

All of us pray in different ways at different stages in our lives. Sometimes our way of praying changes as we grow in our relationship with God.

Listening to a piece of music can be especially helpful when settling 'into prayer'. It can calm us down and help to rid ourselves of some of the day's distractions, allowing us to focus more on our relationship with God. Obviously, not all types of music are conducive to entering into prayer. Instrumental music, sung prayer in the Monastic setting and repetitive chants are probably the best choices. Some may prefer well-known hymns. Being open to experiencing and entering into this different approach to prayer will certainly affect the way we pray and how we experience God.

Book suggestions –You will find reflection on the use of music in prayer and contemplation in the following composers' publications:

Songs and prayers from Taize – see also Taize website

Music from the Iona Community – see also Iona website

Fountain of Life –Music for Contemplative Worship – Margaret Rizza. Has a good introduction *How can music bring us into deeper prayer.*

Celtic Hymn Book – Ray Simpson (pub). Kevin Mayhew. Good introduction to the place of Celtic music/hymn in prayer.

CDs

Taize Instrumental music - for Guitar . Naïve-Auvidis . Paris.

Margaret Rizza – 'Fire of Love' music for contemplative worship /Kevin Mayhew

Sacred music of John Rutter – and Taverner (various)

Instrumental music of Karl Jenkins (Various)

In search of peace - Teresa Brown (Violin) Devine Music

Websites

www.Taizecommunity.com

www.iona.org.uk

Front cover image: www.ologap.org; K Dixon



PRAYING WITH MUSIC



“The person who sings, prays twice.”



Music enhances and enriches our prayerful communication with God:

“The person who sings, prays twice.”

[St Augustine]

Choose a piece of meditative, reflective music.

Still your mind – you could use the prayer sheet ‘Listening to God in silence and stillness’ first.

Play the piece of music. When it is finished, sit in silence for a little while.

Then:

Play the same music again.

This time, **listen attentively** to the tempo, rhythm, patterns and melodies.

♪ What thoughts, feelings come to mind?

♪ Does the music say anything about what God is like?

♪ Is God saying anything to me through this music?

♪ Is there anything or anyone I am moved to pray for?

When the music has finished, be still for a while and then gently bring yourself back to the room.

End your prayer by saying thank you or using words that are familiar, such as the Lord’s Prayer (Our Father) – whichever feels right and comfortable.

