

September 20

For God's Sake, Just Pray

[1 Thessalonians 5:16-18](#) and [Philippians 4:4-9](#)

“Prayer isn’t an individual sport; if anything, it’s more of a relay race. It’s what we do for each other and what we do for the world. When we pray, we hold ourselves and our loved ones and our world up to God and then we pass it off for the next one to do the same.”

Nadia describes prayer as “Mindfully hold[ing] others in the presence of God.”

Each Student takes a turn answering the question: **How do you define prayer?**

Some other discussion questions to fill out the conversation:

Who taught you to pray? When? How?

How often do you pray now? When? How? (no shame or blame here)

Do you pray at mealtimes?

How do you think of God: like Santa, or a vending machine or something else?

Who and what do you pray for? Why?

Copy/Paste the following five questions in the chat (or show via screen-sharing), and give students 5 or so minutes to either jot down some thoughts for each, or pick one to explore in more depth. Let students know that they will be asked to pick one question to share their reflections on with the rest of the class.

How much of prayer is talking and how much of it is listening?

What do you think happens exactly when you pray?

How do you imagine your prayers help God do work in the world?

If God knows your needs before you pray, what’s the point of telling God about them?

How often do you pray for what you want vs. what God wants? How does it feel different?

Call on each student in turn to pick one question to share their reflection on. As each student answers, invite the class into discussion and further reflection on their answer, as time permits.

Nadia says, “When we pray on another’s behalf we become connected to that person through God and we become connected to God through that person”

Who prays for you? Does it matter to you? How and why?

Have you ever felt connected to other people through prayer? How and when?

Ask each student to think of a word or sentence representing a personal concern they have this week, and let them know that you will all take turns speaking that word or sentence aloud in a group prayer, and the teacher will let them know when it’s their turn by saying “We pray with [NAME], for: _____”

Remind them that these prayer requests will be kept confidential by the whole group.

Then the teacher begins a prayer, introducing each student’s turn by saying, “We pray with [NAME], for: _____”

Teacher closes the prayer to end the class session.

Reflect on during the week: Would you consider starting a regular prayer practice, like a regular workout or music or team practice? How often and where would you want to do it?