

Tips for Group Prayer

Conversational prayer can be used anytime two or more people pray together. It differs from what we often experience in group prayer...talking in detail about our prayer needs so there is little time to pray or one long monologue prayer after another. *Conversational prayer* recognizes that prayer is really dialogue, and includes God from the outset. We converse in prayer not only with Him but also with the others present. It is prayer in which we invite the Holy Spirit to lead us and expect His edifying work among us.

You will find a suggested focus for your group prayer throughout this study. You have the freedom, of course, to shift the focus as the Spirit is leading. When you pray as a group outside of the study, it is wise for the leader to articulate a focus or purpose of the prayer gathering, and to start the prayer time with praise to the One to whom we pray.

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.

Adapted from the Navigator's Conversational Prayer guidelines 2006.