

# Prayer Manual

By **Jo Ann Steger Hoffman**

“What I wear is pants. What I do is live. How I pray is breathe.”  
Thomas Merton

Do nothing  
Say nothing  
Think nothing  
Feel nothing  
Dream nothing  
Imagine nothing  
Expect nothing  
Ask nothing  
Offer nothing  
Want nothing  
Accept nothing  
Reject nothing  
Have nothing  
Give nothing  
Keep nothing  
Share nothing  
Read nothing  
Write nothing  
Make nothing  
Touch nothing  
Hear nothing  
See nothing —  
Be nothing.

Being nothing,  
you will understand  
that you are everything.



**Jo Ann Steger  
Hoffman**

---

**Jo Ann Steger Hoffman** is a writer, editor and former corporate communications director, whose publications include a children’s book, short fiction and a variety of poems in literary journals, including *The Merton Seasonal*, *Persimmon Tree*, *Pinesong*, *New Verse News*, *Flying South*, *Red Clay Review* and others. She has received recent contest awards from the Carteret Writers, Pamlico Writers and the Palm Beach Poetry Festival. Her 2010 non-fiction book, *Angels Wear Black*, recounts the only technology executive kidnapping to occur in California’s Silicon Valley. A native of Toledo, Ohio, she and her husband now live in Cary and Beaufort, North Carolina.