

Art as a Prayer Practice: Making space for the creative spirit in life and ministry

R.E. Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri, M.Ed.

You are invited into this space to pray and to do so in artistic ways, as you feel moved, through doodling, coloring, painting, sculpting, writing, or any other form of art. Welcome to this respite where prayers and a moment of rest in God's presence are expressed through artmaking.

Workshop Objectives:

1. Engage in a time of prayer, connecting with God, with self, and with one another.
2. Explore artmaking as a form of prayer.
3. Pray-create focusing on the time with God and on the process, rather than on the final product.
4. Ponder on incorporating artmaking as part of an inventory of personal (and/or collective) prayer practices.
Does this practice respond to personal (and/or collective) spiritual needs and styles?
5. Share insights and ideas on establishing a personal (or collective) "art as prayer" practice.

Supplies:

Any art supplies will do. Invest in good supplies, though. A dried-out marker or a shedding brush can be a distraction and interrupt the time of prayer. Note that quality supplies don't have to be expensive.

Thoughts to ponder:

As you prepare to enter this sacred space and start to engage with your art supplies, consider these quotes:

"Any art form can be a way to pray, reflect, and cultivate a relationship with God. Personal devotional practices should respond to one's styles and personality, so bringing one's authentic self before God in prayer could also mean including art." — Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri. Prayerful person artistically inclined. 😊

"Everyone is allowed to make art, not just 'skilled' artists."

— Jessica Swift. Artist, pattern, surface, and fabric designer, and author of *Art for Self-Care*.

"I found that I could say things I had no WORDS for with COLOR and SHAPES that I couldn't say any other way."

— Georgia O'Keeffe. American modernist painter.

"God the Artist communicates to us first, before God the lecturer."

— Makoto Fujimura. Contemporary abstract expressionist painter and author of *Art and Faith: A Theology of Making*.

"Engage in [spiritual] practices that enliven you, not the ones you think you should do."

— Brian C. Taylor. Episcopal priest, author, and spiritual teacher.

For further study:

Fujimura, M. *Art and Faith: A Theology of Making*. Yale University Press. 2020.

Hutchison, R. *My Favorite Color is Blue. Sometimes: A Journey Through Loss with Art and Color*. Paraclete Press. 2017.

McBeth, S. *Praying in Color: Drawing a New Path to God*. Paraclete Press. 2007.

Miller, R. *Strength for the Journey: A Guide to Spiritual Practice*. CREDO Institute, Inc. Morehouse Publishing. 2011.

Nouwen, H., with Christensen, M. and Laird, R. *Spiritual Formation: Following the Movements of the Spirit*. HarperCollins e-books. 2010.

Sasso, S. E., & Springman, J. M. *Soul feast: An inspirational adult coloring book*. Westminster John Knox Press. 2016.

Sasso, S. E., & Springman, J. M. *Coloring the silence: An adult coloring book for Reflection*. Westminster John Knox Press. 2017.

Swift, J. *Art for Self-Care: Create Powerful, Healing Art by Listening to Your Inner Voice* (1st ed.). Quarry Books. 2023.

