



“Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known.”
-- Jeremiah 33:3 ESV

Prayer

A relationship with God doesn't just happen but requires time and practice to develop bonds of reciprocal understanding. Faith not only deepens as God hears our prayers, but also when we face the reality of denial. Perhaps the greatest challenge of prayer is accepting that God leads and guides as a loving Father and not as a genie in a bottle. Old wisdom in the church says, God may not come when you want, but God is always right on time. – From *Prayer* by Monica Moss, CEB Women's Bible

Prayer Plan

- Adoration of God
- Confession of Sins
- Thanksgiving
- Supplication

Discussion/Journal

Prayer is the primary way we enter into relationship with God and where we learn to recognize God's voice revealing our purposes and plans.

- What one word would you use to describe prayer?
- How might you approach prayer as a way to talk *with* God (not *to* God)?
- What helps you to enter into an attitude of prayer?
- What parts of the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) offer a way to pray for you?
- Have you experienced an answer to prayer? Describe what happened.

Clutching Cross Tool

Using the "clutching cross" (hand-held cross), practice each of these prayer personalities* following the plan above (adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication):

- Contemplative – create a sacred space and try Lectio Divina or Examen
- Creative – draw or doodle words/images, sing to music or write your own song, knit or crochet and pray with each row of stitches
- Active – find an established prayer walk, pray for neighbors while walking by houses, set prayer to rhythm of workout, pray during daily tasks

*See Prayer Personally descriptions on pages 2 and 3



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Tools and Practices for Your “Prayer Personality”

Here are some ideas and practices for each personality. Don't hesitate to try something that sounds interesting, even if you don't think it matches your personality. God made us unique and complicated! There is a suggestion for using your clutching cross for each style of prayer.

Contemplative

- Your physical setting may be important to you when you come to pray. **Create your own sacred space!** Find a place where you can be quiet and undisturbed. It can be in your house, office, car, or a favorite park. It can be a small corner, or even a closet. If it is a space that you share, choose a box or a basket to make your sacred space portable. Clear everything away and add just one or two things to help you feel comfortable and focused. A candle, your Bible, your clutching cross, writing supplies.
- **Lectio Divina.** Literally, *divine reading*. This practice focuses on reflecting prayerfully on God's Word. A guide to this prayer practice can be found here: <https://www.unleashthegospel.org/2020/07/a-guide-to-the-lectio-divina-prayer-style/>
- **Examen.** The Examen is a prayer practice, focused on reflecting on the events of a day, or even a week. It can be an excellent way to look at your life and recent events through God's eyes, and recognize where you saw God at work in your life. You can download a nice card with the steps to Examen here: <https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/examen-prayer-card/>

Creative

- **Try drawing or “doodling” your prayers.** Gather your favorite drawing/writing supplies. Spend a few minutes in silence, focusing on God's presence. When you feel ready, pick up a pen or a brush and share the words and images in your heart and mind with God. A good starting place might be to trace your clutching cross onto the paper and let that simple drawing be the starting point. Here is a fun video about “Doodling Your Prayers:” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=McwnO7Csejc>
- **Make a joyful noise!** You don't have to be a musician, or a trained vocalist, to use music to connect to God. Sing along with a favorite hymn or praise song that says what you want to say to God today. If you are feeling very musical, write your own Psalm and set it to music.



- **If you are a needle worker, activities like knitting or crochet, or even embroidery, can offer a pattern for prayer.** You can pray along with each row of stitches, praying for the person will use the finished item, or use the rhythm of the stitches to help you focus as you pray. Your favorite Psalm can offer a wonderful framework for praying and stitching, reciting one line or verse of the Psalm with each row and adding your own prayer.
 - Example using Psalm 23:1: ***The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.*** “*Lord, bless the recipient of this shawl with all he or she needs.*” Continue on through the Psalm.

Active

- If you do your best thinking while you are moving, then taking a **Prayer Walk** is definitely your kind of prayer practice. Before you start your walk, take a few minutes to focus your thoughts toward your time with God. Carrying your clutching cross can be a good way to keep your mind focused while you move.
 - Some ideas for prayer walking:
 - The Leawood campus has a wonderful prayer walk, located south of Building A. The eight stations are on a path about one third of a mile, or the same distance as the Via Dolorosa – the path Jesus walked from Pilate’s court to the cross. You can find a prayer guide at www.cor.org/leawood/care/prayer-walk.
 - Pray for your neighborhood, or any other place. As you walk through your neighborhood, or an area of the city, or even a trail along the creek, pray for each person and place you pass, for the people you see to encounter God in their lives, and find peace, love, and provision for their needs.
- **Put prayer into your workout!** The repetitive nature of some kinds of exercise allows for a perfect rhythm of prayer. Choose some scripture and recite or read one line with each repetition. Listen to scripture or praise music as you work out and make every movement a prayer of gratitude to the Creator who gave you this body to move.
- **Pray as you do your chores and move through the day.** Pray for those you encounter, for your family, coworkers, and friends. Dedicate your work to God and ask that this work reveal God’s presence to you.

If you would like prayer guides or more information on any of these prayer practices, please email me: jenniferc@cor.org. and I would be happy to send you more information!