

Different Types of Prayer



Bible Contemplation: St. Ignatius recommended praying over a scripture passage where you imagine a verse being spoken to you or picturing yourself as part of a scripture passage.

Bible Praying: Read a verse or passage (Psalms especially) and respond to it in prayer, using it to guide your conversation with God. (Martin Luther's method is especially helpful.)

Breath or Micro Prayers: Simple expressions of thankfulness or need throughout your day. Some even put them on post-it-notes.

Centering Prayer: Quiet prayer that focuses on a particular scriptural verse, word or idea, gently returning to prayer when distracted.

Conversational Prayer: Simply sharing with God what is on your mind and heart.

Examen Prayer: St. Ignatius wrote about this form of prayer with five steps of giving thanks, asking for understanding, review your day or week, reflect on this and look forward to time ahead with God.

Fixed-Hour Prayer: Praying at particular times of the day as monks often do to create a pattern of prayerfulness.

Group Prayer: Gathering with an individual or as a group, often for a particular purpose, such as praying for someone.

Healing Prayer: Especially praying with or for someone who needs healing in body, mind or spirit.

Imaginative Prayer: This could include writing, using various forms of art or other creative expressions to express your prayer life.

Intercessory Prayer: Praying for the needs and concerns of others.

Journaling Our Prayers: Writing out your prayers as a form of physically recording your thoughts and prayers.

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Lament Prayers: Often found in scripture, lifting up the sorrow, anger, hurts and challenges of life. They often take the form of acknowledging God, stating your pain, a request for help and an expression of trust and hope.

Lectio Divina: Another way of praying scripture. Start with an open, quiet mind. First, read the text noting words or phrases that jump out. On your second reading, reflect more deeply. On the third reading, respond in words or writing and then end by contemplating.

Liturgical or Memorized Prayers: Using a prayer written by someone else. Great examples are the Lord's Prayer, the Prayer of St. Francis or Martin Luther's daily prayers found in the Small Catechism.

Meditation/Listening Prayer: Being quiet in prayer, open to the words and guidance of God.

Mindfulness or Practicing the Presence of God: Especially influenced by Brother Lawrence, this is becoming aware of God in our daily lives.

Music and Worship Prayer: Use music, singing, Taizé, Psalms or other scriptural music to praise God through music. (St. Augustine and Martin Luther said those who sing, pray twice.)

Places of Prayer: Many people find there are holy environments that bless their prayers such as lighting a candle, outside in nature, at a church or retreat center, or observing the Stations of the Cross.

Posture Prayers: Use different physical positions like open hands, standing with hands open, laying down or kneeling to guide your prayers.

Reflecting on Your Past: Catherine de Hueck Doherty once shared with a friend that she had been praying through the events of her life, taking time to thank and reflect on God's presence.

Visio Divina: Using icons, artwork or nature to "pray with your eyes."

Walking Prayer: Pray while you are walking, incorporating your environment into your prayer or through a prayer labyrinth.

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