

When preparing a prayer service...

A prayer service is a style of communal prayer which can take on a variety of forms. Here are a few basic things to keep in mind:

- ✓ Ask the Holy Spirit to guide and inspire you
- ✓ Pay attention to the time of the liturgical year (Advent, feast days, solemnities)
- ✓ Know your group – who will share this prayer experience?
- ✓ Focus on the theme / goal for the prayer service
- ✓ Follow the basic pattern:
 - ❖ Gathering / Introduction
 - ❖ Song
 - ❖ Opening Prayer
 - ❖ Scripture – Word of God
 - ❖ Response / silence
 - ❖ Shared Prayer – petitions, traditional prayer, litanies, composed prayers, etc.
 - ❖ Conclusion

Other considerations:

- ✓ The environment creates a greater awareness of the sacred space
- ✓ Be prepared – if possible rehearse with leaders and readers
- ✓ Give instruction ahead of time
- ✓ Scripture should always be included – proclaim the Word of God
- ✓ Vocal and instrumental music are essential
- ✓ Involve the participants – not just leaders and readers
- ✓ Include / borrow prayer from the church (Liturgy of the Hours)
- ✓ Consider elements of movement or gesture
- ✓ Include silence – time for personal reflection
- ✓ Encourage spontaneous prayer
- ✓ Move with reverence – show care and regard for what you are doing
- ✓ Be creative!

Above all, involve yourself effectively and wholeheartedly so that others will follow.