

# Franciscan Prayer

As an SP person, you probably dislike formal prayer and prefer a free-flowing, informal communing with God. The more freedom you have in your prayer time, the more fruitful it is likely to be.

Franciscan prayer makes the fullest use of the five senses and will be flexible and free-flowing. It is “spirit-filled” prayer, totally open to the presence, voice, and movement of the Holy Spirit, present in each one of us. As an SP person, you can see God in the whole of creation, and you are able to meditate fruitfully on the beauty of a flower, a meadow, a lake, a snowfall, a mountain, a pine bough, the changing seasons, or any event of nature. When considering the life of Jesus, SPs will be more concerned about the events of his life than about his teachings.

The SP person needs to see quick results and is best at short-range projects. Therefore, any spiritual exercise which will show some worthwhile fruit in a short time should be chosen. This may involve specific acts of charity and short-term ministry to others. It may involve working with your hands or with tools, which can become a prayerful meditation. Artwork, crafts, gardening, woodworking, hiking, bird watching, even routine household chores can be powerful contexts for prayer in this style.

The SP person may or may not find it useful to follow the four steps of *lectio divina*. However, when other personality types use this form of prayer, some use of the four steps of *lectio divina* will probably be helpful.

## ONE PRAYER SUGGESTION

Walk through the woods or along a road and look for signs of God’s presence, love, beauty, power, wisdom, goodness, or balance. Praise and thank God for being revealed in the visible creation. Sometime before, during, or after your walk you may want to read Psalm 104 (perhaps in some contemporary translation or

## For the SP Personality Preference

paraphrase). Read it aloud. Rewrite it in your own words based upon your experience and observations.

## ANOTHER SUGGESTION

Prayerfully consider someone in need. Hold that person in your thoughts and in your heart for a time. Allow that person’s needs to settle into your depths. Plan an act of charity for that person, then try to carry it out either alone or with the help of others.

## ONE MORE SUGGESTION

Practice contemplation (literally, “con-temple,” to be together “in the temple” – in the place for observation of or communication with the divine). Choose an object of nature – a tree, a branch, a pine cone, a lake, a stone, or something else. Sit quietly and let your eyes lovingly play across its surface, considering its shape, its form, its substance. Listen for any message from God that may come to you. Experience your relationship with it, both of you creatures of God. Celebrate that relationship, giving thanks in whatever way God moves you.