

Getting started

-Don't take time to share prayer requests unless very briefly. Let them come out as you pray.

-Agree to confidentiality if this is appropriate.

Basic guidelines for praying

-Be brief. Limit yourself to a couple of sentences at a time, covering one thought instead of many.

-Use everyday language.

-Pray spontaneously instead of going around the circle.

-Build on the prayers of others as in conversation. When a topic is complete, it will be clear by the silence. Anyone can move on to the next topic, not just the leader.

-If a scripture comes to mind, do pray it if it seems at all related. This is often how the Holy Spirit edifies our prayers.

-Pray loud enough so others can hear you. For those with soft voices, don't pray with your head down.

-Pray along silently with the one who is praying. Discipline yourself not to be thinking about what you'll pray but to stay actively involved when you are not praying.

-Don't rush to fill a silence. Silences are normal, and can actually be restful.

-If someone is uncomfortable praying aloud (very common), give them the freedom to pass and to pray along silently.

-Don't close each prayer in Jesus' name, Amen. Assume that every prayer is prayed in his name. This fosters a continuity or flow in prayer until the very end, when the leader of the group will close in Jesus' name for the entire prayer session.