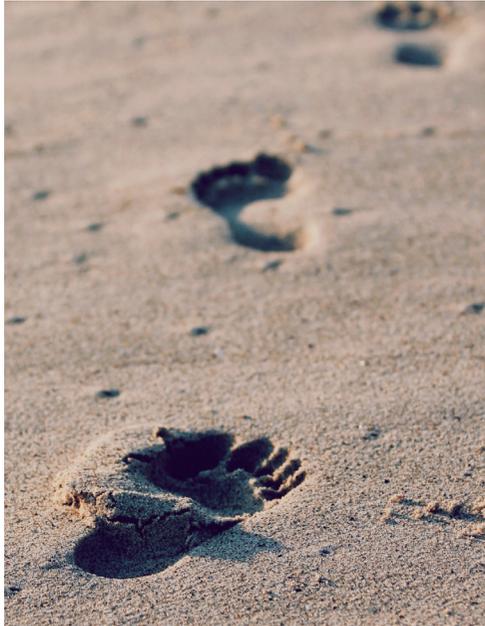


MULTI-SENSORY PRAYER



Gazing at an image or holding a symbolic object can be a gateway into contemplation and communion with God.

As you focus on what you have chosen, allow God to take you beyond the image or object itself - the picture, wood, stone or clay ... Allow yourself to simply be present to this moment, present to God as God is present to you.

Using an image

Look through the pictures and simply let a picture choose you without looking for an explanation.

Holding the picture, rest your eyes on what you see and let it speak to you.

Consider what is before you. Allow your eyes to travel around the picture; notice where you feel drawn and remain there. What holds you? What are you feeling? What do you glimpse of God through it? You may want to put yourself in the picture. What happens as you contemplate your place in it? Does it evoke a memory, an image, a piece of music, a poem, a song, or a passage of Scripture? Does it in any way connect with your life – if so, how?



You may find there are things you want to talk to God about, or sense that God is in some way speaking to you.

When you are ready, bring your prayer to a close by thanking God or using other words or a prayer that is familiar to you such as the Lord's Prayer – whatever feels right and comfortable.

Using prayer stones, a holding cross, or other objects

Hold and look at the object in the palm of your hand; cradle and clench it in turn, then relax your hand. Feel its weight and texture. Consider its story – where it came from: the wind, sun, frost, water and human hands that may have given it its current shape.

Contemplate how that story speaks to you. Does it remind you of something? What do you glimpse of God through it? How does it make you feel? Perhaps you want to think about your own story, and what has led you to today. You may find there are things you want to talk to God about, or sense that God is in some way speaking to you.

As you hold your cross or stone, know that your yesterday, today and tomorrow are held in the palm of God's hand.

When you are ready, bring your prayer to a close by thanking God or using other words or a prayer that is familiar to you such as the Lord's Prayer – whatever feels right and comfortable.



All of us pray in different ways at different stages in our lives. Sometimes our way of praying changes as we grow in our relationship with God.

God has created each one of us as a unique being, and our way of praying is an expression of that uniqueness. We can enter into prayer through Scripture, but also by using pictures, contemporary readings or poetry. Sometimes praying with too many words becomes an obstacle in deepening our relationship with God. A more creative approach, using art or symbols can open up the way. We can contemplate a picture, an image, a painting, or an icon. Or we can pray through touch, exploring shape and colour in a variety of ways. These different ways of praying can help us to enter into the mystery of God's presence through the artistic gifts of others.

BOOK SUGGESTIONS:

Astley, N and Robertson-Pearce, Pamela (eds) (2007) *Soul Food - nourishing poems for starved minds*, Bloodaxe books.

Dickins, Rosie (2014) *The Usborne Art Book about Colour*, Usborne Publishing.

Wallace, Sue (2000) *Multi-Sensory Prayer, over 60 ready-to-use ideas for creative churches and small groups*, Scripture Union Publishing.

WEBSITES:

www.prayerwindows.com/art-as-a-prayer

www.Usborne.com/quicklinks

www.passionart.guide

The material in this leaflet has been adapted from the 'Prayer Pack' developed by the Anglican Diocese of Rochester. Permission has kindly been given for use within the Archdiocese of Southwark.

Archdiocese of Southwark Spirituality Commission:
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