

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”

John 15:5, NIV

grow

deeper
in Christ

Praying Through Art...

IMAGES are like dreams, they are not truth, but they can point us to the truth. Often, the rational mind can only go so far. Art, dance, movement, or music can sometimes break it open. We may come to an understanding of something through symbol. We see an image and have an emotional or kinesthetic response. Holding the image contemplatively before trying to define it with words allows the new understanding to take shape, to deepen. Below are just two examples of ways to pray with art.

Prayer Collage

Preparation

- Gather magazines and tear out a variety of images.
- Consider removing all of the words so that only the image remains.
- You will need tag board, or canvas, glue sticks or Modge Podge and paint brushes to adhere the images

Getting Started

- Breathe and settle into an attitude of prayer. Release any notion that

you are about to produce a piece of great art. Sink into the reality of God's presence with you and that this process is prayer.

- You can start with a question or a biblical text for reflection, or just begin with an openness to receive from God whatever the Spirit reveals.

Prayer

- Look at the images.
- If you see an image that catches you—it might attract or repel, comfort or disturb, or simply intrigue you—select it.
- Once you have a number of photos, start laying out images, overlapping, and moving them until it feels complete. Glue down.
- There is no right or wrong way. It is a prayer—a different way to connect with God.
- Think about the collage. What is it that attracts you? Is it the colors, a particular image, the layout, how one picture interacts with another?
- Prayerfully look at your question.

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What might God be saying to you through this process as you consider your collage from start to finish?

- Don't rush this time. Listen; reflect on what God is revealing.

Time of Reflection

- What was this time like for you?
- Did you sense God's presence?
- Did you get an answer to your question or do you now have more questions?
- Close with a prayer of gratitude for this time with God and whatever was given.

Art as Prayer

Creating works of art through painting, drawing, sculpting, crafting, or other forms of visual art can be illuminating. Creating visual art can stir our soul in ways that other forms of prayer might not, connecting us with God in a new way.

No artistic talent is needed for this prayer process. However, an openness to allowing God's creative Spirit to flow through you is necessary.

The intent of this practice is to explore your feelings in prayer through visual artwork.

The Process

- 1) Select a passage of Scripture.

- 2) Place your art supplies on the table in front of you.

- 3) Settle yourself and clear your mind of distractions. Breathe deeply and imagine God's love and creativity flowing over you.

- 4) Focus on a question or concern that you have taken into your prayer life recently. Write this as the clear intent of your prayer and keep this in front of you during the prayer time.

- 5) Quiet your mind and allow your imagination to start forming an image that addresses your intention for this time. Be patient and try not to force an image to appear. If you are having trouble forming an image acknowledge this to God and invite an image to appear. If needed, get up and walk around for a bit.

- 6) Draw, paint, sculpt, or otherwise craft a representation of the image that appeared to you. Do not be caught up in the process; be guided by your heart and refrain from being critical of your work.

- 7) Reflect on whether or not you were you drawn closer to God. Are you left with answers, more questions, or both?

- 8) Close with a prayer of gratitude for the many ways God is present with us in prayer.

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