These are sample outlines for the four introductory prayer sessions without mentors as recommended by the CPCF. These outlines assume six people learning the prayer with no mentors (experienced companions) available. Modify to meet your group’s needs. The first learning session takes about two hours. Subsequent sessions are about 90 minutes each. The durations shown for each activity are estimated minutes. Adding the start times for each activity can help the presenters stay on track.

If possible, offer a separate introductory presentation before the first learning session. A sample presentation is provided on the CPCF website.

**First Session** (date, time & location)

| **Start Time** | **Est. Min.** | **Activity** |
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|  | 10 | 1. **Opening** 2. Welcome 3. Opening prayer (and a blessing if your priest is leading this activity) 4. Introductions (everyone introduces themselves) |
|  | 15 | 1. **About the learning experience** 2. Brief overview of what happens when:    * + Four sessions experiencing the prayer and learning to companion each other      + Opportunity to continue in weekly prayer meetings      + A one- or two-day retreat 3. Important housekeeping items:  * Please silence your cell phones. * Who to contact if you cannot make it to your session, if you need to swap sessions, or if you have questions. * Personal restroom breaks are very convenient when we are separated into small groups.   ▪ Briefly discuss the Disclaimer   * Any questions? (The Disclaimer will be handed out at the end of this first session.)   ▪ Discuss privacy, sharing, and confidentiality   * Any questions?   ▪ Discuss the applicable Safe Environment principles, special needs and accommodations.   * Examples include: mobility, hearing, sight, attention deficiency, or other special needs. Let us know privately if you prefer. * Any questions?  1. Primarily learning from your experiences of praying and companioning  * Experiential learning rather than lecture * Discuss journaling (and provide journals as needed) * Ask participants to bring their journals to all of the sessions.  1. Read Bishop Quinn’s remarks (and hand it out) 2. State the focus of the four sessions, which is to become familiar with the prayer so you can later participate in a continuing Companioned Prayer group, where spiritual growth and gifts are truly experienced. 3. But now, in this special time of these four sessions, we have a wonderful opportunity to first experience the prayer within an environment of exploration and inquiry. |
|  | 10 | 1. **Scripture reading** 2. Read once (not Lectio divina): 1st Samuel 3:1-9  * Invite everyone to settle in, and listen, with their eyes closed.  1. Reflections on the reading:  * How did they respond to the reading? * What are they seeking in listening for God? |
|  | 15 | 1. **How to pray**    1. Briefly describe how praying with a companion works: Acknowledge that most of this will not make much sense until after they have experienced the prayer.   ▪ Both people begin with personal preparatory prayers.  ▪ One person reads, the other person has their eyes closed throughout and prays.  ▪ We will begin with six prayer movements, with instructions within each part for both the person reading and the person praying; and time for personal reflection in each movement; not yet the full Companioned Prayer.  ▪ Includes awareness of how we physically feel.  ▪ What we pray about (*ASKING GOD*); and taking it to the loving heart of Jesus (*GOD’S LOVE AND ACCEPTANCE*).   * 1. Read the “General Guidelines for Praying”   ▪ Read the first 5 bullets (do not read the 6th bullet)   * Any questions?   ▪ Read the last 4 bullets (do not read the 6th bullet)   * Any questions?   *Do not describe each prayer movement in detail.  Do not discuss sharing of symbols.* |
|  | 15 | 1. **How to companion** 2. Hand out the ***Introduction to the Loving Heart of Jesus***Companioned Prayer form (not the standard CP form). 3. Explain that it’s easy: just read the bold text. Italic is instructions for you, the companion   ▪ *OPENING PRAYERS* are extemporaneous (what is provided is only a sample). Always invite the person to say a prayer silently or out loud, and to say “Amen” when they are finished.   1. Read the first 6 bullets of “Guidelines for the Companion”   ▪ Any questions?   1. Read remainder of “Guidelines for the Companion”   ▪ Any questions?   1. Remind everyone that the companion ends the prayer with a blessing or prayer said out loud, and then invites the person to write in their journal. |
|  | 40 | 1. **Participants companion each other in groups of two**   Separate into small groups throughout the church nave and take turns companioning each other using the ***Introduction to the Loving Heart of Jesus***form (not the standard Companioned Prayer form). |
|  | 10 | 1. **Group sharing/discussion**   *Try to maintain silence until group sharing begins*  When everyone rejoins the large group:   1. Explain that sharing and questions after our prayer experience are especially helpful during these learning sessions.  * There is no judgement of the value of your experiences. We are not looking for any kind of experiences. The personal or spiritual value of your prayer experiences are discerned solely by you. * When we share, we should share not only what we want to witness to, but also share what doesn’t seem to be happening. For example, if it feels like not much happened, or perhaps we were nervous about it, or how it was different praying with another person, or some other aspect of our prayer experience. * Especially in these learning sessions, when we share in this way, we not only get to understand our own prayer experiences better, we also gain a better understanding of what happens as we pray, and the nuances of how to pray. So in this sense, the sharing is of great value, and we hope that you will share something, even if it is very general in nature.  1. Individual sharing of their prayer experiences.   ▪ Ask participants to close their eyes, settle in, and recall what their prayer experience felt like, bringing to mind what came during their prayer and where they were at when their prayer ended. *[pause about 30 seconds]*  ▪ Invite participants to open their eyes, and to share or to remain silent. *[Remain silent until someone begins to speak, which can take a minute or two. Allow plenty of time for sharing (do not rush it).]*   1. Discussion of what it was like to be the companion. 2. Discussion of how this experience relates to scripture. |
|  | 5 | 1. **Closing**   a. Hand out:   * the “Disclaimer” * “Confidentiality and Sharing” * the standard CP prayer form for Ordinary Time * the “Guidelines for Praying” * the “Guidelines for the Companion”   Ask everyone to read these handouts before the next meeting.  b. Confirm their attendance at the next session, and remind them to bring their journals.  c. Closing prayer |

**Second Session** (date, time & location)

| **Start Time** | **Est. Min.** | **Activity** |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | 5 | 1. **Opening**   a. Welcome  b. Opening prayer  c. Scripture reading, e.g., Matthew 11:28-30  *(not Lectio divina)*   * Invite everyone to settle in, and listen, with their eyes closed. * After the reading, invite responses to the reading. |
|  | 20 | 1. **How to pray**    1. Brief Q&A from previous meeting   ▪ Especially invite any questions about the Disclaimer, Confidentiality and Sharing, and Special Needs   * 1. Hand out the standard ***Companioned Prayer form for Ordinary Time*** prayer form.   ▪ Same as the previous prayer form but with two additional movements.  ▪ Ignore the sharing or reflecting of symbols for now.   * 1. Discuss the new prayer movement, *LETTING GO INTO THE LOVING HEART OF JESUS*   ▪ An opportunity to continue, and to discern if there is more.   * 1. Discuss the new prayer movement, *BEING OPEN TO GOD’S SPIRIT*   Continuing to notice and to see if there is anything more that God may wish you to be aware of.  ▪ Noticing more, cycling, and ending  ▪ Respond to “b” with a “yes” or “no”  ▪ Review how to let your companion know when you are finished with this movement. |
|  | 50 | 1. **Participants companion each other in groups of two**   Separate into small groups throughout the church nave and take turns companioning each other using the standard ***Companioned Prayer for Ordinary Time***prayer form. |
|  | 10 | 1. **Group sharing/discussion**   *Try to maintain silence until group sharing begins*  When everyone rejoins the large group:   1. Reiterate that sharing and questions after our prayer experience are especially helpful during these learning sessions. 2. Individual sharing of their prayer experiences.   ▪ Ask participants to close their eyes, settle in, and recall what their prayer experience felt like, bringing to mind what came during their prayer and where they were at when their prayer ended. *[pause about 30 seconds]*  ▪ Invite participants to open their eyes, and to share or to remain silent. *[Remain silent until someone begins to speak, which can take a minute or two. Allow plenty of time for sharing (do not rush it).]*   1. Discussion of what the two new prayer movements were like. 2. Discussion of how this experience relates to scripture. |
|  | 5 | 1. **Closing** a. (no handouts)   b. Confirm their attendance at the next session, and remind them to bring their prayer form and journals..  c. Closing prayer |

**Third Session**  (date, time & location)

| **Start Time** | **Est. Min.** | **Activity** |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | 5 | 1. **Opening**   a. Welcome  b. Opening prayer  c. Scripture reading, e.g., John 15:4-5a,9 *(not Lectio divina)*   * Invite everyone to settle in, and listen, with their eyes closed. * After the reading, invite responses to the reading. |
|  | 15 | 1. **How to pray** 2. Q&A from previous meeting   ▪ Recognition that it may take a few times to become familiar with the cycling in *BEING OPEN TO GOD’S SPIRIT*.   1. Discuss symbols (hand out the CP form again)   ▪ Read the 6th bullet of the “Guidelines for Praying”  ▪ Read the last bullet on the first page of the “Guidelines for the Companion”  ▪ For this session, encourage sharing of symbols so everyone can have that experience.   1. Explain that their prayer subject or symbol will change as they progress through their prayer. 2. Any questions? |
|  | 50 | 1. **Participants companion each other in groups of two**   Separate into small groups throughout the church nave and take turns companioning each other using the standard ***Companioned Prayer for Ordinary Time***prayer form. |
|  | 10 | 1. **Group sharing/discussion**   *Try to maintain silence until group sharing begins*  When everyone rejoins the large group:   1. Individual sharing of their prayer experiences   ▪ Ask participants to close their eyes, settle in, and recall what their prayer experience felt like, bringing to mind what came during their prayer and where they were at when their prayer ended. *[pause about 30 seconds]*  ▪ Invite participants to open their eyes, and to share or to remain silent. *[Remain silent until someone begins to speak, which can take a minute or two. Allow plenty of time for sharing (do not rush it).]*   1. What it was like sharing and reflecting symbols   ▪ Remind everyone that sharing of symbols is optional,  but reflecting shared symbols is not optional   1. Q&A 2. Discussion of how this experience relates to scripture. |
|  | 5 | 1. **Closing** 2. (no handouts) 3. Confirm their attendance at the next session. 4. Closing prayer |

**Fourth Session** (date, time & location)

| **Start Time** | **Est. Min.** | **Activity** |
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|  | 5 | 1. **Opening** 2. Welcome 3. Opening prayer 4. Brief check-in   ▪ Any questions from last time? |
|  | 10 | 1. **Introduce Lectio divina** 2. Explain what it is, and how sharing works 3. Read Luke 24:32-36 three times, with pauses 4. Sharing |
|  | 45 | 1. **Participants companion each other in groups of two**   Separate into small groups throughout the church nave and take turns companioning each other using the standard ***Companioned Prayer for Ordinary Time***prayer form. |
|  | 5 | 1. **Group sharing**   *Try to maintain silence until group sharing begins*  When everyone rejoins the large group:   1. Individual sharing of their prayer experiences   ▪ Ask participants to close their eyes, settle in, and recall what their prayer experience felt like, bringing to mind what came during their prayer and where they were at when their prayer ended. *[pause about 30 seconds]*  ▪ Invite participants to open their eyes, and to share or to remain silent. *[Remain silent until someone begins to speak, which can take a minute or two. Allow plenty of time for sharing (do not rush it).]*   1. Discussion of how this experience relates to scripture. |
|  | 15 | 1. **Discussion of continuing** 2. Read Bishop Quinn’s quotes 3. Continuing as a weekly prayer Companioned Prayer group   ▪ Including Lectio divina  ▪ It is within this ongoing prayer group experience that the Companioned Prayer experience deepens. (Share your own personal story or experience with this.)  ▪ Invite and encourage their continuing personal participation, confirming meeting times, etc.   1. Planning new Companioned Prayer outreach and ministry experiences   ▪ Discuss inviting other parishioners to a Companioned Prayer learning experience (hand out any flyers)   1. After further experience with the prayer, consider:   ▪ How they might use the prayer in ministry  ▪ Mentor preparation for future offerings  ▪ Attending a Companioned Prayer retreat |
|  | 5 | 1. **Closing** 2. Hand out the “Summary of Companioned Prayer” 3. Invite closing comments or reflections of all participants. Also offer to talk with them privately if they prefer. 4. Thank them for sharing, and thank them for participating and contributing in these sessions in faith. 5. Confirm their attendance at the next ongoing (or new) prayer circle 6. Closing prayer |