

# **PRAYER WORKSHOP FOR MEMBERS OF THE CWL of CANADA**

To book the Prayer Workshop contact Eleanor Arless & Shirley Bernier

## **Excerpt from the Prayer Workshop**

### **Prayer Summary**

**What is prayer?** That was a question one of the groups was asked.

It is hard to explain – it can mean different things to different people. For us as Christians it is a relationship with God. It is a listening and responding to God.

How we do it varies:

- We can use words (spontaneous or prepared) to talk to God or we can just quietly listen feeling His presence.

We may pray:

- With Scripture – connect the wisdom of scripture with our everyday life. Sometimes God speaks loudly and clearly through the words of Scriptures or the events of our lives.

How do we see God or Jesus – as a healer, teacher, friend, father, etc.

- Using music or various senses – taste, touch, hearing - God speaks to us through all creation –
- Using the body – dance, gestures, actions – this is popular with our young people
- In silence – letting the Holy Spirit work
- Alone or in a group - often we see that Jesus prayed alone and often at night – but with the raising of Lazarus He offered thanksgiving to the Father in public
- Anytime and everywhere – we pray just as we are – with our hopes, fears, joys and doubts. We pray out walking, on the bus, in the car, at home – making every act a prayer.

We may use:

- Prayer of Adoration & Praise – God can be found everywhere in all things and events. We acknowledge the greatness of God

- Prayer of Thanksgiving – We express our gratitude for all we have – knowing that all we have is a gift of God. It is always a good idea to say thank you before asking for something
- Prayer of Petition – We all like this one – however we should begin by asking forgiveness before submitting the list of our needs
- Prayer of Intercession – We petition on behalf of another
- Prayer of Meditation or Contemplative prayer – Saint Thérèse of Lisieux explains contemplative prayer as *“nothing else than a close sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with him who we know loves us.”* In solitude and silence we allow the Holy Spirit to speak to us as we go about our daily lives.
- Prayer of Action – Our everyday service is a prayer
- Liturgical Prayer – We all pray together – our Eucharistic Celebration

While thinking about prayer, I noticed that we have all the forms of prayer in our Eucharistic Celebration that we will soon participate in:

Penitential Rite – Petition asking for forgiveness

Glory to God – Prayer of Praise

Opening Prayer – a good model when speaking to God – we address Him, sort of praise him up a bit and then ask Him for something.

We listen to God’s Word in the Scriptures

Prayers of the Faithful – Intercession on behalf of others

Eucharistic Prayer – Praise the Father, Petition for the church, for the Living, we invoke the Holy Spirit, pray for the deceased and end by praising God again

Prayer over the Gifts and Prayer after Communion – again Praise and thanksgiving

One definition I will leave you with is that of Thérèse of Lisieux who said:

*“For me, prayer is a surge of the heart, it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of gratitude in time of trial and in time of joy, it is something great, something supernatural, which opens my heart and unites me with Jesus.”*

Research, notes, and presentation by Shirley Bernier