

Getting Comfortable Praying Aloud

The number one fear for many people is public speaking. Given that, it is no wonder that many of us are uncomfortable praying aloud in front of other or in a group. Yet, the benefits of doing this with someone else or being part of such a communal activity can outweigh our discomfort, if we would just keep a few things in mind.

1. Practice praying aloud when you are alone. In other words, say the prayer you are praying out loud, so you can hear how you sound. We are often way too critical of our content and delivery than we need to be. Hopefully, hearing yourself aloud will allow you to hear both your own intent (which need not be perfection) and your own sincerity (which will be sure to touch every heart who hears you pray).
2. Before you pray aloud, think about for who you will be praying (yourself, other individuals or groups, or places or situations), what you are praying about (giving thanks, asking for help...) and what you are praying about (the what you are asking for, or expressing thanks for) For example, Why – a friend is getting ready to undergo surgery, Who – Jim, What – that God guide the doctors and medical staff and for healing and peace.
3. You may want to put a bit of additional structure to your prayer by deciding what name for the Divine you will use to begin your prayer – it could be the name you use in your own silent, private prayers, or a name you have heard others use that you like. Such as, Father, Lord, Loving God... Next, put into a sentence or two who you are praying for and what you are praying for. Finally, you may want to end or start your praying aloud by giving God thanks, such as for hearing your prayer, for being there always and forever, or for being one who is so loving and caring. Know that it never hurts to end your prayer with an “Amen”.

Last, but not least, remember that each of us should pray in a way

that is true to us. We don't need to imitate others, just be yourself – real and honest. And don't forget that it is okay to keep your prayers short. It doesn't mean God will hear us any more or even better because we have a lot of words.

And through it all, let us not forget that audible prayer is both encouraging and heartwarming for all you are listening and joining you in prayer, even if we think it did not go “perfectly.”

Sometime, you may want to build up your confidence by asking someone (or a group) you trust how they felt about the prayer you offered. You will be surprised on how helpful and meaningful it can be for others.

Be brave, dare, trust God and then after you have prayed, you will feel supported in a way that is often hard to experience when we keep our prayer private.