

What does it mean to pray?

At St Agnes' Parish it is our practice or "start each meeting with a prayer". Why would we do that when we have a short time and much to discuss?

Well, firstly, what do we mean by prayer? Put simply, it is listening and talking to God. This is not done in any specific way or any particular place. As we walk around, we can direct our minds to God and thank God for anything for which we are grateful; praise God for the beautiful person we just met or for the sunrise or sunset or any other delightful thing we see; ask God for help that we want in any area of our life, our work, our decision making; say sorry if we know we have hurt anyone or offended God.

We can pray alone or with a group, as in a meeting. One thing I find helpful whether alone or in a group is to tell myself to slow down, breathe and to be aware of Jesus' presence. He promised us that "where two or three are gathered in My Name, I am there with you". This is the reason for any of the works we do through the parish.

God speaks to us through our thoughts, through our interactions with another, through our mistakes, through worshipping together, through music, through beauty of any kind, through grief. God speaks to us in any place, at any time and we can do the same in return.

So why do we have prayer at the beginning of a meeting? So that we can listen to the God who will help us to use the words that help people and works that fulfil peoples' needs.

In future issues we will talk about the different types of prayer, individual prayer, communal prayer, informal prayer, formal prayer.

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