



QUICK START

Welcome to Prayer Sisters—a way to connect with God and each other at the heart level. As Prayer Sisters, we have friends to pray alongside us for our personal and family needs and to encourage us along the way.

And girls, do we need it!

Several years ago my friends and I started praying together regularly, mostly for the growing concerns of our teenagers. It wasn't long before we realized how much we valued the help in praying for all of the other “stuff” in our lives. We found ourselves walking and praying each other through scary health issues, personal faith crises, and a host of other difficult situations. Because we had grown as close as sisters and knew we could count on one another for prayer, we started calling ourselves Prayer Sisters.

We often hear women say, “I wish I had a group like that!” And that is exactly why Prayer Sisters International was created—so you can have this same enriching connection and prayer support.

This Quick Start booklet gives simple steps to begin your own Prayer Sisters journey. I pray you will see many prayers answered and your relationships, especially with God, deepened to an intimate heart level as Prayer Sisters.

In sisterly prayer,

Kathy Groom
Founder and President
Prayer Sisters International

Prayer Sisters are small groups of women committed to supporting one another in friendship, prayer and spiritual growth who meet regularly to pray.



“...they raised their voices together in prayer to God.” Acts 4:24



Why are Prayer Sisters important?

Many women today feel alone. Busy lifestyles and stressful demands overwhelm us. The idea of getting close to other women and sharing our concerns, even in prayer, intimidates us—while our needs for friendship and prayer support remain neglected.

Prayer Sisters walk through life together. They support each other in prayer and encourage each other to truly *know* God. There is no need to be alone!

Prayer Sisters meet three essential needs of every woman:

Friendship

Prayer Sisters satisfy a deep longing for authentic relationships. More than a social connection, Prayer Sisters nurture real friends at the heart level.

Prayer Support

Prayer Sisters pray one another through life's challenges with combined hope. When we pray together, we increase the effectiveness of our prayers and gain strength from one another's faith.

Spiritual Growth

As Prayer Sisters walk through life together, we encourage one another to grow personally and to truly *know* God.





Quick Steps

These easy steps will help your group begin your journey together as Prayer Sisters. Keep in mind these are only suggestions. As you discuss each step, feel free to tailor these ideas to your own needs and decide what works best for you. Each Prayer Sister group is different!

Gather a group:

Consider asking your closest friends to be Prayer Sisters with you. Friendships strengthen when friends pray together. Or take a risk and invite women you'd like to get to know better. If you feel a need for Prayer Sisters, chances are others do too! Be open to women of different ages and seasons of life, as well as those from varying church homes.

When to meet:

Some groups meet weekly, some meet twice a month, others meet monthly. A regular day and time is helpful for planning purposes but be flexible and willing to change because our schedules rarely stand still. Be purposeful and commit to making your prayer times together a priority. Lots of Prayer Sisters use current technology to keep up with each other, but nothing replaces praying together face-to-face!

How long to meet:

Most groups meet for at least one hour, but some groups enjoy two hours or more together.

Also, it is helpful to agree ahead of time how long you will allow yourselves to visit before you start praying. We girls love to chat. And that's good! Sharing our lives is an important part of being Prayer Sisters.

You may want to assign someone to keep your group on schedule, for both visiting time and prayer time.

What to do when you meet:

Visit a while and then pray, basically! To transition from chat time to prayer time, you might want to:

- Read aloud a scripture or a short devotional to help get your hearts ready for prayer. Keep it short so it only takes a few moments of your valuable prayer time.
- Or, you can begin your prayer time with a few moments of silence for personal reflection.
- Another effective way to transition into prayer is with praise and worship, either in prayer or song, acknowledging that God is the reason you're meeting and you're eager to talk to him together.

The *Prayer Sisters Group Guide* is available to assist you through your first few sessions together. Download your free copy at www.prayersisters.org.



How to share prayer requests:

These are some different options that have worked well for many groups. You may come up with some new ideas of your own!

- E-mail requests to one another ahead of time. (This has been a highly effective option for most groups.)
- Provide paper or 4x6 index cards for women to write down their requests when they first arrive. Take turns reading each other's requests aloud.
- Allot a limited amount of time for each member to share, 3-5 minutes for example.
- Discuss urgent prayer requests and how to best notify one another to pray when emergencies arise. Email, cell phone, text, etc.

More quick tips...

- **Honor privacy.** It is important your group agrees ahead of time on your boundaries of confidentiality. For example, whether or not to share prayer requests with family members.
- **Keep it simple.** This is not the time to hostess. Leave the cloth napkins in the drawer. Simply set out a few tea bags, a pot of coffee and your favorite old mugs.
- **Enjoy your friendship.** Have fun getting to know each other! You might choose to celebrate birthdays or meet occasionally at your favorite coffee shop. Or you may choose to work together on a service project. By spending time together, you get to know one another better, which adds greatly to your friendship—and ultimately helps you intercede more effectively for each other.
- **Commit to pray.** Sometimes circumstances prevent you from all gathering together. As long as two people can meet, do it! Pray for everyone else and for what is going on in their busy lives.
- **Tap resources.** Take advantage of the resources available through Prayer Sisters International. Our website www.prayersisters.org is filled with helpful information. Download our free books. And join our global network of Prayer Sisters on Facebook/Prayer Sisters International.
- **Contact us.** If you have any questions, contact us through our website at www.prayersisters.org.



Frequently Asked Questions

How much time will Prayer Sisters require?

As much or as little time as your group wants. There is no training or preparation; you simply meet with friends to pray regularly. You can give it as much time as you want, but hearts can grow and be encouraged with a time commitment of just an hour or two every other week.

How many women should be in a group?

A group can start small, with as few as three women, but limit your group to six or seven if possible. This is not to be exclusive, but to cultivate trust. When you can be honest with your Prayer Sisters, you will pray more openly and see greater results.

A group of at least three members builds the necessary sense of comradeship and support. When a group has too many members, it is hard to give adequate time and attention to each person's prayer needs. Also, confidentiality is more difficult to maintain in a large group.

Do we need a leader?

Not really. You just need someone to make sure you get together and pray. Many groups rotate this responsibility.

Do I have to include strangers in my group, or can my group consist of my existing friends?

We actually advise close friends to become Prayer Sisters. If you have three to seven friends who desire to pray together as Prayer Sisters, then you already have a group. Go for it! You will experience a deepening and strengthening within your relationships. If, however, you have only one or two other interested friends and would like your group to be larger, we recommend you consider opening your group to women who are looking for friends just like you.

What if I have a hard time developing friendships?

No worries. Praying together has an amazing way of opening hearts and deepening relationships. Since God is calling you to a prayer group, you can trust him to help you through the scary parts of developing intimate friendships.

What if I don't like praying aloud?

That's fine. Just be sure at least two members of your group are comfortable voicing everyone's prayers. With time you may feel more at ease praying aloud, but no pressure. God hears your silent prayers just as well as the spoken ones.



How long will our group be together?

As long as you need it to! The group of women that inspired Prayer Sisters, the Heart Sisters from Cincinnati, Ohio, have been together for 30 years. And so far, the original Prayer Sisters have been praying together since 1997. Some groups will find this longevity appealing, while others may be hesitant to enter into such a long-lasting commitment. Try committing to a minimum length of time and see how it goes, six months or one year, for example. Then assess whether or not you want to continue.

What if our group doesn't "click?"

Keep in mind that it takes time to develop relationships of trust. If after six months or a year your group has not deepened in friendship, try disbanding and forming new groups with different women. Not every group of women will be the "perfect" fit, and rather than striving in vain to blend incompatible personalities, you might be better off changing your groups around. The concept of praying together works and is worth the effort to find a well-suited group of friends.

How are Prayer Sisters groups different from other "small groups"?

The focus of Prayer Sisters is to meet three essential needs of every woman: authentic friendship, diligent prayer support, and faithful encouragement as we grow spiritually. The primary activity for Prayer Sisters groups is praying together—for one another.

Where should we meet?

Meeting in one another's homes is a logical option. You can take turns meeting at different locations, or if one person especially enjoys having friends in her home, meet there!

Another option is to meet at a church that is convenient for your group. Some of our Prayer Sisters attend a church with a small coffee shop, which has become a favorite place to gather.

Should we serve refreshments?

Only if it does not take away from the focus of prayer. Prayer is our highest priority. Most groups elect to save snacks for special occasions (i.e. Christmas, birthdays, etc.), although coffee and tea are often served regularly.

Do we need to belong to a church?

Not at all. The objective is prayer, not church membership.



Prayer Sisters Resources

Free Downloads

To download your free resources, visit our website at www.prayersisters.org or contact us at contact@prayersisters.org.

- ***Quick Start***

This concise booklet shares the vision of Prayer Sisters and gives basic information on how to start and manage your own Prayer Sisters group. Download as many times as you need, and share these valuable resources with your friends.

- ***Prayer Sisters Group Guide***

This helpful book is a fun read and effective teaching tool that provides guidance for each Prayer Sister group. Included in this book is a section of important lessons that groups can read at the beginning of their first few sessions together. The ***Group Guide*** addresses issues like expectations, attitudes, God's promises, ideas to help you grow spiritually, and more. Picture it as experienced Prayer Sisters joining you, sharing life stories and offering valuable sisterly advice. Every Prayer Sister will want to download her own free copy!

Website

www.prayersisters.org

Through our website, you can download all the resources you will need to support your own Prayer Sisters group. You'll also find stories, advice, and ideas from other Prayer Sisters to help you on your Prayer Sisters journey.

Facebook/ Prayer Sisters International

Join our growing network of Prayer Sisters worldwide! At Facebook/Prayer Sisters International.

Prayer Sisters International is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.
All contributions are tax deductible,
and go directly to help women around the world become Prayer Sisters.

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