

1. PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

Lectio Divina

1. Having asked for the grace to hear God's Word, READ the passage twice.
2. During the second reading, pause whenever so moved and REFLECT on a word, a sentence, a feeling, or an image that strikes you.
3. SPEAK directly to God and open your reflection to Him.
4. REST Listen contemplatively for any response God might choose to make. Remember that God responds to us at times with loving silence.
5. Close with a prayer of thanks.

Repeat this pattern as you move through the passage. There is no hurry.

Let God's Word take hold of you.

2. PRAYING WITH IMAGES:

Visio Divina

1. Ask for the grace to see, to hear, to recognize God's Word resonating within you.
2. READ Slowly look at the image. Notice any reactions without judging or engaging them.
3. REFLECT Return to the image with an open mind and heart. Prayerfully ponder how the meanings, ideas, feeling, desires, or memories that come to you are connected to your life
4. RESPOND to God in ways that fit your prayer: gratitude, praise, sorrow, petition, etc.
5. REST Be still *with* God, held in His love and grace. Contemplatively listen for any response God might choose to make. Remember that God responds to us at times with loving silence.
6. Close with an "Our Father or a Glory Be.

3. PRAYING WITH NATURE

Creatio Divina

1. ASK for the grace to recognize God's Word speaking to you through Creation.
2. NOTICE your reactions (sensory, emotional, and physical) without evaluating or engaging them. a) Breathe deeply, b) Listen attentively, c) Look closely, d) Smell, e) Touch textures, f) Feel a connection to the Earth. (10 minutes)
3. REFLECT on whatever created the strongest reaction within you. With an open mind and heart, ponder how new feelings, desires, insights, or memories relate to your life (5 min.)
4. RESPOND to God with gratitude, praise, awe, sorrow, petition, reverence, gestures, etc. (5 min)
5. REST Be still *with* God who is holding you in His love and grace. Listen for any response God might choose to make, remembering that, at times, God responds with loving silence (5 min.)
6. CLOSE with a "Glory be to the Father..."

4. BRINGING FEELINGS TO PRAYER

1. What am I really feeling?
How do I feel about what I am feeling?
2. What do I really want?
How do I feel about what I want?
3. What am I like right now?
How do I feel about what I am like?
NOTICE GOD
4. What is God's attitude and feeling about:
- what I am feeling?
- what I want?
- what I am like?
5. How does God see me at this very moment?
- How is God looking at me?
- How close is God right now?
NOTICE MYSELF AGAIN
6. What do I want of God?
7. Can I...Will Iask for what I want?
Stay with the questions. Allow them to become more and more concrete.

5. PRAYER OF THE HEART (St. Ignatius)

1. Ask for the grace you wish to receive.
2. Slowly read the passage, and imaginatively enter the place of this scripture. **Look** at the people, their expressions, and actions. **Listen**. Can you **feel/sense** the mood? Does someone (want to) **touch** you/another? “Taste and see that the Lord is good” Ps 34:9). **Ask yourself: Who or where might I be in this story?**
3. Going deeper. Ask the Holy Spirit to create a bridge between the biblical stories and the circumstances of your life and relationships.
4. Colloquy: At any time, speak freely and honestly with God as one friend to another.
5. Repetition: Stay with (and later return to) any part that is touching or challenging you.
6. Review: What happened **in** you? What stood out? A particular word or image? A strong feeling? An insight, memory, desire, challenge?
7. Close with a prayer of thanks or *Our Father*.

6. EXAMEN PRAYER

1. I become aware of the love with which God looks upon me.
2. I note and give thanks for the gifts that God has given me this day.
3. I ask the Holy Spirit_ for the insights, receptivity, and grace to see clearly what God wants me to notice from my day.
4. With my God, I review the day. I look for the stirrings in my heart and the thoughts that God has given me I look also for those that have not been of God. I review my choices in response to both and throughout the day.
5. Forgiveness: I ask for the healing touch of the forgiving God who, with love and respect for me removes my heart’s burdens.
6. I look forward to the following day and, with God, plan concretely how to live it in accord with God’s loving desire for my life. “Glory Be...” (Gallagher, *Examen Prayer*, p. 25).

7. CENTERING PRAYER

1. Choose a sacred word – as a symbol of your *intention* to be open to God’s presence and action within you.
2. Sitting comfortably and with eyes closed, settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as a focus on your consent to God’s presence and action within.
3. When you become aware of thoughts, feelings, images, physical sensations, or any other distractions, return ever so gently to the sacred word. [Avoid engaging the distractions. Any analyzing, commentaries, guilt feelings, or judgments are more distracting than the original thought.]
4. At the end of the prayer, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes. (Keating, *Intimacy with God*, pp. 63-64)

8. The JESUS PRAYER:

“Lord Jesus Christ,

Son of God, have mercy on me (a sinner)”

1. All prayer is a grace, a gift of God, so, as you begin, ask the Holy Spirit to help you pray.
2. Remember your prayer is an intensely personal communication with Christ.
(The Jesus Prayer is not a mantra or way to relax.)
3. Use songs or other prayers to “wake up your heart” before beginning the Jesus Prayer.
4. Start with a 3 - 5 minute prayer time.
5. Don’t rush or count the repetitions.
6. Don’t try to unite your prayer with your breath; (that can lead to hyperventilation).
7. This is a way to “pray without images”. Avoid engaging your thoughts, feelings, desires, and/or imagination. Don’t use pictures of or visualize Christ.
8. We were created for prayer—for relationship with God—but it takes hard work to fight the constant, inner noise. Expect distractions.
9. Regular practice of the Jesus Prayer creates a pause between you and your automatic reactions. This allows Jesus—who knows and loves you deeply—to heal and free you from whatever keeps you from being the person you were created to be.