

## Online Discernment: Theme – Prayer

Prayer – Invocation or raising one’s mind to God

### FORMS:

Active prayer – using your body or engaging in activity to support connecting with God in prayer.

Some people struggle with prayer simply because they can’t sit still that long. Active prayer simply means praying with your body.

The simplest physical prayer is to become aware of your posture during prayer, and to consciously use your posture as part of your communication with God. Traditionally, this meant praying on your knees. Many people in the charismatic movement pray by raising their hands to God or by adopting an open posture.

Another kind of active prayer is pairing your prayer with an activity that you already do. Some people might pray while they knit or sew, or while they do some other activity they enjoy. The only criteria is that the activity leaves the mind free to focus on God.

One final mode of active prayer is to keep a prayer journal, or do some other writing while you pray. Writing really helps keep me focused in my prayer. Keeping a prayer journal is also a great way to record who God is working in your life. Sometimes you don’t see God at work until you look back at where you came from. If you’re the more artistic type, you might consider drawing or doing some other form of art while you pray. A formalized version of prayerful art (or artistic prayer) is the practice of “praying icons.” The creation of an icon is actually done as an act of prayer, and the icon is then used as a focal point for meditative prayer.

Adoration – paying respect, reverence; devotion

Blessing – asking God for power, protection, presence with or for a person or event

Confessing – admit fault and seek God’s mercy or proclaiming our belief in God

Contemplation – listen, look at, be aware of or gaze upon something that raises mind toward God

Intercession – prayer for others

Mandalas – prayer/art form used to center one’s thoughts through active prayer; done in circular form representing wholeness, completion, womb, etc.

Meditation – reflection; deliberate focus on a thought, word, image or mantra (repetitive statement)

Petition – asking another party to provide something for self or another person or party

Prayer walking - a style that particularly suits those who are more kinesthetic by nature, who like to be doing something rather than just sitting down. It lend itself to prayer walking in an appropriate setting, like a forest or a meadow.

Religious Practices – making sacrifice, doing corporal or spiritual works of mercy, abstinence, alms giving, processions and rituals

Supplication – prayers for special purposes such as novenas, special days and events (i.e., Day of Prayer for Peace, etc.)

Thanksgiving – giving thanks to God (or saints, etc.) for blessings received

Vocal – spoken or sung

Worship – acts of religious devotion; showing honor