

Let's try praying like this...

{#16 – Laying on of Hands}

What's it like?

It's like praying for someone else – and the someone else is there with you! It's like making a real connection with the person you're praying for. It's like a physical blessing, by making contact with another child of God and praying for them. It's like an immediate connection of Christian love: both between you and your brother or sister, and between each of you and God.

What's it for?

It's for showing someone else God's love. It's for showing someone else your attention, time, and care. It's for making a prayer real and personal, up close. It's for strengthening the ligaments of the body of Christ. It's for touching someone's life – physically and spiritually – and feeling blessed in return. It's for making the world a better place.

When could I use it?

You could use it anytime there's another human being with you who could benefit from your prayer and touch (= any time). (Keep in mind all covid safety restrictions and common sense!)

Where could I use it?

You could use this wherever there's another human being with you who could benefit from your prayer and touch. It could be private or public, depending on the situation. (Keep in mind all covid safety restrictions and common sense!)

How it works...

Well, basically it has four steps. First, you talk to someone. You should actually do way more listening than talking. It could be a brief (or not), one-time conversation; it could be a series of conversations over a number of years. Second, you ask if it would be ok with them to say a prayer. Third, you ask if it would be ok with them for you to make physical contact. Now, you wouldn't actually say it like that – you'd say something like, “May I hold your hand while we pray?” You could also place a hand on their shoulder, or one or both hands on their head (like a confirmation or wedding blessing). The touch ***must*** be appropriate. This ***cannot*** be stressed enough. And the person must give permission: either right when you ask, or (if it's a family member or friend you know well and trust) when that kind of a touch is already established between you as appropriate. Fourth and finally, you pray for them, out loud. You pray for the things they've been talking about. If you don't know what to say, remember the basics: things like giving thanks, asking for help, or saying sorry.

Try it!

1. Approach someone today – it could be someone you know well or not so well. Explain that you'd like to pray for them today. Ask them to tell you what's going on in their life, and what they'd like you to pray about.
2. Once you've listened and have an idea about what to pray about, ask something like, “Would it be ok if I said a prayer with you now?”
3. In pretty much the same breath, ask something like, “Would it be ok if I held your hand/touched your shoulder/etc. while I prayed?”
4. Pray.

Thank them for letting you pray for them. Continue on with your day, either with or without your prayer partner. Make sure to reflect (solo or with others) about this experience later.

The next step would be to have someone pray via a laying on of hands for *you*. This is a prayer that is sometimes even more powerful to be on the receiving end of than to be the one offering it up.

What did you think?

Learning goal: Prayer isn't just for the person praying – it's fundamentally for the life of the world, for the good of others. This applies no matter your personality type, no matter whether you're an introvert or an extravert. Our savior became incarnate; our prayers must also be incarnate, and tangible, sometimes as well.

Soul Types meets “Let’s Pray Like This”

“Let’s Pray Like This” is a class to explore, sample, and experience different types of prayer. *Soul Types* is a book to help individuals find their natural spiritual path (including prayer) based on personality type. The following list gives each of the sixteen sessions of “Let’s Pray Like This” a Myers Briggs four-letter personality type. If the letter is capitalized, the particular prayer activity is very strongly in that Myers-Briggs category. If the letter is lower-case, that means the particular prayer activity is moderately in that Myers-Briggs category, but could easily be tweaked to “flip” to its corresponding letter. Some of them will have a slash, like “E/I,” where you could do it either way. Finally, if there is an *, that will be one of the prayer activities we’ll be trying out during the Women’s Retreat. (Oh, and if you like the activity but it’s not your “type,” then adapt it to make it work for you!) Enjoy!

1. Structured Prayer – i · S · t · J
- *2. Reflections on Movies/TV/Art – e · N · F · P
3. Biblical Prayer – i · s · t · p
- *4. Spontaneous/Sensory Prayer – i · S · f/t · P
5. Daily Devotions – i · S · f · J
6. Music – i · N · F · P
- *7. Active Prayer – e/i · s/n · F · j
8. Prayer Journal – i · s · t · j
- *9. Centering Prayer – I · s · F · J
10. Prayer Labyrinth – I · s · F · J
- *11. Study – i · S · T · j/p
12. Service – e · s · F · p
- *13. Small Group Prayer – E · s · F · j/p
- *14. Debate & Deliberation – E · n · t/f · P
15. Excursion – e/i · s/n · t/f · j/p
- *16. Laying on of Hands – E · N · F · P