

# Leading A Discussion On Prayer

At Alton Castle on Saturday morning

1. You could begin by sharing thoughts about what prayer is. The old catechism definition is quite hard to beat: *Prayer is the raising of the heart and mind to God*. But there may be many definitions of prayer.
2. Try to be honest in saying what experience you have, or don't have, of prayer:
  - as a daily practice
  - as an emergency option, in times of distress
  - as a sudden impulse, in moments of happiness
3. Compare/contrast the group's perceptions of prayer with the following:
  - worrying
  - planning
  - serious thought
  - licking wounds
  - daydreaming
  - dreaming
4. Can you pray
  - whilst listening to music?
  - on a bus?
  - in a waiting-room?
  - whilst waiting to fall asleep?
  - on waking up?
5. Do people have experience of prayer
  - that asks God questions?
  - that asks God for help or for favours?
  - that gradually falls silent, or uses no words?
6. In prayer, who is acting – the one praying, or God? Do the members of the group have the experience of letting God have the controls?
7. Could the group comment on the thought that being a Christian is not so much about *doing* good (or not *doing* evil!) as about *being* what God wants us to be: that we come when we pray to a frontier between earth and heaven, the world and the Kingdom of God, and there we give ourselves to be a bridge, a point of communication, a port of entry for the grace of God to the world?