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Stretch and Pray: A Daily Discipline for Physical and Spiritual Wellness  
by [Murray D. Finck](#) (Author)

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In this book, Finck provides a step-by-step guide to forty stretches, movements, and postures to improve physical and spiritual well-being. The book features photographs and devotional reflections for individuals to use to create their own routines.

While on a pilgrimage trek through Thailand, Finck discovered the benefits of daily stretching and quiet prayer. On the physical level, after only one week, the chronic back pain that had plagued him for twenty years disappeared. On a spiritual level, the poses deepened his prayer experiences.

Thriving Securely with Hope and Balance - Homily 2  
by Annette Toft Langdon, RN, BSN, MA

It had been an overwhelming week -  
- too many meetings and a growing “to-do” list  
- too many people who were hurting, dying  
- worries about some of my own family members

You all have been there. You know the feeling of coming to the end of yourself - of having no words, no hope to offer no more strength or energy.

So what do we do? How do we thrive, when we feel like we are drowning in needs and demands for our time and energy?

On this particular week, I thankfully came to Thursday - with still so much to do, but at 9:30, I took my yoga mat and went down to Room N204, slipped off my shoes, my watch and joined the Breathe, Stretch, Pray class - a Christian Yoga class - level 1.

We started with deep breathing and remembering the One who gives us breath. And I slowly let go of my frantic pace and my worries. At the end of the hour, the instructor shared this devotion:

*A prize was once offered for the best painting representing peace. Two artists brought their paintings. One had painted a placid mountain lake. There was not a ripple on its surface, and plants and bushes were mirrored in the clear water. Everything breathed a spirit of peace and rest.*

*The other painting was of a mighty waterfall. A dark mass of water tumbled over the steep wall of rock to break into foam on the rocks below. Everything suggested uproar and confusion. There seemed to be nothing on which the eye could rest. Could this mean peace? But see, at the very top where the water tumbled into the deep, grew a little tree. A thin branch stretched out over the angry water. And there - on this branch above the abyss - sat a little bird, its head beneath its wing, asleep. This painting was given the prize.*

*It is easy enough to have peace in good and sunny days, when all goes well. May we also have it in days of storm and trial. In the peace of God we rest securely above the roar and turmoil of the world. (from Today with God, by Daniel Nystrom, 1944, p 151)*

It is in the times of turmoil, of change and upheaval, that we need to care for ourselves. As parish nurses, we can thrive securely with hope, trusting in God’s grace to sustain us and to keep us whole.