SHARE PRAYER

A Quick Guide to Intercessory Prayer

Diocese of Green Bay

WHAT IS SHARE PRAYER?

"Share Prayer" is an easy way to pray with and for someone in a simple and non-threatening manner. It takes some practice but once you have done it a couple of times you will find it to be a comfortable formula that you can use with family, friends, or with someone you have just met.

PRAYER TRANSFORMS LIVES, WE JUST HAVE TO BELIEVE IT AND SHARE IT!

Regardless of who we are praying with, the value of intercessory prayer is that it connects us more deeply to the suffering of the other while at the same time encourages the Lord to take hold of their situation. Praying with someone is to extend the voice of Christ to another which brings healing and peace.

PICTURE THIS SCENARIO:

As you are out and about, you run into a friend that you have not seen in some time. After some conversation you notice that your friend seems to be worried and anxious. You ask them what is going on and they open up to you.

Your friend tells you that their beloved grandmother has had a mild stroke, that their family is fighting about whether she should be placed in a nursing home and as a result, the family is in turmoil. Your friend asks you for some prayers and you promise to remember them in your prayers.

At the end of the conversation you say, "I am sorry. I will pray for you" which is a fairly typical response. In the days and weeks that follow we remember our friend and their intentions in our prayers.

We know that prayer is good but we don't realize that we can do something concrete to bring Jesus into the situation right there and then. What we can do is to "share a prayer" with them.

WHY SHARE PRAYER WITH OTHERS?

Jesus tells us to pray for others. The early witness of the Church tells us to pray. We want to pray, but we don't always feel comfortable praying aloud with another person.

Our friend may or may not be a Christian, they may or may not believe in God or maybe they are seeking a relationship with Christ but do not know where to begin. Regardless, they need prayer and have reached out to you as someone they trust. Instead of praying for that person and their situation later in your day, why not stop and pray for and with them in the moment?

BENEFITS OF SHARE PRAYER:

- The Scriptures are clear - Jesus tells us to pray with others. The disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray so that they could deepen their love for Christ and for each other.
- It is a witness of the Gospel to the person you pray with and for.
- In a crisis, praying with someone unites us to their suffering and our suffering to Christ's suffering.
- Praying for the living and for the dead is one of the spiritual works of mercy.
- In the words of Pope Francis when we rise from prayer our hearts are "more open and freed of self-absorption".
- If we pray in the moment, we won't forget to pray later.

HOW TO SHARE PRAYER:

In general, one would want to do share prayer after talking with someone who is having difficulties. At the end of the conversation, ask the person, "Would it be ok if I pray with you?"

If they say "no," that is ok and just move on.

If they say "yes," you may follow this template or improvise as the Holy Spirit moves you.

- You can call on God the following ways: God, Lord, Father, Jesus, Holy Spirit, Heavenly, Loving etc.
- Thank God for the person you are praying with and ask for God's blessing upon them: "Thank you for my friend, your son/daughter of Christ. Please bless him/her and uplift them at this time."
- Then ask God for what the person needs for example: "We ask you to heal Francis' grandmother or “We ask you to help Ann’s family to make the right decisions about the nursing home or “We ask you to help Jason who is struggling with debt at this time”.
- Gratitude for all that God is doing. “Thank you Lord, Jesus etc for revealing yourself to us” or “Thank you for your blessings on this family”.
- Finish the prayer with a doxology: "We ask this through Christ our Lord." OR "We ask this in Jesus' name." OR "Through Our Lord Jesus Christ you Son, who lives and reigns with the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever." OR “Glory Be” etc

BIBLICAL QUOTATIONS:

"Again, [amen] I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:19-20).

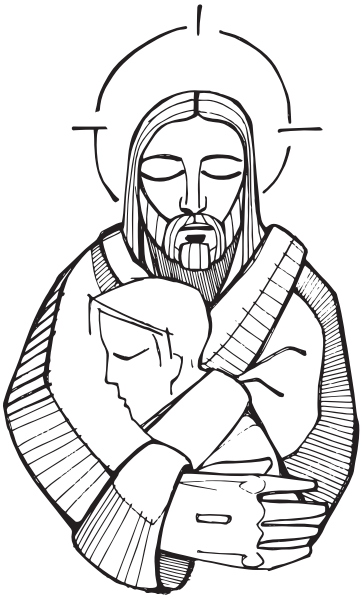
"Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The fervent prayer of a righteous person is very powerful" (James 5:16).

QUOTES FROM THE EARLY CHURCH:

"Pray without ceasing on behalf of everyone" (St. Ignatius, c A.D. 110, Letter to the Ephesians 10).

"Pray for all the saints. Pray also for kings, for those in power, for princes, for those that persecute and hate you, and for the enemies of the cross, so that your fruit may be apparent to everyone and that you may be perfect in Him" (St. Polycarp, A.D. 110-150, Letter to the Philippians 12).

QUOTES FROM POPE FRANCIS:



“One form of prayer moves us particularly to take up the task of evangelization and to seek the good of others: it is the prayer of intercession. Let us peer for a moment into the heart of Saint Paul, to see what his prayer was like. It was full of people: ‘…I constantly pray with you in every one of my prayers for all of you… because I hold you in my heart’ (Phil 1:4, 7)” (Evangelii Gaudium #281).

“This attitude becomes a prayer of gratitude to God for others. ‘First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you’ (Rom 1:8). It is constant thankfulness: ‘I give thanks to God always for you because of the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus’ (1 Cor 1:4. When evangelizers rise from prayer, their hearts are more open; freed of self-absorption, they are desirous of doing good and sharing their lives with others” (Evangelii Gaudium #282).

“The great men and women of God were great intercessors. Intercession is like ‘a leaven in the heart of the Trinity’. It is a way of penetrating the Father’s heart and discovering new dimensions which can shed light on concrete situations and change them. We can say that God’s heart is touched by our intercession, yet in reality he is always there first. What our intercession achieves is that his power, his love and his faithfulness are shown ever more clearly in the midst of the people” (Evangelii Gaudium #283).