

Let's try praying like this...

{#7 – Active Prayer}

What's it like?

It's like praying with your hands, your activity, your movement. It's literally like offering your self to God. It's like piggy-backing prayer onto something you do anyway, or even transforming that usual something *into* prayer. It's like channeling your prayers, with or without words, through your hands and your feet, your muscles and your bones, your breathing and your sweat, your working and your finished product.

What's it for?

It's for when you don't feel like sitting still and praying quietly or with a book. It's for when you want to offer God a prayer in the form of a craft or a project or your own sweat and sore muscles. It's for when you need your hands and body to be doing familiar stuff before your mind is ready to go to the places of prayer. It's for when you're just not the kind of person who likes to sit still, but who still wants to stay in touch with God.

When could I use it?

You could use it whenever you'd be doing an activity you're familiar enough with that you have enough concentration or available disk space in your brain and soul to pray while you're active. You could use it whenever you'd like; whenever you're active; or even on a set routine.

Where could I use it?

You could use it wherever you'd be doing your above-mentioned activity, wherever you'd feel comfortable and safe enough to move/work/play and pray at the same time.

How it works...

You do some activity you're already familiar with, or even try something new. And while you're at it, you pray. Some activities might be things like woodworking, quilting or sewing, exercising, creating art, fly-fishing, doing yoga, shooting pool – the possibilities are endless! If you make something, you could even give it to the person you were praying about while you made it. And you can pray a structured prayer while you move or work or pray – like the Lord's Prayer – or just let your mind have a sort of wandering prayer. If your activity has some kind of goal – like finishing a craft or completing a certain number of reps – you could dedicate the activity to God as a prayer. If your activity has a repetitive component to it, you could try to come up with a prayer or name or petition for each repeated action (for example, each row of knitting or each set of weightlifting).

Try it!

We'll do a simple style active prayer today. Using some children's blocks (Lego and Duplo or whatever), you will build a prayer. Get some blocks, and start building – whatever you'd like to make. Make each block a prayer petition, for yourself, for someone else, whatever is on your heart. Make your structure a visible prayer, dedicated to God. If you feel comfortable, share your creation and/or some of your petitions with friends or online, or why you chose to build what you built. (Then please clean up, because those blocks are the worst when you step on them!) If you don't have any blocks around, please adapt this to another activity of your choice.

What did you think?

Learning goal: Just as there are different styles of learning – some people learn visually, or audibly, or kinesthetically, or by teaching the same material to others – there are as many different ways to pray. There is no one correct way to pray. Find a way (or ways) that fits you, because a healthy relationship with God is too important not to.