

About the Sojourners' Companions

Who We Are

The Sojourners' Companions comprise a group of prayer guides. The first batch of Companions was trained by Fr. Gerard Hughes, S.J. and his team in 1995. Serving on a voluntary basis in this ministry, the Sojourners' Companions journey with others in prayer using Scripture. We offer a Week of Guided Prayer in local parishes.

Our Mission

We strive to be witnesses of Christ by being people of prayer and journeying with others through Scripture so as to deepen their experience of God in their daily lives.

Our Logo

The logo shows two people in communication – one a prayer guide and the other a pilgrim. The Word of God and the Holy Spirit are central to the prayer companionship. The tagline “Journeying with you in prayer” describes the mission of the ministry.



Virtual Week of Guided Prayer



Why Pray

Prayer is about meeting God, because “in God we live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:28). Prayer is a relationship with God. Our ultimate identity is not in our family, job, or where we live. Our ultimate identity is in God. Each of us is a unique manifestation of God.

In the Bible, God keeps telling us, “Don’t be afraid, for I am with you” (Isaiah 41:10). God loves us unconditionally, and God is, in St. Augustine’s words, “Closer to me than I am to myself.”

Prayer helps us to become more aware of God’s presence, and enables us to see ourselves and our world in a different light. This involves change. Real change has to begin in our minds and hearts. It is a liberating experience if we allow it to happen.

Steps for Prayer

- Set aside some time for prayer each day. A suggested time frame may be:

Preparation: about 10 mins

Prayer proper: 30 mins

Closing the prayer: about 10 mins

- Find a quiet space where you will not be disturbed. Minimize distractions.
- Sit comfortably.
- Pray to the Holy Spirit.
- Read the Scripture/prayer passage for a few times.
- Ask for grace.
- Pray with one of these prayer methods – Ignatian Contemplation or Lectio Divina.
- Colloquy – Conversation with God.
- Closing the prayer.
- Review of prayer, and journaling.

Going into Prayer

Set aside time each day for the prayer as though you have a formal appointment with God. Try to make this the same time each day. Then you are less likely to miss a day. With determination, it can become a good habit.

For the prayer, you need to relax and be quiet. Silence allows you to be attentive to the still, small voice of God that will speak to you personally – and intimately. First, get settled in a quiet place where you can be alone without any interference from people, phones, email and so forth. Try to put everything aside for the time of prayer.

Sit comfortably, and compose yourself. Spend some moments to allow your thoughts to settle. Do some breathing exercises if necessary to relax. Let go of any habitual thoughts or plans or worries, and place yourself in the presence of God.

Begin with a preparatory prayer. It can be a prayer to the Holy Spirit or your own spontaneous prayer.

Read the Scripture passage. Pause, then re-read the passage. Do this a few times until your mind is saturated with the passage. Ask for a grace that flows out of the prayer passage. Remember, we pray with the Scripture. We do not study it.

End the prayer period with your own spontaneous prayer or Our Father.

Finally, review and journal what happened during your prayer and the effects the prayer had on you. Where in the prayer were you moved towards God or feeling drawn away from Him?

Prayer Method 1

Ignatian Contemplation

In Ignatian Contemplation, you are invited to imagine yourself in the scene described in the Scripture passage which you have read a few times. The intention is to help you form a close, personal relationship with Jesus, to have “an intimate knowledge of our Lord, who has become man for me, that I may love Him more and follow Him more closely”.

Make the scene as vivid and real as possible. Place yourself in the scene. Observe what the characters are doing, hear what they are saying, and feel their movements. Mingle and converse with the people so that their experience becomes your experience.

Pray using all your five senses, not just your intellect. Be aware of your feelings as you contemplate. Stay focused, and be faithful to the half hour of prayer that you have set aside for God.

In each prayer period, it is essential to enter into a conversation (or colloquy, as St. Ignatius puts it) with God. Share with Him your thoughts and feelings that arose during the prayer. Allow yourself to be touched and changed by the Word of God. Simply rest in the presence of the Lord, enjoying the experience of being close to Him.



Additional Help

Imaginative Prayer

Imaginative prayer is exactly what its name implies. I use my imagination to call up the sense images contained in the point. To do this I use sounds, sights, smells, feelings.

The idea is not to achieve a real, historical enactment of what “really” happened. I use imagination so that my entire self can be involved, mind, heart, feelings and all. I am free to imagine the scene any way that occurs to me, without spending time to “get it right”.

When in prayer I no longer have to worry about imagining. I simply go with the flow of my sense, inner feelings and understanding. I remember that God alone can give real prayer to me and so I do not trouble myself about how I am doing, whether it is working, or what I need to accomplish.

Source: The Centre for Liturgy at Saint Louis University

Prayer Method 2

Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina (or Sacred Reading) is spending time with God, slowly contemplating the Word of God. It cultivates the ability to listen deeply, to hear with “the ears of our heart”. This gentle listening is tuning in to the presence of God.

In Lectio Divina, read the Scripture passage slowly and attentively a few times, listening to hear a word or phrase that touches you. This is God’s Word for you this day. Gently, repeat the word or phrase to yourself, and allow it to interact with your thoughts, your hopes, your memories, and your desires at the deepest levels. There is no place in our hearts, no interior corner that cannot be opened and offered to God.

Enter into a conversation with God. Share with Him your thoughts and feelings that arose during the prayer. Allow yourself to be touched and changed by the Word of God. Simply rest in the presence of the Lord, and enjoy the experience of being close to Him.

Additional Help (cont’d)

Distractions

Distractions will come and go during your time of prayer. How can you deal with them?

- Try to keep your focus on the Scripture passage, either on the scene in your imagination, or on a word or phrase that touches you.
- If you feel an itch or discomfort and want to move, acknowledge the discomfort but try to remain still.
- If you become aware of stray thoughts or questions, acknowledge the thought but turn your attention back to your prayer.
- Repeat this if you continue to have distracting thoughts.

Asking for grace

In the “Spiritual Exercises” St. Ignatius asks pilgrims to be specific in their prayer – to ask God for a specific grace for that particular prayer period.

A grace is a spiritual gift which only God can give and the grace you ask for must come from the Scripture passage. It is something that you do not have, something that you really want, something that you cannot give yourself. Therefore, you ask God for it as a gift. You should be able to sense this grace when you finally receive it.

Examples of grace that you may ask for after reading certain bible passages:

- to understand and experience how Jesus is inviting you to come to him as a child
- to know Jesus more intimately, to love him more deeply, and to follow him more closely.



Additional Help (cont'd)

Colloquy

Colloquy is a term that describes the intimate conversation between God and you. This helps to establish a two-way flow of conversation. Speak or listen as God's spirit moves you – sometimes as a sinner, sometimes as a child, at other times as a lover or friend.

It is important to know that in Truth we are ONE with God. We are part of God and He is part of us. God loves us, and He knows who we are better than we know ourselves. He is anxious to connect again with you, who is part of Himself. He can only do so if you allow Him. He wants to be a part of your life. He is eager to help but He never forces Himself on you.

During the colloquy:

- If you feel joy, happiness, contentment or peace – tell Him.
- If you have feelings of anxiety, hurt, confusion, rejection, and weariness – share with Him.
- If you are reminded of your failure and sins – confess to Him.
- If things are troubling you and you have important decision to make which you can't put aside – discuss them with Him.

Finally, if you just want to praise Him for who He is and thank Him for what He's done – do so.

After you have said something to God, allow time to listen to Him. Sometimes it may be helpful to imagine God responding as if He is sitting beside you. You may receive ideas and inspirations that you know is not the way you usually speak or think. That is how you know you are connected to the indwelling God. Be willing to listen to things you really don't want to hear.

Remember: Make a conversation or dialogue with the Lord. Never end any prayer period without some form of conversation or dialogue.

*Be still
and know that
I am
God*

Psalm 46:10

Using Ps. 46:10 as a prayer, with the breath can perhaps help us to get to this place of being. Consider holding your hands open, as if receiving a gift, which may help you bodily feel these words more deeply in your heart and soul.

Be still and know that I am God...

Be still and know that I am...

Be still and know...

Be still...

Be...

My Week of Guided Prayer

My Spiritual Companion:	Contact No:
	Email:
My Fellow Pilgrims	
	Contact No:
	Email:
	Contact No:
	Email:
	Contact No:
	Email:
	Contact No:
	Email:

Day	Scripture Passage
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

My Journal

Day/Date:
Time/Place:
Scripture:
The Grace I Prayed For:

My Journal

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Time/Place:
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The Grace I Prayed For:

Let Your God Love You

Be silent.

Be still.

Alone.

Empty

Before your God.

Say nothing.

Ask nothing.

Be silent.

Be still.

Let your God look upon you.

That is all.

God knows.

God understands.

God loves you

With an enormous love

And only wants

To look upon you

With that love.

Quiet.

Still.

Be.

Let your God love you.

(by Edwina Gateley)

Prayer for Spiritual Freedom

*Take, Lord,
and receive all my liberty,
my memory,
my understanding,
and my entire will,
all I have and call my own.*

*You have given all to me.
To you, Lord, I return it.*

*Everything is yours;
do with it what you will.
Give me only your love and your grace,
that is enough for me.*

— St. Ignatius of Loyola