**Stilling prayer is about *being* not doing**

A while ago I was looking for quotes for a calligraphy theme. I was able to obtain a book by Peter Millar, *Touch the Earth Lightly,* in which he gathers articles from all over the planet on caring for our world. It provided more than enough quotes for my project. However, there was one article that really struck home - *Dadirri.* Without going into all the detail, *dadirri* is a concept and practice within Australian aboriginal spirituality. The person providing the article suggests ‘this ancient wisdom can bring new meaning to western spirituality.’ That’s a big statement!

But looking more deeply into this wisdom, we may find that there is something to which we can relate. This is snapshot on *dadirri –*

‘It is inner deep listening and quiet still awareness. Dadirri recognises the deep spring that is within us. We call on it and it calls to us. It is something akin to what we know as contemplation, perhaps sitting on a river bank or walking through the trees – just listening in the same way as the community has listened since the earliest days.’

In Genesis 1, we read about God’s creation as it takes form, and at the end of each day it states, ‘God saw that it was good.’ At the end of the sixth day we read in verse 31, ‘God saw all that he had made and it was very good’, including making humans in the image of God. After which God rested not merely *from* his work, but rested *before* his work in a sustained act of contemplation on the 7th day, the Sabbath day of rest.

In doing this we see God’s approving eye on His creation, a way of being similar to this concept and practice of *dadirri.* This ancient Aboriginal spirituality is understood in the Hebrew scriptures as being from the dawn of time and was the very first response to God’s creation by God’s own self. Every time we experience a sense of wonder at God’s creation we are sharing in this divine way of being.

And *dadirri* seems to offer a first step whenever we settle into prayer of stillness but also whenever we sense the world around us as we stop to give thanks to God for the wonders of his creation. As Byrd Baylor suggests: ‘The way to start the day is this – face the east and greet the sun with a blessing in words that spring from your heart.’ As we move now into the stillness, let us hold an image of some aspect of creation that you have experienced recently.

**A prayer to take us into stillness**

Mother and Father God

I am made whole again

Creator of the deep quiet,

May we never be a stranger

To that place within our heart

Where we are alone

With life’s resources

And tiniest bloom/

Peter Millar *Touch the World Lightly*

**We leave the silence**

Creator God,  
Whose voice I hear in the winds  
and whose breath gives life to all the world.  
Hear me! I need your strength and wisdom.  
Let me walk in beauty, and make my eyes  
ever hold the red and purple sunset.  
Make my hands respect the things you have made  
and my ears sharp to hear your voice.  
Make me wise so that I may understand  
the things you have taught my people.  
Let me learn the lessons you have hidden  
in every leaf and rock. Native American Indian prayer [slightly adapted]