This is a sample detailed outline for a Companioned Prayer extended retreat into the loving heart of Jesus. All times are approximate and are shown rounded to five minutes. This outline should be expected to change in response to participants’ needs as the retreat progresses. Modify this sample program to meet your retreat requirements. This program is designed for meeting twice (or three times) a week, for at least an hour-and-a-half per meeting. This program is designed so that the last five meetings can be held in a weekend retreat if desired. Handouts are referenced as “HO“ followed by the handout number, such as “HO-02”.  Teaching Aides, which need not be handed out to participants, are referenced as “TA” followed by the aide number, such as “TA-01”. The handouts and teaching aides may be downloaded from www.CompanionedPrayer.org/Resources.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Meeting** | **Primary Discussion Topic and Prayer Activity** |
| **Optional Introductory Presentation** |
| 0 | Introductory retreat overview presentationPsalm 46 ‘Be Still’ exercise; and group Reflective Prayer |
| **An Extended Retreat Into the Loving Heart of Jesus** |
| 1 | Discuss what we will be doing and our goals; how we will learn Companioned PrayerPersonal introductions; and group Reflective Prayer |
| 2 | Discuss the loving heart of Jesus, and the Loving Heart of Jesus companioned prayer formGroup exercise; and paired companioning each other with the Loving Heart of Jesus form |
| 3 | Discuss discerning what God wants you to pray aboutGroup exercise; Companion each other with the Loving Heart of Jesus form |
| 4 | Discuss new steps: *Letting go into the Loving Heart of Jesus*, and *Being Open to God’s Spirit*Companion each other using the standard Companioned Prayer for Ordinary Time form |
| 5 | Discuss ‘cycling’ in *Being Open to God’s Spirit*Companion each other using the standard Companioned Prayer for Ordinary Time form |
| 6 | Discuss symbol reflectionsCompanion each other using the standard Companioned Prayer for Ordinary Time form |
| 7 | Personal sharing exercise, and discuss *Opening Prayers*Companion each other using the standard Companioned Prayer for Ordinary Time form |
| 8 | Discuss experiencing the prayer as a single flow instead of discrete partsCompanion each other using the standard Companioned Prayer form |
| 9 | Discuss other Companioned Prayer forms for Advent, Christmas, Lent, Triduum, EasterCompanion each other using the Lenten Companioned Prayer form |
| 10 | Discuss the Triduum form. And discuss how our retreat is going.Companioning each other using the Triduum Companioned Prayer form |
| 11 | Discuss experiencing the risen ChristCompanion each other using the Easter Companioned Prayer form |
| 12 | Discuss expanding our attention from experiences to abiding in GodCompanion each other using the Companioned Prayer form for Advent |
| 13 | Discuss the spirituality and role of the body in Companioned PrayerCompanion each other using the Companioned Prayer form for Christmas |
| 14 | Discuss the abbreviated formsCompanion each other with the Abbreviated Companioned Prayer for Ordinary Time form |
| 15 | Discuss intercessory Companioned PrayerCompanion each other with the Intercessory Companioned Prayer form |
| 16 | Discuss Companioned Prayer and the contemplative prayer tradition of the ChurchCompanion each other using the Paired Lectio Companioned Prayer form |
| 17 | Discuss *Resting in God’s Spirit*Companion in groups of three using the abbreviated Companioned Prayer Ordinary form |
| 18 | Discuss Companioned Prayer in your Church ministryCompanion in groups of three using any Companioned Prayer form |
| 19 | Discuss what Companioned Prayer could mean for the ChurchCompanion in groups of three using any Companioned Prayer form |
| 20 | Discuss what happens when Companioned Prayer is practiced over time. Retreat reflectionsCompanion in groups of three using any Companioned Prayer form |

OPTIONAL INTRODUCTORY PRESENTATION

**0. Introductory presentation meeting**

* 1. Introduction, welcome and opening prayer [5 min]
	2. Who we are and why we are here: [5 min]
		+ We are offering an ‘extended retreat’ – what that means
		+ A retreat to experience the loving heart of Jesus
	3. Why we are doing this: Personal sharing about Companioned Prayer [15 min]
		+ Personal sharing – presenter 1
		+ Personal sharing – presenter 2
		+ Personal sharing – presenter 3
	4. About the prayer: [5 min]
		+ A prayer with another person, a companion
		+ A prayer of listening instead of talking
		+ What we pray about
		+ A prayer of taking our prayer topic to the love of Jesus and experiencing what that is like
		+ Jesus is our true prayer Companion
	5. An experiential retreat that blends personal prayer with elements of contemplative prayer [5 min]
		+ Waiting, noticing, letting go into, nurturing, and savoring
	6. A spiritual exercise of noticing: Psalm 46:10 [15 min]
	(See TA-01 or refer to “Introducing guided prayer and openness to the Holy Spirit” under “Teaching Challenges” of chapter 12 of the book *Companioned Prayer, an interactive prayer for companions, families and small groups* by Bill Stobbe.)
		+ Introduction to the exercise (2 min)
		+ **Be ⏐ still ⏐ and know ⏐ that I am ⏐ God** (8 min)
		+ Sharing (5 min)
	7. A group prayer using the Reflective Prayer format [15 min]
		+ About this reflective prayer: What we will do. Don’t worry if nothing ‘happens’
		+ Reflective prayer (HO-01, *Reflective Prayer for Ordinary Time,* from the Resources page of the CPCF website: www.CompanionedPrayer.org/Resources)
		+ Group sharing
	8. What will happen during our Companioned Prayer extended retreat; and retreat signup [5 min]
		+ Community is formed in Christ
		+ A renewed and deepening relationship with Jesus
		+ Read Bishop Quinn’s quotes about Companioned Prayer (HO-02)
		+ Participant retreat sign ups (HO-03 or similar)
	9. Questions and answers [15 min]
	10. Additional program info: If Not Covered in the Q&A [5 min]
		+ When we will meet
		+ You don’t need to bring a companion with you
		+ What we will do
		+ What will happen
		+ How long does it take to learn the prayer?
		+ A Christ centered prayer
		+ Hand out: HO-02, Bishop Quinn’s quotes on Companioned Prayer
		+ Hand out: HO-04, *Short Summary of Companioned Prayer* (available from the CPCF website at www.CompanionedPrayer.org/Resources)
		+ Additional info at the CPCF website, CompanionedPrayer.org
	11. Closing prayer and Thank you – see you at the first retreat meeting!

AN EXTENDED RETREAT INTO THE LOVING HEART OF JESUS

1. **First meeting** (after the introductory presentation meeting, if held)
2. Welcome, beginning group prayer and scripture reading. [5 min]
3. Retreat rules and expectations (go over first to get them out of the way) [5 min]
	* + Bathrooms, exits, and breaks
		+ Please silence your phones while in the retreat meetings
		+ Not therapy or counseling (read out loud the disclaimer in HO-04, the *Short Summary of CP* – make sure everyone has a copy of the *Summary*)
		+ Request that there be no discussions of politics
		+ Withhold personal judgments. Be open to others’ experiences and points of view
		+ We will always include time for prayer when we meet here
		+ Handouts and homework: always optional; additional resources at CP website
		+ Sharing (up to each person how much to share); privacy and confidentiality
		+ Free to make mistakes and ask questions (they are the best ways to learn)
		+ Contributions of each of us: this will be a collaborative retreat
		+ Together creating an environment of faith, trust, openness and hope; supporting each other in our walk with God
		+ Anyone here who was not here for the introductory/presentation meeting? (Or, if no introductory meeting was held)
			- Give them HO-04, the *Short Summary of Companioned Prayer*
			- Have them sign HO-03, the signup/contact sheet
		+ Any questions about all of this?
4. What we will be doing together [10 min]
	* + What do we hope will occur in this extended retreat, and why are we referring to it as a retreat?
			- A retreat facilitates personal change through experience, rather than through study
			- It is a journey in faith – somehow through these experiences, our faith will be deepened
			- We look forward to some personal spiritual transformation as we progress in the retreat, not just at the end
			- Our personal journey’s path (our path of transformation) is the loving heart of Jesus, experienced through Companioned Prayer
			- Our goal is a renewed and deepening very personal relationship with Jesus Christ, not as a concept, but in actual relationship with him
		+ As a group we will be:
			- Sharing our stories and get to know each other
			- Experiencing Christ together
			- Supporting each other and staying on the Christian path together
5. Let’s begin by starting to share our stories – Introductions of everyone [30  min]
	* + What brings you to this extended retreat? What do you hope to get out of it? (We have lots of time set aside for this)
6. Break [5 min]
7. An overview discussion of the prayer’s eight steps or movements [5 min]
8. What is different about this prayer: [5 min]
	* + Closing the eyes
		+ Personal extemporaneous prayer
		+ Having a companion and providing feedback
		+ Listening instead of talking, being attentive inside, waiting, noticing, nurturing
		+ Being aware of our body, and how what we are praying with might physically feel
		+ What we pray about – letting God help us know what to bring to him in prayer
		+ Taking our prayer subject to the love of Jesus, and experiencing that
9. How we will learn the prayer, since there is too much to learn at once [5 min]
	* + Experiencing most of the prayer, but discussion and exercises focused only on a certain part – so getting the whole picture will take time
		+ During the first half of our retreat you will probably find that your focus will naturally be more on how to do the prayer; and then you will settle down into it and in the last half we will explore more about our experiences as we pray
		+ Initially learning the prayer may feel different; you may wonder about it, but be patient
		+ The prayer experience is one of developing a more personal and intimate relationship with God, and this is experienced through personal encounters, not necessarily through analytical learning – so we must be open to this gentle experiential learning process over time
10. A group prayer experience using the *Reflective Prayer* format [15 min]
	* + About this reflective prayer: What we will do. Don’t worry if nothing ‘happens’
		+ Reflective prayer (HO-01 from www.CompanionedPrayer.org/Resources)
		+ Group sharing
11. Closing [5 min]
	* + Hand out HO-01: *Reflective Prayer for Ordinary Time*
		+ Hand out HO-05: *The Prayer Movements*
		+ Hand out HO-06: the single page list of retreat meeting dates and subjects
		+ Next time we will discuss how the loving heart of Jesus is experienced in the prayer
		+ Questions?
		+ Concluding group prayer
12. **Second meeting**
13. Beginning group prayer and scripture reading. [5 min]
14. Discussion: Our retreat into the loving heart of Jesus [15 min]
	* + How is the loving heart of Jesus part of the prayer? (5 min)
		(see material in the HO-09 handout or in chapters 3, 5, 6, & 11)
		+ How our experiences of Jesus’ love invite a journey of intimacy with him
		+ Group sharing of thoughts or experiences of Jesus’ love (10 min)
15. The exercise of recalling someone special in your life (See TA-02) [10 min]
	* + What we will do
		+ The exercise: (body/breathing awareness, question, nurturing, closing)
		+ Group sharing
		+ How was God’s love present in your special relationship?
		+ Did you notice how that love felt inside you as you were recalled it?
			- Let’s take a moment to do that (invite everyone to close the eyes and notice how God’s love feels inside, and how they carry it.)
			- More sharing as time permits
16. Discussion: Companioning each other using the Loving Heart of Jesus prayer form [20 min]
	* + Hand out HO-08, the one-page prayer form: *An Introduction to the Loving Heart of Jesus*
		+ Discuss how the prayer form is laid out
		+ Similarities to *Reflective Prayer* that we have been experiencing
		+ Added instructions for the Companion, including ‘*wait’* and ‘*pause’*
		+ Briefly discuss the roles of the companion and the person praying
		+ Questions/contributions?
17. Break into small groups of two people each and companion each other using HO-08, *An Introduction to the Loving Heart of Jesus* prayer form [30 min]
18. Group reflections, sharing, questions, discussion [5 min]
	* + What was that like?
		+ We will have more time for questions and discussion next time, so bring them to the next meeting
19. Closing [5 min]
	* + Hand out HO-09: material on the loving heart of Jesus (text, not the form)
		+ Hand out HO-10: general guidelines for Companioned Prayer
		+ Next time we will break into pairs and again companion each other like we did today
		+ Questions?
		+ Concluding group prayer
20. **Third meeting**
21. Beginning group prayer and scripture reading. [5 min]
22. Continuing the experience of Jesus’ love: the exercise of holding a baby [15 min]
	* + Reiterate the centrality of Jesus love in Companioned Prayer
		+ Point out that the exercise is guided imagery, not Companioned Prayer
		+ Lead the exercise: body/breathing awareness, holding baby, being held by Jesus. (See TA-03)
		+ Group sharing
		+ Would anyone like to share what you experienced, or what that felt like?
		+ Could you notice the body-feel of tenderness and compassion?
		+ How did it change as the story progressed?
		+ Did you notice that you didn’t have to force any experience? It just happened. It was easy; even effortless.
23. Discussion: Discerning what God wants you to pray about [10 min]
	* + Coming before God with openness, humility and honesty
		+ Not intellectually reasoned or emotionally prioritized
		+ We don’t imagine what we believe God wants us to listen to and be with in prayer. It is not about how we believe we are supposed to feel or be.
		+ It is about how we actually are right now, as we come before God
		+ It can be anything from any part of our life
		+ How? By being open to God’s loving presence
		+ Sensing what stands out rather than listening for God’s voice. Perhaps a thought repeats itself or carries more energy or somehow feels different.
		+ Can be just a feeling, a sense, an image or a memory
		+ We don’t analyze it or explore it. We simply accept it
		+ If nothing comes, let your companion know (your companion can then repeat the entire instruction, *ASKING GOD*)
		+ Questions/contributions?
24. Questions and discussion regarding using the HO-08 prayer form, *An Introduction to the Loving Heart of Jesus*, including: [10 min]
	* + Any questions or discussion from last time when you companioned each other?
		+ Roles of the companion and the person praying
		+ Any of the different parts of the prayer
		+ Any other questions/contributions?
25. Break into small groups of two people each to companion each other using the prayer form, *An Introduction to the Loving Heart of Jesus*. [35 min]
26. Group reflections, sharing, questions, discussion. [10 min]
	* + What was that like?
27. Closing [5 min]
	* + Hand out HO-11: Discerning what God wants you to pray about
		+ Next time we will companion each other using the full Companioned Prayer form
		+ Hand out HO-12: the standard *Companioned Prayer for Ordinary Time* form
		+ Point out the two new steps (do not discuss them now)
		+ Next time we will discuss those two new parts of the prayer, and we will companion each other using this form
		+ Questions?
		+ Concluding group prayer
28. **Fourth meeting**
29. Beginning group prayer and scripture reading. [5 min]
30. Discussion: the new steps in the prayer form: [20 min]
	* + Ensure everyone has a copy of HO-12, the standard *Companioned Prayer for Ordinary Time* form
		+ *LETTING GO INTO THE LOVING HEART OF JESUS*
* Letting go into how all this feels inside is not about surrendering into our feelings. It is about surrendering into the sense of God’s presence *within how our prayer subject feels inside* – into the sense of “something more”.
* Staying with how all this feels in our body, we let go into how all that feels inside. There is no analysis here. The letting go is not letting go into critical thinking or meditations on meaning. Likewise, it is not letting go into emotional “what ifs” or emotional reactions. Instead it is a letting go into the overall experience of our prayer subject as we hold it in the faith and love of Jesus.
* We must allow time for symbols and subjects to form; to allow time to notice; and in due course to allow time to nurture.
* We are powerless to make anything happen. Our companion is also powerless to make anything happen. We can only place ourselves in an attitude of gentle faith in God’s care, being honest within ourselves, and receptive to his word. That is the prayer. Beyond surrendering into that trust, we can do nothing.
	+ - *BEING OPEN TO GOD’S SPIRIT*
		*[note: postpone the discussion of reflecting symbols until the sixth meeting]*
* Brief introduction to cycling (cycling will be discussed at the next meeting)
* How to let your companion know when you are finished
	+ - Questions/contributions?
1. Break into small groups of two people each to companion each other using HO-12, the standard prayer form, *Companioned Prayer for Ordinary Time*. [50 min]
	* + Ignore the parts of the form where it says “*[Reflect back the symbol if shared]*”
2. Group reflections, sharing, questions, discussion. [10 min]
	* + What was it like?
3. Closing [5 min]
	* + Hand out HO-13: guidelines for *Letting Go in the Loving Heart of Jesus*
		+ Next time we are going to talk more about ‘cycling’ within *Being Open to God’s Spirit*
		+ Questions?
		+ Concluding group prayer
4. **Fifth meeting**
5. Beginning group prayer and scripture reading. [5 min]
6. Questions or discussion from previous meeting or from the handout? [5 min]
	* + What makes Companioned Prayer a prayer?
7. Discussion: ‘cycling’ in *Being Open to God’s Spirit* [15 min]
*[note: postpone a full discussion of reflecting symbols until the next meeting]*
	* + Continuing to notice and respond
		+ a → b → c → a → b → c → a → b → c → …
		+ How to indicate you are ready to go to the next step of the prayer
		+ It is God who draws us forward in our prayer journey. It is not us, and not our companion. We are simply open and attentive in faith.
		+ Questions/contributions?
8. Break into small groups of two people each to companion each other using the full standard prayer form, *Companioned Prayer for Ordinary Time*. [50 min]
	* + Ignore the parts of the form where it says “*[Reflect back the symbol if shared]*”
9. Group reflections, questions, discussion. [10 min]
	* + How did the cycling in *Being Open to God’s Spirit* work?
		+ How were the experiences personal to you?
10. Closing [5 min]
	* + Hand out HO-14: guidelines for *Being Open to God’s Spirit*
		+ Next time we are going to discuss the reflection of symbols
		+ Questions?
		+ Concluding group prayer
11. **Sixth meeting**
12. Beginning group prayer and scripture reading. [5 min]
13. Questions or discussion from previous meeting or from the handout? [5 min]
14. Discussion: symbol reflections [10 min]
	* + How to select and share a symbol
		+ How to reflect a symbol
		+ Questions/contributions?
15. Break into small groups of two people each to companion each other using the standard prayer form, *Companioned Prayer for Ordinary Time*. [50 min]
	* + Share and reflect symbols as you pray and companion each other – this is important to do for this session since we are learning how to reflect symbols
16. Group reflections, sharing, questions, discussion. [10 min]
	* + How did the symbol reflections work?
		+ Did they help you to notice more of your prayer, and to be present to it?
17. Closing [5 min]
	* + Next time we are going to discuss the *Opening Prayer*
		+ Questions?
		+ Concluding group prayer
18. **Seventh meeting**
19. Beginning group prayer and scripture reading. [5 min]
20. Sharing more of our stories. Getting to know each other [20 min]
	* + Explain what we are going to do, and then do it:
		+ Pair off in this large group and ask each other something of their story, e.g., where they grew up, their family, etc.
		+ Share each other’s story with the group (each person tells the group something of the other person’s story)
21. Discussion: the *Opening Prayer* [10 min]
	* + Not a prelude to the Companioned Prayer experience; an integral part of it
		+ What to pray about
		+ How to invite the other person to say a prayer
		+ What happens when we pray for each other
		+ Questions/contributions?
22. Break into small groups of two people each (same pairs an in the sharing exercise) to companion each other using the standard prayer form, *Companioned Prayer for Ordinary Time*. [50 min]
	* + In the opening prayer, say something personal for the other person
		+ Continue to share and reflect symbols
23. Group reflections, sharing, questions, discussion [10 min – expand this time if possible]
	* + Were your *Opening Prayers* more personal? Did you feel more connected with each other?
		+ How does this relate to your life journey or your faith experiences?
		+ Are you finding yourself more open to being closer to Jesus?
24. Closing [5 min]
	* + Hand out HO-15: material on the *Opening Prayer*
		+ Next time we are going to discuss experiencing the prayer as a continuous flow instead of discrete parts
		+ Questions?
		+ Concluding group prayer
25. **Eighth meeting**
26. Beginning group prayer and scripture reading. [5 min]
27. Questions or discussion from previous meeting or from the handouts? [5 min]
28. Discussion: experiencing the prayer as a single continuous flow instead of discrete parts [15 min]
	* + Review how each movement forms into the next; a continuation
		+ Read out loud “A Prayer Experience” (from the perspective of the person praying) from chapter 2 of the book *Companioned Prayer.* Or, alternatively, create and read your own, from your own prayer experience.
		+ Questions/contributions?
29. Break into small groups of two people each to companion each other using the standard *Companioned Prayer for Ordinary Time* form [50 min]
30. Group reflections, sharing, questions, discussion. [10 min]
	* + How was your experience an entire prayer instead of discrete parts?
		+ In what ways was that different?
31. Closing [5 min]
	* + Hand out HO-21: the second part of chapter 2, the companion’s experience; or if you have read your own prayer experience, also write the prayer experience from the companion’s perspective and hand that out.
		+ Next time we are going to discuss other forms of Companioned Prayer, including the Lenten form, which we are going to try out
		+ Questions?
		+ Concluding group prayer
32. **Ninth meeting**
33. Beginning group prayer and scripture reading. [5 min]
34. Questions or discussion from previous meeting or from the handout? [5 min]
35. Discussion: Other forms of Companioned Prayer [15 min]
	* + Letting the Church seasons call us into prayer in their special ways
* Rounding out our prayer experiences
	+ - Hand out and discuss the Companioned Prayer forms for the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, Triduum, and Easter (HO-16, HO-17, HO-18, HO-19, and HO-20)
		- Discussion of the Lenten form
* Differences in the *Beginning Group Prayer*
* Differences in the *Opening Prayer*
* Difference in *Asking God*
* Lenten reflections within the *Closing Prayer*
	+ - Group questions, reflections and discussion
1. Break into small groups of two people each to companion each other using HO-18, the Lenten form [50 min]
2. Group reflections, sharing, questions, discussion. [10 min]
	* + How was that different from Companioned Prayer during Ordinary Time?
3. Closing [5 min]
	* + Next time we are going to companion each other using the Triduum Companioned Prayer form
		+ Next time we are going to reflect on how our extended retreat is progressing
		+ Questions?
		+ Concluding group prayer
4. **Tenth meeting**
5. Beginning group prayer and scripture reading [5 min]
6. Discussion: the Triduum prayer form; why the Triduum form asks what it asks [5 min]
7. Break into small groups of two people each to companion each other using HO-19, the Triduum Companioned Prayer form [50 min] (Bring copies for everyone)
8. Group reflections, sharing, questions, discussion. [5 min]
	* + What was it like using the Triduum form?
9. Discussion/sharing: Reflections on how our retreat into the Loving Heart of Jesus is going [20 min – expand this time if possible]
	* + Pose any of the following or similar questions as time allows:
		+ What do you consider significant about your experiences in this retreat?
* Do we find ourselves taking steps and being open to discovery?
	+ - Are we surrendering in faith, and responding to Jesus or the Holy Spirit?
		- Do we find ourselves being drawn closer to God?
		- Do we find ourselves supporting each other in our walk towards God?
		- Are we experiencing our faith journey as a group and getting to know each other, instead of trying to walk by our self?
		- Are we finding ourselves more open to being closer to Jesus?
		- Are we discerning what God wants us to be aware of in our life, and to bring to him in prayer?
		- Are we experiencing grace and a more intimate relationship with God?
		- Are we beginning to experience any kind of spiritual awakening inside us?
		- Any other overall reflections on our Companioned Prayer journey to the loving heart of Jesus?
		- Any suggestions for improvements?
		- Anything you would like to have more emphasis or time with?
		- Anything you would like to have less emphasis or time with?
		- Any other recommendations for the last half of our retreat?
1. Closing [5 min]
	* + We have covered most of the mechanics of the prayer. As we continue, we will continue exploring the other Companioned Prayer forms, not only for the other Church seasons, but also Companioned Prayer for intercession and for lectio divina. We will also explore the more contemplative aspects of our prayer experiences. For example, we will explore how the risen Christ reveals himself to us, the spirituality of the body, the contemplative experiences of abiding in Christ, how Christ might be personally calling you in his ministry, what happens when we continue practicing Companioned Prayer over time, and how our experience of worship and the church can be enlivened as a result of Companioned Prayer. It will be very interesting!
		+ Next time we will be praying using the Companioned Prayer form for Easter
		+ Questions?
		+ Concluding group prayer
2. **Eleventh meeting**
3. Beginning group prayer and scripture reading. [5 min]
4. Group discussion: Experiencing the risen Christ [20 min]
	* + How did Jesus reveal himself to his disciples after his resurrection?
* How does Christ reveal himself to us?
	+ - Did the disciples easily recognize him?
* How do we recognize him in Companioned Prayer?
	+ - Why did he appear to the disciples? What did he call them to do?
* To strengthen their faith: trust, hope and courage
* To open their hearts and minds to greater understanding
* To come back into community
* To spread his word
* To minister to others
	+ - What is he calling us to do?
1. Break into small groups of two people each to companion each other using HO-20, the standard Companioned Prayer form for the Easter Season, HO-20 [50 min] (Bring copies for everyone)
2. Group reflections, sharing, questions, discussion. [10 min – expand this time if possible]
	* + Did this Easter prayer form touch you in a unique way? Did you feel, or become aware of, some kind of call from God in your life? How personal was your prayer experience?
3. Closing [5 min]
	* + Next time we are going to discuss expanding our attention from ‘prayer experiences’ to ‘abiding in God’ and we will be using the Companioned Prayer form for Advent
		+ Questions?
		+ Concluding group prayer
4. **Twelfth meeting**
5. Beginning group prayer and scripture reading. [5 min]
6. Questions or discussion from previous meeting or from the handout? [5 min]
7. Discussion: Expanding our attention from seeking prayer experiences to abiding in God during the season of Advent [15 min]
	* + Are we willing to come before God as we are, instead of how we want to be? (note that the *AS WE ARE* part of the prayer is discussed in the next meeting)
		+ Where will we encounter the mystery of God during the season of Advent?
		In the ‘pauses’ and ‘waits’. (Show HO-23, a CP form with all waits and pauses highlighted.)
* In trust and in faith
* Through our prayer subject as it changes
	+ - What happens when we stop seeking and simply surrender?
* Waiting and letting go into all of it, with the comfort of the Holy Spirit and Jesus our Companion
	+ - How we are changed silently in our awareness, even without our awareness
* An intimacy beyond knowledge
	+ - Group questions, reflections and discussion
1. Discussion: the Advent form [5 min]
	* + Advent is a time of waiting, longing, looking forward to, and also a time of humility, introspection and preparation. This is how we approach Companioned Prayer during Advent, holding all of these at the same time. We can bring this attitude into our *OPENING PRAYER*.
		+ In the Advent form, *ASKING GOD* asks, what are we longing for?
* Even though Advent anticipates the coming of Christ, do not seek a religious answer when asking the question in Companioned Prayer for Advent. Do not seek any particular response. Turn it over to God and wait for him.
1. Break into small groups of two people each to companion each other using the Companioned Prayer form for Advent, HO-16 [50 min] (Bring copies for everyone)
2. Group reflections, sharing, questions, discussion [5 min]
	* + How was your experience personal to you and your situation?
3. Closing [5 min]
	* + Hand out HO-24: Coming before God as we are right now
		+ Next time we are going to discuss the spirituality and the role of the body in Companioned Prayer, and we will be praying with the Companioned Prayer form for the Christmas season
		+ Questions?
		+ Concluding group prayer
4. **Thirteenth meeting**
5. Beginning group prayer and scripture reading. [5 min]
6. Questions or discussion from previous meeting? [5 min]
7. Discussion: The spirituality and role of the body in Companioned Prayer [10 min]
	* + The mystery of the spirituality of our created physical nature, the body
* The incarnation of the Spirit
* Christ’s body when on earth, and his risen body
* Our share in the incarnation of Spirit here and now, and in Christ’s body
	+ - Awareness of our body in Companioned Prayer
* The *AS WE ARE* part of the prayer is not a prelude to the prayer experience, but is an integral part of it
* Shifting to awareness that is other than analytical or emotional
* Noticing how we actually are as we come before God. The purpose is not to relax, so do not suggest relaxation even though that is a common outcome
* Being present in the moment where God meets us
* Sensing how a prayer subject feels in our body, a ‘felt-sense’
* Taking our time with this in *AS WE ARE* and elsewhere in the prayer
	+ - Questions/contributions?
1. Break into small groups of two people each to companion each other using HO-17, the standard Companioned Prayer form for the Christmas Season [50 min] (Bring copies for everyone)
2. Group reflections, sharing, questions, discussion. [10 min – expand this time if possible]
	* + How do your Companioned Prayer experiences relate to your faith experiences?
3. Closing [5 min]
	* + Hand out HO-22: material on the role of the body in Companioned Prayer
		+ Next time we are going to discuss the abbreviated forms of Companioned Prayer
		+ Questions?
		+ Concluding group prayer
4. **Fourteenth meeting**
5. Beginning group prayer and scripture reading. [5 min]
6. Questions or discussion from previous meeting or the handout? [5 min]
7. Discussion: Abbreviated Companioned Prayer [15 min]
	* + Hand out and discuss HO-26, the Abbreviated Companioned Prayer for Ordinary Time form
		+ Requires the person praying to know what to do and when to give feedback
		+ Should not shorten the prayer experience
		+ Group questions, reflections and discussion
8. Break into small groups of two people each to companion each other using the *Abbreviated* *Companioned Prayer for Ordinary Time* form. [50 min]
9. Group reflections, sharing, questions, discussion. [10 min – expand this time if possible]
	* + How was that different from using the standard form?
		+ All the other abbreviated forms are on the *CompanionedPrayer.org* website
10. Closing [5 min]
	* + Next time we are going to discuss companioned intercessory prayer
		+ Questions?
		+ Concluding group prayer
11. **Fifteenth meeting**
12. Beginning group prayer and scripture reading. [5 min]
13. Questions or discussion from previous meeting? [5 min]
	* + Did anyone download the other abbreviated Companioned Prayer forms?
14. Discussion: Intercessory Companioned Prayer (see ch. 9) [15 min]
	* + Who is our intercessor? Our risen Lord, Jesus
* How do we take our prayers for others to him in Companioned Prayer?
	+ - To his loving heart
		- Hand out HO-27, the standard Intercessory Companioned Prayer form, and discuss it:
* An opening prayer for others
* What can come when we ask God who needs his love and care
* Not a petition on someone’s behalf as in regular intercessory prayer
* Letting God tell us what we should hear about the person
* Taking all this to the loving heart of Jesus
* Jesus is the intercessor, not us
* A closing prayer that might pertain to the intercessory subject
	+ - Group questions, reflections and discussion
1. Break into small groups of two people each to companion each other using HO‑27, the standard *Intercessory Companioned Prayer* form. [50 min]
2. Group reflections, sharing, questions, discussion. [10 min]
	* + How was that different from regular intercessory prayer?
		+ What happened?
3. Closing [5 min]
	* + Hand out HO-28, material on Intercessory Companioned Prayer
		+ Next time we are going to discuss Companioned Prayer and the contemplative tradition of the Church. So, you might be thinking about that.
		+ Questions?
		+ Concluding group prayer.
4. **Sixteenth meeting**
5. Beginning group prayer and scripture reading. [5 min]
6. Discussion: Companioned Prayer and the contemplative tradition of the Church [25 min]
	* + What is contemplative prayer/what makes a prayer contemplative?
		+ What does the Church say about contemplative prayer? (see HO-25)
		+ How does Companioned Prayer draw us into a contemplative experience?
* The prayer’s instructional words: “wait” “pause” “notice” “staying with” “being open to” “listen to” “take your time” “seep into” “settle in” “sense” “journey with” “let go into” “nurture” “resting in” “savor”
	+ - The surrender into and encounter with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
		- Group questions, sharing, reflections and discussion
1. Discuss *Lectio divina*
	* + Traditional *lectio divina:* listening without analysis, being open to inspiration from the Holy Spirit
		+ The Paired Companioned Lectio prayer form – download the form from [www.CompanionedPrayer.org/Resources](http://www.CompanionedPrayer.org/Resources) (and hand the form out)
2. Break into small groups of two people each to companion each other using the *Paired Companioned Prayer Lectio Divina* form (bring short scripture readings that they can select for using with the form) [50 min]
3. Group reflections, sharing, questions, discussion. [5 min]
	* + What happened in your listening to scripture in this way? Did you feel a personal connection with the Word?
		+ Did you experience a contemplative presence in your Companioned Prayer? What was it like?
		+ How was the experience similar to, or different from, the experience of the other forms of Companioned Prayer?
4. Closing [5 min]
	* + Hand out HO-25: the reprint on contemplative prayer from the Catechism
		+ Continuing our focus on the contemplative aspects of Companioned Prayer, next time we will discuss the *RESTING IN GOD’S SPIRIT* part of the prayer
		+ Questions?
		+ Concluding group prayer
5. **Seventeenth meeting**
6. Beginning group prayer and scripture reading. [5 min]
7. Discussion: *RESTING IN GOD’S SPIRIT* [10 min]
	* + Simply letting go into God’s presence within where we’ve come to inside
		+ Taking extra time in this prayer movement
		+ Explain how companioning in a group of three works, and how extra time in this step can be experienced (with the closing prayer by oneself)
		+ Group questions, reflections and discussion
8. Break into small groups of three people each to companion each other using the abbreviated form of Companioned Prayer for Ordinary Time [65 min] (ensure everyone has a copy)
	* + Practice the extended time in *Resting in God’s Spirit*
9. Group reflections, sharing, questions, discussion. [5 min]
	* + How was companioning with three people different from in pairs?
		+ Did anyone spend the extra time in *Resting in God’s Spirit*?
* Did you do so while still with your small group, or did you separate?
* What was the experience like?
1. Closing [5 min]
	* + Next time we are going discuss incorporating Companioned Prayer into the Church’s ministries. So please be thinking about how you might use Companioned Prayer in any ministries that you are involved in. For an example go to [www.companionedprayer.org/the-prayer-in-service](http://www.companionedprayer.org/the-prayer-in-service)
		+ Questions?
		+ Concluding group prayer
2. **Eighteenth meeting**
3. Beginning group prayer and scripture reading. [5 min]
4. Discussion: Companioned Prayer in your Church ministry [15 min]
	* + Did anyone consider how you might introduce or include Companioned Prayer into your Church or personal ministry?
		+ Working together in pairs (or more)
		+ Remember that Christ is our Companion
		+ Discuss any examples of having brought Companioned Prayer into a ministry (e.g., Mercy McMahon Terrace)
		+ Group questions, reflections and discussion
5. Break into small groups of three people each to companion each other using any of the standard or the abbreviated Companioned Prayer forms [65 min]
6. Group reflections, sharing, questions, discussion. [10 min]
	* + Any further insights regarding Companioned Prayer and ministry?
		+ Anyone want to get together for some ministry planning?
7. Closing [5 min]
	* + Hand out HO-29, material from chapter 10, *Companioned Prayer in Service Outreach*
		+ Next time we are going to discuss what Companioned Prayer could mean for the Church
		+ Questions?
		+ Concluding group prayer
8. **Nineteenth meeting**
9. Beginning group prayer and scripture reading. [5 min]
10. Questions or discussion from previous meeting or from the handout? [5 min]
11. Discussion: What Companioned Prayer could mean for the Church (see chapter 14) [20 min]
	* + Christian scripture, faith and tradition, 2000 years of experiences
		+ Living in Christian community; and called by Christ to grow in Him
		+ How is the risen Christ calling you to participate in this realization?
* Here at this parish
* With other parishes and organizations
* Companioned Prayer outreach and service
* The CPCF and its website
	+ - Group questions, reflections and discussion
1. Break into small groups of two people each to companion each other using any of the standard or the abbreviated Companioned Prayer forms [50 min]
2. Group reflections, sharing, questions, discussion [10 min – expand if possible]
	* + How is the risen Christ calling us?
		+ Any further insights about Companioned Prayer and the Church?
3. Closing [5 min]
	* + Hand out HO-30: material from chapter 14, *Companioned Prayer and the Church*
		+ Next time we will discuss what happens when Companioned Prayer is practiced over months and years
		+ Next time is our last retreat meeting. Will you continue to support each other in prayer?
		+ Questions?
		+ Concluding group prayer
4. **Twentieth meeting**
5. Beginning group prayer and scripture reading. [5 min]
6. Questions or discussion from previous meeting or from the handout? [5 min]
7. Discussion: What happens when Companioned Prayer is practiced over time (months and years)? [10 min]
	* + What has happened so far?
		+ What do you think might happen if you were to regularly practice this for a few years?
8. Break into small groups of two people each to companion each other using any of the standard or the abbreviated Companioned Prayer forms [50 min]
9. Group reflections, sharing, questions, discussion. [20 min]
	* + Exercise:
* Close the eyes and recall how you felt about your relationship with God prior to this Companioned Prayer retreat *[pause]*
* Now come to where your relationship with God is now, at present *[pause]*
* Open the eyes
	+ - Sharing
* What was your experience from the exercise?
* Has our relationship with God become more intimate?
* Are we experiencing the love and grace of our risen Lord?
* Do we feel more spiritually awakened?
* Any other overall reflections on our extended retreat to the loving heart of Jesus?
	+ - Discuss continuing as a Companioned Prayer ministry in your parish
* Who would like to coordinate it?
1. Closing [5 min]
	* + Hand out HO-31: material from chapter 7, *Prayer Partners and Groups*
		+ Hand out HO-32: *What happens when Companioned Prayer is practiced over time*
		+ Please tell your priest what you think about the Companioned Prayer program, and share some of your experiences
		+ Tell as many people as you can about Companioned Prayer in any way you can (social media, write or respond to articles, contact people in various ministries or programs, etcetera.) Please try to get the word out, and personalize it.
		+ Most importantly, continue practicing Companioned Prayer with each other, and with people new to Companioned Prayer
		+ Consider leading or sponsoring a Companioned Prayer retreat when you feel called to do so
		+ Questions?
		+ Thank you for participating!
		+ Concluding group prayer