

**DEVELOPING YOUR SKILLS**

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Archdeacon Bob Barrett

# **Healing - Prayer Ministry**

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**The ministry of healing  
How do we go about praying for others?  
What are the practical skills we need?**

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Archdeacon Bob Barrett

## Healing – Prayer Ministry

**How do we go about praying for others? What are the practical skills we need?  
A booklet for Church Staff, Parish Visitors, all members of Prayer Ministry  
teams Home Group Leaders and those who supervise these ministries.**

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*This series of Booklets provide practical ideas to help leaders develop their skills in a variety of ministry areas. Experimenting with them, growing your own ideas, discussion with ministry teams will help both you and others grow in skill. Good modelling, evaluation and training will inspire worshippers to worship, pray and grow in their Christian life and ministry.*

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**We never know when we may be in the position of being asked to pray for someone. Two things will give us courage: knowing the basics of prayer ministry and trust in the Lord to work through our prayers. The Lord is the one with the power. The outcome is in the Lord's hands.**

### ***A Personal note . . . .***

*The things I share in this booklet have **emerged as learning points for me** over the last thirty plus years (from the time I was first challenged to be involved in 'praying for healing'). Some thoughts have come from reflections on the experiences I have been through; from books, articles and other teachers; from discussion with others - especially those involved in the healing ministry teams during my time as a Vicar; and from trying to shape all of this into a way of training others. Although I have had a number of experiences I, like all of us, still have much to learn.*

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# WAYS TO USE THIS BOOKLET and GROW IN THE HEALING MINISTRY

Read, reread and think carefully about the contents of this booklet and its implications for you, others and your Church

Discuss the ideas and methods with other interested people.

You may be able to form a short term group to explore the healing ministry.

Gather with friends to pray together - seeking to grow in your ability to listen to the Lord and to pray for each other.

Use the booklet as a part of your ongoing training for any healing groups you have in your parish - for discussion.

Talk to people about your experiences.

Try to become an apprentice to more experienced people - especially those in your Church's healing-ministry team.

Read Developing your Skills No 4: 'People Skills'. Developing our people helping skills needs to go alongside growing our ability to pray for others.

It may be helpful to read Developing your Skills No 3: 'Worship - Leading the Prayers' for ideas on prayer, silence and words.

Remember this booklet is an **introduction** to the healing ministry. You will find it helpful to read more. Check your parish library or Vicar's study for good books. Remember s/he will want them back!

If there is no healing-prayer ministry in your Church suggest that a group of interested people could get together (under the Vicar's oversight) to explore, learn more and begin praying for others.

Attend seminars and conferences on the healing ministry.

Be ready to take the opportunities the Lord opens to pray for others

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## WHAT IS PRAYER-HEALING MINISTRY?

It is praying for people who have **any kind of need** - either for themselves or another person. It is one aspect of seeking wholeness for their lives.

It is joining in prayer with other people and assisting them to **be open to the Lord's blessing**, guidance, strengthening, wisdom and healing - open to any way the Lord might wish to touch those prayed with or those they come on behalf of.

Such ministry is ready to pray for a **variety of needs**.

- Making a commitment (to Christ, ministry or some other action)
- Physical, emotional and mental needs
- Relationship issues
- Freedom from habits
- Seeking guidance and wisdom
- Guilt, repentance, confession, forgiveness - for us
- Forgiving others
- Inner healing - healing scars from past experiences
- Deliverance
- Empowering by the Spirit
- For spiritual gifts
- . . . and for a variety of other things

Prayer ministry is ready to **face any issue** with prayer and openness to the work of God.

Prayer ministry is placed **alongside other ministries** - especially pastoral work and counselling. People often require both care **and** prayer. Prayer ministry also dovetails into worship, preaching, equipping people for ministry and helping people find God's will for their lives.

Prayer ministry praying is **for every Christian**. We never know when we may be in a position of being asked to pray for someone. Two things will give us the courage: knowing the basics of prayer ministry; and (more importantly) trust in the Lord to work through our prayers, because . . .

. . . prayer ministry is not a result of anything we have within ourselves. It is seeking to be a **vehicle of God's blessing**. The Lord is the one with the power. **Outcomes are in his hands**, not ours. We cannot 'make' anything happen - but we can trust the Lord to come by his Spirit and minister as appropriate in the situation.

Christians from all backgrounds have been involved in healing ministry - praying or receiving prayer. If you are discussing this in a group encourage them to share some of their experiences - how they were 'led' into praying for others (or receiving prayer) and how that affected them.

# THE BIBLICAL IMPERATIVE

We like to take our lead from the events and teaching of Scripture - and there we find a challenge to involvement and expectancy.

**Jesus healed people** - we know of many occasions. It is worth rereading one of the Gospels and noticing the number of occasions of healing - including the 'catch all' phrases of 'many were cured' (e.g. Mark 6:56). Perhaps read Mark chapters 1 to 9. Jesus also 'delivered' many from evil spirits. The Gospel writers frequently give clear distinction between the healing and the deliverance (e.g. Mark 1:34).

Jesus **sends out the disciples** to perform the same ministries - and they do! (e.g. Mark 6:13).

The **early Church** continued this healing ministry (e.g. Acts 3:1-10) with the same results (Acts 5:12-16). The Church expected the ministry to continue - James 5:13-16.

**All can share** in the healing ministry - praying for others. Some of us will be especially gifted for the healing ministry (1 Cor 12:9) although most who pray will just be ordinary Christians; others are expected to pray because of their Christian maturity and experience or the Church leadership role they currently hold (James 5:14).

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## A TRUE STORY - AN EXPERIENCE I HAD

Some time ago a lady (we will call her Anne) asked me to pray with her. She and her friend knelt on one side of the rail and I on the other. She told me of her situation and explained how she would like me to pray. I said *"let's pause and silently ask the Lord how he would like us to pray."*

The silence began . . . and so did her friend. She began praying - away she went, praying flat out through every issue. Non stop covering everything Anne had mentioned and more!

I was left with nothing to pray for - but worse, I wasn't even ready to begin praying!

That experience illustrated a **number of dangers**.

I was left with nothing to pray for (although that is okay - I didn't necessarily need to pray).

She prayed for everything at once - perhaps a little at a time could have been better.

The order of praying for things - maybe she could have prayed for some things and when they were dealt with other issues could be prayed about (on that occasion or some later date).

She picked up all the presented issues (and more) but were they the issues that needed prayer? Were there more appropriate underlying issues?

She prayed for some issues that Anne had not asked about. She really should have checked with Anne first.

But - most importantly - by rushing into the prayer she failed to take time to discover what the Lord really wanted us to pray about. Lord what issues? What outcome? How do you want us to pray?

## **What happened to Anne?**

After her friend had finished her l o n g prayer I once again suggested that we pause and silently listen.

After a time of silence I said *"I am not sure if this is God speaking, but I have a word that has come to mind . . . Does the word 'grief' mean anything ?"*

Anne immediately burst into tears . . . and we were on the way to praying through the issue the Lord knew needed to be dealt with.

During that time of prayer he gently laid her on the floor to minister his healing love.

I believe that only happened because we sought to listen to the Lord and to focus on the issues for prayer which he knew were important - in the order he wanted them covered.

The **Lord is the only one** who knows exactly what is best for the person and the best way to bring those results about. In prayer ministry we therefore **seek**, above all else, **to listen to the Lord**.

He will show us

- what to pray for
- how to pray
- how long to pray
- what suggestions to make (if any - regarding action the person could explore; whether to talk it through with someone; further prayer; . . . etc. . . .)

*The Lord gives gifts to Christians to empower them to serve him. One gift is the gift of healing - 1 Corinthians 12:9. Some will discover that they have this gift. However the gift is normally only discovered when people pray for others and find that God is at work in a special way through them for the sake of those they pray for.*

*Even if we do not have the gift of healing we can pray for others. If we are open to the Lord, listen to the Spirit and pray relying on the Spirit to be at work then we will find God using us as vessels of his healing power.*

# UNDERSTANDING OUR PLACE IN THE HEALING MINISTRY

It is useful to **picture a triangle**



We are not between the Lord and the person - we are off to the side. Helping the person:

- Bring their requests to the Lord
- Listen to the Lord
- Receive from the Lord

We encourage their openness and their faith by being with them.

- We 'stand outside' the situation - so may be in a better position to 'hear' and 'to pray'.
- We are constantly seeking to listen to the person and to the Lord.

We therefore use prayer methods that will help us be in that position and ensure we **do not disturb what the Lord is wanting to do.**

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## A SEVEN STEP METHOD

This is a method which allows the Holy Spirit to work in the person and use us in whatever way the Spirit wishes. We focus along the two directions of the triangle that move from us and to us.

### **STEP 1: ESTABLISH RAPPORT AND CLARIFY THE PRAYER REQUEST.**

We talk to the person. We introduce ourselves - gathering their name so that we can personalise the prayer.

We ask what has led them to come for prayer and what they are wanting prayer for.

In this step we listen to the person.

We explain that we will begin the prayer time with silence - asking the Holy Spirit to come and guide our praying.

We will ensure the person is relaxed and comfortable (whether sitting, standing, kneeling at the rail or sitting at the rail).

## STEP 2: WE PRAY - ASKING THE HOLY SPIRIT TO COME.

Praying that the Spirit will show us what to pray for and how.

We silently listen to the Lord, being attentive to any thoughts, single words, sentences, subjects, pictures or ideas.

In this we will also be alert to the possibility of the area the Lord points to being different from the person's presented issue. An example is found with Jesus and the paralytic - the request for healing became a statement about 'sin' (Mark 2:1-12).

## STEP 3: CHECK WITH THE PERSON.

*I have found that this step is **constantly omitted** by people who pray for others. Having heard the Lord (or the person's presented issues) they rush into prayer. Doing that we can often cut across the work the Spirit has begun. Rather than moving immediately from listening to prayer it is good to do the following:*

**Watch** the person - they may have begun to pray themselves, or the Lord might be touching them.

**Ask** the person:

*"Are you aware of anything happening or of the Lord speaking to you ?  
Does anything come to mind ?"*

**Explain** what will now happen. This will come out of anything they or you are aware of; any words given; any action the Spirit has begun.

**Warn** and seek their permission if we feel we may wish to lay hands on them, anoint or pray in tongues. They have a right to know (and to say 'no'). We must never override their freedom nor encroach on their individuality or personal space without permission.

## STEP 4: PRAYER.

Praying as now seems appropriate. Some spoken out loud, some silent. When we sense we know what God wants to do we pray clearly for that outcome. If after listening we are still unsure we could pray along the lines of "*Lord, may what you want to do truly happen . . . may nothing prevent your will being done.*"

We may encourage the person to raise their hands as a physical symbol of their openness to the Lord.

The person may be encouraged to pray out loud - either making up their own prayers or repeating ours.

We are more likely to encourage the person to be silent and receive (soak up) what the Spirit is bringing. Most people cannot concentrate on both receiving and asking at the same time.

## **STEP 5: CHECK WITH THE PERSON.**

We again are alert to the issues of Step 3 - watching and asking - being very careful not to cut across anything the Spirit may be doing.

The person may or may not be 'experiencing something'. If so they will be encouraged. However we must ask and explain in a way that does not leave them discouraged if nothing **seems** to be happening.

We check to see what further prayer they now feel they wish to have. If necessary we again **begin the cycle moving through Steps 1 to 5 as may be appropriate in each situation.**

## **STEP 6: INSTRUCTION**

(Also reflect on the section below 'Giving Advice')

It may have become clear that some instruction needs to be given. This needs to be given carefully, gently and lovingly - as a **suggestion**. (We have no right to tell them what they **must** do.)

If you feel it is vital for you to talk to someone else then seek their permission.

*For example "I am wondering if there is some help we can get (some other way to pray; some information I can obtain; . . . ) Do you mind if I talk to . . . ?"*

It is possible they may say "no". (see below on Confidentiality).

## **STEP 7: CONCLUDING PRAYER.**

To thank the Lord for what he has done; is doing; will do.

To seek the presence of the Holy Spirit to be with them as they go to do what they should do; continue to listen and be open; make a decision; talk to someone; continue to seek healing etc. . . .

Again be alert - in case they suddenly become open to some special work of the Spirit at this moment - we may need to return to step 4.

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# PRACTICAL SKILLS AND ISSUES

## WE ARE AGENTS OF THE LORD.

Results of prayer are God's work not ours. We are looking for the Lord to be at work. In whatever happens we need to **mirror his love**. Our actions should also keep love for the person uppermost.

Love includes not invading their privacy; overriding their free will; imposing our ideas; 'making' them respond in certain ways.

Since this is God's work we must let him do it in his way and in his time frame. We are the ones who must be ready to cope with the unexpected - as the Lord jumps out of the 'box' we thought we had him contained in. In other words we cannot dictate to the Lord what he must do and when !

Very often the Lord will minister in ways that astound us - touching people in ways different from our experience. We help people to be open to what the **Lord** wants to do and how he wants to do it **for them** - which may be totally different from the way he has worked in us.

Reflect on the implications of this. Are we prepared to let the Lord do it differently ? More/less demonstratively ?

## PRAYING IN A TEAM

When possible (when they are available and the person requesting prayer is happy with this) we should include others alongside us - as a part of the team praying.

This can enable: better listening and prayer; give us someone to evaluate with and learn from; provide a different perspective; allow a 'checking of words' and perceptions; and develop their skills (as well as ours).

Three in a team is usually plenty. Too many can overwhelm the person being prayed for.

In most situations a gender balance is good.

It is important that we do not pray in private for a person of the opposite gender. Certainly never more than once. Definitely never if the person being prayed for is likely to be 'rested in the Spirit'. (see below)

## WARNING BEFORE PRAYING

Before praying for certain requests we should warn of the consequences.

For example: *"please pray that I will have more patience"* should be met with a warning that *"the Lord will be quite likely to answer your prayer by placing you in a situation this week that is very difficult and will call for increasing patience on your part - because that is the main way the Lord can increase your patience !"*

For example: praying that someone will be a better witness for Christ may mean challenging them to take up the opportunities the Lord will give them this week to speak about him or demonstrate his caring love in a special way.

## **REFUSING TO PRAY**

At times it may be right not to pray for something the person has requested - especially if it could be immoral, un-Christian, unwise, or something they are not ready for.

Watch for issues like unforgiveness or unwillingness to obey God in an area which may mean it is inappropriate to pray in the way the person requests.

In these cases there can be other aspects to pray about - e.g. *"help Annette in her continued struggle with her feelings and fears of forgiving someone."*

Also watch for areas where a person may need counselling before prayer; or where they need to get permission from another person; or where they need to come with another person (e.g. a spouse) when a particular matter is going to be prayed for.

If people are upset, or begin manifesting (see below) it may not be appropriate to pray for them there, but to move to a more private location, or to arrange another occasion.

Sometimes issues are raised during a prayer time which are better left until a later occasion.

This is especially true if the time of prayer has already been long enough. There is no point in going on and on in prayer - people become too tired to listen, pray and receive prayer. The Holy Spirit will guide regarding how long to pray.

You may feel it is not appropriate for you to be the person who prays. It can be right to refuse to pray. If you feel this link them to someone else.

## **EYES - KEEP THEM OPEN !**

Many of us pray with our eyes closed - to shut off the distractions. However in prayer ministry we need to learn to pray with our eyes open.

Open eyes let us observe what the Lord is doing and keep us alert to what is happening in the person.

We watch for movement (rocking back and forth; upset; tears; fluttering eyes; sagging - falling over etc.). All may be signs of the 'Spirit at work'.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY IS CRUCIAL**

We will lose our ministry with people if they cannot trust us to be 100% confidential with everything they say to us. That includes confidentiality with other prayer-ers; in our prayer groups; in house groups; and with our spouse.

It is usually best to let things stay in the 'prayer time' and not discuss them on other occasions - neither with others who were involved in the praying nor with the person prayed for.

If you feel something needs to be shared (for advice or action) seek to get the person's permission to share it with some appropriate person in authority (tell them who you wish to share it with). Maybe promise to be quite general and not say who you were praying with.

Only in matters of life/death should these guidelines be broken.

## TOUCHING PEOPLE

In Booklet 4: 'People Helping Skills' I wrote:

*"Touch - with care to gender issues and the level of comfort a person feels. It is not wise to comfort a person of the opposite gender with touch except maybe briefly in the socially acceptable area of the upper arm. Remember - some people are not 'touch types'. When and how to touch depends on the occasion, who is present, gender and age differences. Watch - some are helped by touch, some are uncomfortable, some read the wrong message in touch."*

This still applies in prayer ministry - although when praying, having warned the person and received their permission, gentle touch can be very appropriate.

Touch when praying ("laying on hands") is probably most appropriate on the head, shoulder or upper arm.

Some like to lay hands on the affected area (when praying for such things as physical healing). Ask the person to put their hand on the spot and lay your hand lightly on theirs - provided this can be done with modesty.

## CHECKING WORDS

During ministry we are seeking to hear the Lord speak. He will speak by thoughts, words (one word or more), ideas, feelings, pictures etc. What we do with these words is very important.

If a partial word/picture is given we should ask the Lord to reveal more and wait on him as he does and then ask him to interpret it for us.

Sometimes the word should not be shared with the person we are praying with until:

- Later, when it may be more applicable in the process, or
- when you have checked the possible word with a senior colleague or staff person, or
- when you are alone with the person (so they do not have to hear a potentially embarrassing word with others round).

When sharing it is best to **submit the word to the person** in a way that allows them to reject it.

- *"God is telling me that you . . ."* can be very hard to receive.
- Expressing it *"I'm not sure but I was wondering if the Lord might be saying . . ."* is far easier for many people to receive.
- That allows them to say *"no"* - although on later reflection they may come back to agree it does 'fit'.

When sharing words other members of the team will often be able to confirm (suggest it could be right).

The above comments also apply to sharing Bible passages.

## **PRAYING ONE STEP AT A TIME**

Much prayer ministry is 'onion layer prayer'. That is it is best to pray about one issue and when that issue is dealt with move on to the next issue until all are covered. It is important not to jumble all the issues up.

Don't rush through all the issues in one time of prayer. Everything does not need to be covered on the one occasion. Some issues also take time - to soak the person in God's love and the Spirit's presence. Quietly praying, or maybe quietly worshipping together - while the person remains in an attitude which is open to receive and soak up the Lord's blessing.

Sometimes the Lord immediately opens the central issue and when this is dealt with other issues more easily fall away.

Always be alert in case there are other underlying issues that also need prayer - before or after those first presented. Some are more obvious connections - e.g. 'headache' could also require prayer for sleep or worry or stress. Other issues will be ones only the Lord could reveal.

Some issues may need more than one time of prayer. It is not necessarily a 'prayer of faith' to pray once and then leave it.

## **AVOID EMBARRASSMENT**

Never do things, nor ask the person to do things which may embarrass them.

If you sense embarrassment back off the particular way you are currently approaching things.

Be sensitive to the feeling and 'messages' the person you are praying with is giving. Also be sensitive to those who pray alongside you and to the Lord !

## **GIVING ADVICE**

As in counselling ministry so too in prayer ministry it is important not to 'tell people what they must do.'

At times it is possible to get them to suggest a course of action, at other times we may need to make gentle suggestions.

Possible suggestions could include:

- To come back for more prayer.,
- To *"let me know how you get on."*
- To ring me.
- To see a Church staff person.
- To go and read a passage of Scripture.
- To pray themselves about " . . . "
- To talk to their spouse/partner, friend, child, parent, workmate, vicar, house group leader, counsellor, doctor, or other appropriate person.

Never ever (under any circumstances) tell anyone to stop or change their medication - no matter what you think God has done. If there has been a healing which makes the drugs unnecessary the doctor will soon notice and adjust the prescription.

## COUNSELLING AND PRAYER MINISTRY

Sometimes it is very helpful to merge counselling and prayer ministry together - where a person receives counselling and at appropriate stages this links to prayer ministry.

However prayer ministry is **not** counselling. Those in prayer ministry should not get into long counselling sessions. Prayer ministry is for prayer !

Some listening will be necessary but if counselling is required it should be on other occasions with people who are qualified in counselling.

## FOLLOW UP

Some people prayed with will need to be checked with over the next few days to 'see how they are'.

It is good to let the person know you will do this - and if raising it make sure you do ! They may be waiting for your phone call.

## PARISH POLICY PRACTICALITIES

Each Church has its own policy on a number of things associated with prayer ministry. Ensure you know the policy, any guidelines and the way you are supposed to do things.

Policy issues could include expectations in the following areas:

1. **Anointing.** Know who is allowed to, when it is thought to be appropriate and how it should be administered.
2. **Confession.** Sometimes confession just occurs (without prior warning) in counselling and prayer ministry. Treat this highly confidentially.
3. **Occasions** for prayer ministry - know when, where and by whom prayer ministry is acceptable and any other expectations.
4. **Holy Communion** can at times be included with prayer ministry. Know the policy regarding who can administer and when it is appropriate.
5. **Testimony** of healing. Be careful about claiming a miracle - give a period of time for this to be shown.
6. **Accountability.** Pray-ers should be accountable. We need to know what boundaries and expectations there are placed on us who would pray.

## OTHER PRACTICAL ISSUES

1. **Location.** Try (in Church and other places) to be where people can see you (this is good for encouraging prayer ministry and is a protection against accusation). For some ministry this is not appropriate (where upset, confidentiality or deliverance could make it difficult).
  2. **Tissues.** Ensure these are always readily available in all places where prayer ministry is likely to occur. People could be in tears - something not to be discouraged.
  3. **Simplicity.** Watch for people looking for a 'quick fix' for something they should be willing to work hard at or personally deal with.
  4. Our own **preparation.** To be clean channels we need to be prepared to deal with the sin and hurts the Lord points to in our own life.
  5. **Faith.** Jesus talks of 'mustard seed' (a very small seed !) faith. We can begin with very small faith and gradually see our faith grow from those small beginnings.
  6. We may feel unable to pray for some requests - for example a sick person to get totally better now. However in this situation we may have enough faith to pray that they 'sleep well tonight'. Pray for things our faith is 'comfortable' about - and always be open to have our faith stretched.
  7. **Volume.** God is not deaf ! Shouting is unnecessary. Be loud enough for the person to hear - if they should.
  8. **Heavy handed prayers.** There is no need for force or laying hands heavily. Gentle touch is enough.
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## THINGS WHICH MAY OCCUR

### 1. PEOPLE BEING UPSET

Check the cause. It may be because of what the Lord is doing - he is letting/causing the upset to surface as a step towards healing; it may be the way you are handling things; it maybe fear of the future. Knowing which determines the way we will handle it - encourage, move away from etc.

### 2. PHYSICAL SIGNS

Shaking, eyes fluttering, smiling movement etc can be signs of God working.

Watch for things that are not of God - possibly seen by the way people are upset or a sense of God's peace is missing.

People may feel warmth (even heat) or tingling in their hands as the Lord works in their lives.

### **3. RESTING IN THE SPIRIT**

Resting is different from slaying. Generally people are 'rested' (gently laid on the floor); occasionally we will see people suddenly 'crumple'.

It often seems to come as the Lord's anaesthetic - while he ministers his healing power.

There is a devil's counterfeit to be aware of which draws people away from prayer and results in unease and edginess.

We should never force resting. The Lord can and does minister powerfully to people without having to put them on the floor as he does so.

People sometimes resist it. Encourage them to relax and 'let the Lord do what he wants to do'. There is nothing to fear if we let God be in control - he does not bring harm to us. God will also have a purpose if he lets it happen'.

If people are rested - silently pray. It is usually best not to touch them as that draws attention to our presence - away from the Lord's ministering.

Sometimes it will be quite some time before people are able to get up (perhaps 45 minutes). Ensure someone continues to silently and prayerfully sit with the person.

If a person is rested in the Spirit explain what is happening to others and if necessary (later) to the person.

Afterwards check with the person to ensure they are okay. Find out if they were aware of anything special and see if further prayer is required.

Avoid situations where people 'go down' because they think they should. Teach and talk about it. The same applies to people who think God has not done anything because they (or someone else) did not 'go down'. Also watch out for pray-ers who think 'going down' is the only way God ministers.

Sometimes it may not be appropriate for a person to 'go down'. They may need to be 'held up' during prayer.

If 'resting in the Spirit' is likely to occur for someone who is standing we need to be alert to the possible requirement for someone to 'help them down'.

### **4. MANIFESTATIONS AND DELIVERANCE**

The need for deliverance ministry may occur. If you feel it is necessary stop the prayer time and seek help from someone with experience. We do not need to be afraid (God is more powerful!). In deliverance ministry there are pitfalls to avoid - for both your sake and the sake of the person being prayed for.

It is outside the scope of this present booklet to explore the deliverance ministry. These issues do need to be discussed in the prayer ministry teams of your parish.

Discuss and explore together such things as:

- How do we recognise that deliverance may be necessary ?
- What do we do in terms of praying now and passing them on to experienced people ?
- Who are the experienced people in our parish ?
- How do we grow in this area and assure someone is available and skilled should need arise ?

## 5. PEOPLE NOT BEING HEALED . . .

. . . **at least not in the way they or we hoped for.**

There is so much we do not understand. We must trust God to be sovereign and give him the freedom to do what he wants to do.

We should ensure no one feels it is 'their fault'. They '*didn't have enough faith*' is an accusation wrongly thrown at those prayed for and at those praying. Guard against such false ideas.

This is a topic those involved in prayer ministry should think through, read about and discuss with others.

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## SETTING UP A PRAYER - HEALING MINISTRY TEAM

Healing prayer is a ministry of the Church. House group leaders, parish visitors, youth group leaders, staff and others will need to pray with people. It is also good to have a team of those for whom '**this is their ministry**'.

When setting up a team the following ideas can be kept in mind.

**Training Sessions.** It is good to have open introductory training sessions which all parishioners are encouraged to attend. The more parishioners who understand the ministry the better. Some will be encouraged to explore it further and may become apprentices within a healing team.

A Power Point presentation to use alongside this booklet is available.

Special training sessions, at deeper levels, will also be required for all who regularly pray - especially for all members of the parish prayer-healing ministry team.

**Apprentice Model.** Encourage people exploring prayer ministry to be apprentices in the team. They will learn much from praying alongside experienced people. They can also 'test' whether it is their ministry. Others can check on the apprentice's suitability and their development; and become aware of areas the apprentices require further training in.

**Regular Meetings** for learning, support, sharing, prayer and policy issues are vital for all ministry areas. This is most important for all members of prayer ministry teams.

Prayer-healing ministry teams can be used **during and/or after services**. As people become skilled then clergy and staff are free to mix with parishioners.

Such teams provide a pool of people who may be available for **mid week** pastoral prayer needs - again freeing clergy for other roles.

**Reporting back and accountability** issues need to have a thought out policy. Confidentiality and privacy limit the type of reporting back. It can be vital to know who prayed with whom. This acts as a safeguard for all concerned and allows follow up if issues arise.

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## HELPFUL RESOURCES

'Saints For Healing' By Roger Vaughan

Although I have not had the opportunity of working through this I have known many who have used it and found it helpful. The contents look very good. I have heard Roger Vaughan speak powerfully and relevantly of his experience in the healing ministry.

'Listening To God' By Joyce Huggett

'Healing" and "The Power to Heal" Francis MacNutt - Ave Maria Press

'Deliverance and Inner Healing' John and Mark Sandford - Chosen

'The Transformation of the Inner Man' John and Paula Sandford

'Your Healing is Within You' Canon Jim Glennon - H & S

'How To Have A Healing Ministry Without Making Your Church Sick' C. Peter Wagner - Monarch

'Authority to Heal' Ken Blue - Inter Varsity Press

'Power Healing' John Wimber - Hodder and Stoughton

Jesus said

*"Very truly, I tell you, the Son can do nothing on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise" (John 5:19)*

This is the basis of our praying for others - we seek to do what the Father is doing. We seek to pray for what the Father wants to do, in the way he wants to do it, in the time frame he has in mind.

We seek to know the Father's will. We want to pray 'according to his will'.

## TITLES IN THE SERIES:

Number 1 "Visitor Friendly Worship"

Number 2 "Worship - Who is it for?" – 2001 edition.

Number 3 "Leading Worship - The Prayers"

Number 4 "People Helping Skills"

Number 5 "Preaching and Teaching"

Number 6 "Stewardship - The Financial Area"

Number 8 "Healing - Prayer Ministry"

Number 9 "Informal Worship - Designing and Leading"

Number 10 "Incorporation - Helping Newcomers Into Membership"

Number 11 "Change - Introduce New Things Successfully"

Number 12 "Youth Ministry For the 21st Century"

Number 13 "Handling Hurts in the Church"

Number 14 "Managing Conflict in the Church"

Number 15 "Every Member Ministry – Making It Work"

Number 16 "Criticism – How Do We Respond?"

Please note that Number 7 on Planning is not available in the Electronic Series.