

## Spiritual Practice for month of November 2020

### Making a Home Altar

As the days shorten and become colder and wetter, we tend to spend more time indoors. For many of us, it's easy to find God in nature, but how can we be reminded of the Divine in our own homes?

One way is to create a simple altar, a physical space where we can signify the Spirit dwelling among us. It can become a special place where we pray, read, and reflect – a place where we encounter God and are reminded of the sacred web of relationship that links us with creation and with other people, both those living in this world and in the world to come.

The Hebrew Bible tells of Noah, Jacob, and others, who raised altars to acknowledge God's presence and to give thanks. And if you've ever sung the original version of the hymn, "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing" (not the one in our hymnal), you'll have sung the words, "Here I raise my Ebenezer," referring to an incident when the prophet Samuel set up a stone to remind the Israelites of God's care for them.

Creating a home altar is as simple as finding a table, mantel, ledge or shelf, where you can arrange a few items that make you feel close to God. Here are just a few ideas – your own imagination and experience will suggest more.

- A natural object, such as a feather or stone
- A small icon
- A candle
- A photograph of someone beloved to you, perhaps a departed friend or relative
- A reminder of a pilgrimage you have taken or other time when you have experienced God's presence

Notice that I have used the singular "a" in my list. The idea is to have a few representative items, not a comprehensive collection. You may want to change some of these with the season, either natural or liturgical.

Finally, find a few moments each day to spend at your altar, praying and being reminded of the Divine presence. In these unsettled times, we need all the reminders we can get.