

Multiple prayer practices from others

Intercession

Praying with the Anglican Rosary

Carol Husbands, St. Mark's, San Marcos

I've incorporated the Anglican rosary in my prayer practice since 1996. I use it when I greet the dawn from my prayer corner, a little niche in my office by the window.

My favorite way of praying the rosary is singing various combinations of chants, but sometimes I content myself with just saying them softly. I usually go slowly once around the sacred circle. When I have time, I write my own set of rosary prayers from the daily lectionary. If I'm really inspired, I sometimes create simple chants from the prayers I've written.

The rosary has become a source of calm for me in and of itself. I keep one in my purse or pocket so I can pull it out whenever I'm feeling anxious or frightened or sad, or when I'm driving or waiting somewhere. I don't even have to say the prayers; holding the beads is a reminder of God's presence and love.

Journaling

Carla Pineda, St. Mark's, San Antonio

My journal is another prayer book. When I read from Scripture or some other spiritual reference, one line or word will jump out at me. I note this in my journal, spend more time in quiet and meditation, then write my thoughts, insights or questions that arise. Many times I find myself writing something like prose-poetry or prayer.

Vivian Cox, Reconciliation, San Antonio

I'm an early riser and prefer to practice intercessory prayer after the Daily Office and pot of coffee. I often pray the names on my prayer list to the rhythm of my treadmill or while waiting in line or at a doctor's office.

Sometimes I name the beads of the rosary and other times, when someone is heavy on my heart, I will turn and turn with one person dominating my prayers.

Other benefits are the deep personal relationships that develop — even if the person is not aware of my prayers. Anonymity is a special discipline for me.

Sacred space

Patty Brooke, St. Stephen's, Goliad

My private prayer time is spent in what is sacred space to me: a big, wingback chair with a candle lit on a small altar cloth, surrounded by books. I make a cup of hot tea, sit with my feet curled up under me (with my dog, Blue, on the floor) and read from a devotional book. I ponder the scriptural reference, then write in my journal, ending with prayers of

intercession and thanksgiving. There is a sense of sitting in God's lap, being embraced in love.

The Jesus Prayer

Karen Poidevin, St. Barnabas, Fredericksburg

The Jesus Prayer is especially useful when I'm waiting in line behind someone who can't find their credit card and I'm already late for the next thing taking place in my life. This helps me remember my desire to be in right relationship with God. Through this connectedness, I discover who I am and who I can be.

The Labyrinth

Patsy Sasek, Reconciliation, San Antonio

The Labyrinth is a sacred symbol found in many faith traditions and many forms around the world. By walking a replica of the Chartres labyrinth that was inlaid in the floor of the cathedral in 1220, many have rediscovered an important tool for prayer and meditation.

Scripture and silence

Mac Biggs, Evers Road Christian Church, San Antonio, and a member of the diocesan water well drilling ministry

I like to pray with my first cup of coffee in the morning before and after reading Scripture. I pray when driving and rarely listen to the radio.

Walking this path quiets the mind, allowing one to go within, opening the heart and soul to God. I use it as a form of centering prayer and an extension of daily meditation. Like many others, I have found that this practice relieves tension and gives a deep sense of peace and healing. Often, I have gone into the labyrinth with a question or a petition and have been surprised at the unexpected answer that enters my mind.

"Pray as you can..."

Marion Sehlke, Good Shepherd, George West

My prayer practice is very simple, and I am never sure what it should be, but I keep on because I hold to the saying, "Pray as you can and not as you can't."

I take time each morning to read the Bible and several devotionals, then sit with God in quiet. I bring to him the people I have on my prayer list and ask for His will to be done for each of them.

Through the rest of the day, I hold a running conversation with God, thanking Him for small blessings, asking for his mercy and help with small events.

Icons

Lissa Barker, All Saints, Corpus Christi

Using an icon is not the same as "praying to" an icon. I pray to open myself to the Holy Spirit's movement. The icon helps because I know the image is there through the power of the Holy Spirit that came to the icon writer as the icon was being created.

Occasionally I borrow an icon of Hildegard of Bingen. Her stance and eyes seem to reach out and grab me, so I stop being scattered and listen. This time with her helps me to reflect on her teachings about justice, for instance.

As I contemplate translations of her words, some puzzle I've been wrestling with often falls into place. Her hand, raised in a pose of benediction, generates a feeling of blessing.

The practice of icons as an adjunct to prayer teaches one to focus and to reflect. It's like reaching a port in a storm of competing thoughts.