Guidelines for the Companion in Companioned Prayer™

This handout can be given to people in a prayer group that wish to companion others.

- The role of the companion is to assist the person who is praying surrender to God in faith and trust within their prayer experience. The companion's role is to honor the person's spiritual journey and their relationship with God by accompanying them in their prayer. In this accompaniment, the companion serves the person praying.

- The companion is not a guide. The companion follows the desires of the person praying, who is in turn open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

- When companioning someone in their prayer, be present from within your own faith; from within that part of you where you know grace and gift are felt. Companion from the presence of Christ within you.

- Use a tone of voice and quality of presence that demonstrates your respect for what they are doing. Know that the person may be spending time with sensitive issues or challenges. Having a faith-based quality of presence that is respectful, attentive, caring and patient is the most important thing that you can do. The companion offers a loving, compassionate presence of openness, gentleness and faith.

- The companion must be non-intrusive. Respect the person's privacy. Do not present an expectation of personal sharing or of being involved in what the person is praying about or journeying with. Do not offer judgmental comments during or after their prayer.

- It is vital that you give your prayer partner sufficient time to not only do what you are offering, but to also allow them to notice anything that may be happening within themselves. Therefore, do not rush through the *[pauses]*. Allow at least ten to fifteen seconds at each *[pause]* before going on. At each *[wait]*, wait for them to let you know

when they are ready to go on. It is within the time that we give for each *[pause]* and each *[wait]* that God quietly reaches out to us. So do not pass over them quickly. Setting a slow pace encourages the person praying to slow down and take time to be with the Lord in the prayer; time needed to be open, to wait, to listen, to notice, and to nurture.

- If at any point you do not remember where in the prayer you are at, simply ask the person praying. If you are not sure what they would like you to do next, simply ask them. If you are not sure you heard what was said, rather than guess, simply ask them to repeat it.

- When becoming familiar with companioning, there may be a tendency to automatically revise some of the prayer's wording to a more familiar phrase; for example, changing "let me know when we are ready to go on" to "let me know when you are ready to go on." Stay with the wording as printed.

- If the person praying says out loud a word or symbol of what came to them, simply repeat it back to them exactly as they said it and then continue. For example, if they said the word "path", repeat "path" back to them with the same tone as it was said. If the person praying said a phrase or whole sentences, just pick out a word or two of theirs that might best capture the whole feeling of what they have shared, and repeat it with the tone given.

- Do not engage in significant dialog until their Companioned Prayer has been concluded. Do not offer advice about the issues they are praying about. As a companion you know from your own prayer experience and faith that the answers to the person's issues, and the grace to allow the person to receive them, will come from God from within their prayer.

- After the person has finished praying, it is nice to offer a personal prayer or blessing on behalf of the person. Say a prayer or blessing out loud, and then when finished, if they journal their experiences, invite them to briefly journal what was special about their prayer, giving them a couple of minutes to do so.