

## SESSION II

### PRAYER AND SPIRITUAL LIFE

The goals of this session are to help the candidate grow in their understanding, valuing, and practicing of an active prayer life. This session will help them realize that prayer is an essential skill or tool for effective membership in the faith community. They will appreciate that prayer helps one to maintain a Christian lifestyle. A positive attitude toward prayer and developing a style of prayer that responds to needs at various times in one's life is important.

**"RISING EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, JESUS WENT  
OFF TO A LONELY PLACE IN THE DESERT;  
THERE HE WAS ABSORBED IN PRAYER"  
MARK 1:35**

1. Begin this Session with the Prayer of Trust and Thanks:

**SPONSOR**      *Protect me, O God; I trust in you for safety,  
Say to the Lord, "You are my Lord;  
All the good things I have come from You.*

**CANDIDATE**      *You, Lord, are all I have, and You give me all I need,  
My future is in your hands. How wonderful are your  
gifts to me; how good they are!*

**SPONSOR**      *I praise the Lord, because He guides me.  
I am always aware of the Lord's presence;  
He is near, and nothing can shake me.*

**CANDIDATE**      *And so I am thankful and glad, and feel completely  
Secure, because you protect me from the power of death  
And you will not abandon me to the world of the dead.*

**SPONSOR**      *You will show me the path that leads to life;  
Your presence fills me with joy  
And brings me pleasure forever. (Psalm 16:1-2,5-11)*

**Discuss:**      What has happened since the last meeting?  
How about your goal-action?

## Activity 1

# MY PRAYER LIFE

*Complete the following together:*

I pray when  .

A favorite way for me to pray is

Something that keeps me from prayer is  ..

Something that makes it difficult to pray is

Something that makes it easy to pray is  ..

I would like to nurture my prayer habits by  ..

## Activity 2:

# OBSTACLES TO PRAYER

Below are four elements necessary to prayer. Note the obstacles listed that can make it difficult to pray. Share about any of the obstacles that effect your prayer life. Together try to identify practical things that the candidate can do to overcome those obstacles.

### 1. Time:

- Can't find a time to pray -
- Don't take time to pray -
- Don't make time to pray -
- Other obstacles regarding time for me -

### 2. Inner Quiet:

- Can't settle down enough to pray -
- Can't concentrate when I pray -
- Other obstacles to inner quiet for me -

### 3. External Quiet:

- Can't find a quiet place to pray -
- Can't find a good atmosphere for praying -
- Other obstacles to external quiet -

### 4. Aids to Prayer

- Can't find the right book or other aid for prayer -
- Not familiar enough with the Bible to pray with it

Both of you think about and answer these questions:

When does your weekly schedule allow time for yourself?

Do you take advantage of this time and use it for personal reflection?

How could you rearrange your schedule to include time for quiet prayer?

(Activity 2  Continued)

### Candidate complete with the help of your mentor:

After identifying obstacles I currently have which prevent me from having a meaningful prayer life, I plan to:

1.(time)

2.(inner quiet)

3.(external quiet)

4.(aids to prayer)

### Activity 3

## PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

Read any or all of the following scripture passages together then:

- Each name a key word or phrase that speaks to you about prayer
- What does the passage say to you personally about prayer?
- How can my prayer life reflect what is in the passage?

*Matthew 6:5-15*

*Matthew 13: 57-58*

*Matthew 17: 14-21*

*Matthew 18: 19-20*

*Luke 2: 41-43*

*Mark 1: 35-36*

*Mark 7: 24-29*

*Mark 8: 11-12*

## Activity 4

# PRACTICING PRAYER

Choose one or more of the following between now and your next session to practice.

**Create an Environment:** Although we can pray anywhere, anytime, creating an environment conducive to prayer can foster an active prayer life. Try creating a special place for you to pray; a quiet room, a place where you can look out to nature, a sunny spot in which to feel the warmth of God, soft instrumental music; a lighted candle, a crucifix or picture of Jesus, a Bible on a table -- all can help you focus on prayer.

**Quiet Yourself:** Close the door to your room, take the phone off the hook, and turn on soft music. Get up early, while it's quiet in the house. Close your eyes and breath slowly and deeply. Consciously relax your body by tightening, then relaxing body parts starting with your feet and moving toward your head. Repeat a short phrase (called a mantra prayer) slowly as you breathe.

**Example:** Breathe in "You are wonderful"  
Breathe out  My God   
OR  
Breathe in  Dear Jesus   
Breathe out  I Love You

**Make up your own:** Find a short verse in Scripture from the Psalms of the Old Testament or in Proverbs; both are great sources.  
Pray the Rosary.  
Attend Adoration or other special prayer times at your parish.

Close this session with your own prayer

**Complete the summary sheet and return to the Youth Office.** Plan your next meeting time and place before you leave.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Session II - Evaluation Form

This form needs to be filled out at the end of Session II and returned to the Holy Family Youth Office

All session evaluation forms must be turned in by \_\_\_\_\_.

1. Name something you liked or disliked about this session. Explain.
2. Did any of the material lead you to ask more questions or require more information? Explain.
3. Was there anything personally challenging about the session?
4. Did you gain any insights during the session either about yourself or Sponsor/Candidate? Be Specific.
5. Overall, how did you feel about the session? Suggestions?