The Nine Ways

St. Dominic, who lived from 1170-1221 and founded the Order of Preachers (aka, the Dominicans), did not himself write down a text on how to pray. Rather, an anonymous author, inspired by St. Dominic’s holy example, wrote The Nine Ways of Prayer of St. Dominic sometime between 1260-1288. The hand-written book includes pictures of the movements and gestures the author described.

Adapting the Nine Ways

Adapt the nine ways to your own needs and daily routine. You can change the words, do only one or two of the movements and gestures, and/or use them in a different order. The purpose of this prayer form is not to “get it right,” but to discover how to use your body to strengthen your relationship with God.

Praying with the Body

Praying with the Body reminds us that we aren’t only mental and spiritual beings, we’re also physical beings. What I do with my body affects my mind and heart, just as what I allow into my mind and heart affects my body. By incorporating physical movement and gesture into our prayer, we can strengthen both our minds and hearts.

And God saw that it was good.

Body and soul, matter and spirit – these are created and sustained by God. Our prayer will be stronger if we pray with our whole selves.

This pamphlet is posted on oursundayreadings.wordpress.com
ADORATION

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

(Bow deeply and say a Glory Be.)
Praise God who is the source of all goodness. Praise God the creator of all.

INTIMACY

You knit me in my mother’s womb.

–Ps 139:13
(Kneel with your hands on your heart.)

Think of times God has felt especially close to you. Remember that God is always close.

CONTRITION

O Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

–Lk 18:13
(Stretch yourself out on the floor.)

Confess the sins that separate you from God and harm you and others.

THANKSGIVING

In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.

–1 Thes 5:18
(Stand, arms raised, palms up.)

Thank God for the big and small ways in which he has blessed you.

INTERCESSION

Ask and it will be given to you.

–Mt 7:7
(Put your palms together and point them upward.)

Pierce the heavens with your requests.

OFFERING

...whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s.

–Rom 14:8
(Hold out your arms as if you’re on a cross.)

Offer yourself to God. Allow God to make you more like Christ.

STUDY

A lamp to my feet is your word...

–Ps 119:105
(Bring your hands together to form an open book.)

Read Scripture, writings by or about the saints, or passages from the Catechism or other church documents.

MORTIFICATION

People used to whip themselves as a way to control their body.

Try contemporary practices of mortification like fasting or abstaining from meat, soda, social media, or music.

DAILY TASKS

As the Father has sent me, so I send you.

–Jn 20:21

Choose a word, phrase or image from scripture and carry it in your mind as you walk or drive.