?
5. What is your harvest and how does it add abundance to your life?
6. What invitations to transition or stillness do you hear?
7. Is there a part of your life that holds abundance? How has it bless you?
8. Is there a part of your life that has matured and come to greater fullness?

# Prayer

## God of the Seasons

Part of the beauty of fall  
is its fleetingness  
We know we have a limited time  
to savor the vibrant, warm colors  
and the crisp crinkle of leaves under our feet

It's like those intimate times of prayer  
when Jesus particularly touches our heart  
and we know in our bones we are loved by God

We do not always sense this glorious truth  
but the memory of it keeps us going  
helps us to persevere through the seasons of our soul

We may feel we are in a barren winter spiritually at times  
but we know God is doing something within us  
just as we know the death of the leaves and the falling snow are  
preparing earth for new life

We know too that the glory of spring will come  
just as we will feel God's closeness once again

God, as we admire the leaves of autumn  
help us to dwell on your abundant love for us  
Guide us to continue to walk in hope  
as we watch the leaves slowly fall to earth  
And grace us with deep trust  
that you are always moving within us  
getting us ready for something new.

- Lorraine Reaume, OP (Adrian)

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## Closing Prayer

O breath of God, come with your transforming breath. Descend from the heavens; rise up out of the earth. Surround me with your liberating breath. Free me from the things that keep me tied only to what I know. Reveal to me the things that hinder, those that prevent me from being a blessing in the lives of others. Take away my leaves of resentment, fear, apathy,, indifference, greed. Help me to surrender my self-hatred and discouragement. Empty me that there may be a beautiful new space in me for renewal. I offer you my life. Receive me.

We conclude by blessing each other –

May autumn lead you into deeper peace.

- Joyce Rupp

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