



## How To use our Symbol Prayer Sheets

Welcome to our space for prayer with creative communicators who enjoy using pictures and reading symbols. We hope you will enjoy using our prayers. The research project **Everybody Has a Story**<sup>1</sup> has identified that there is a poverty of resources for People who have been Intellectually Disabled and who wish to experience religious practice. There are very few resources that enable them to enjoy active participation. This resource will help you to enter into the experience of prayer with them, using accessible symbols to help them identify what they *do, see and feel*. We hope you will enjoy using the resource.

**At this time of Covid 19 Crisis please follow all of the Government guidance regarding social distancing and sharing space. This is very important.**

This 'How to use' is for parents, carers, pastors, chaplains and friends who will spend time praying with creative learners. The structured activities will help you carve time out in the day to pray with people who have an intellectual disability.

Before you begin, if you need help, please *take time to read through our guidelines* on praying with creative communicators. Please think about how you might pray by keeping social distance. We have given a method and process below that can help you.

*Thank you.*

*We hope that you enjoy sharing a place to be with each other as you turn your gaze towards God.*

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<sup>1</sup> Gangemi C, Tobanelli M, Vincenzi G, Swinton J *Everybody Has a Story* : Meeting People with Intellectual Disabilities and Responding to their Spiritual and Religious Needs available as a download from [Thekairosforum.org](http://Thekairosforum.org) website.

## What you will need

### Contact at 2 meter distance

- ✓ Printer : Please print out the PDF symbol sheet.
- ✓ Glue or Sellotape
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ An image of Jesus (always use the same picture to avoid confusion)
- ✓ A cross
- ✓ Individual photographs of the people who pray and of everyday activities and preferences.

### Non- contact: Social Distancing

- ✓ Prayer sheets can be shared by looking at the downloads from the website and sharing them on separate tablets.
- ✓ You can also create home drama's using the symbol themes and bible stories but please adhere to social distancing and government guidelines and distances.
- ✓ You can work virtually during the virus by using programs such as Zoom and Skype, where you can share screen and add photos and names to the screen...Be creative.

### The process you will use: Praying with creative communication at the core: PSR (Purpose, Share and Respond) ©Gangemi 2010

**P: Purpose:** The purpose of your prayer time can change each time you meet. During the Covid 19 Crisis; it will be a time to pray for people who are sick, who have died and who need our spiritual support. You can change this and pray for whatever you want to share.

**S: Share.** Sharing time using symbols sheets and creative prayer through word, symbol, action, image, colour, familiar objects and Virtual exchange. You could change the way you share each time. Make sure you keep a distance from one another.

**R: Respond.** The most important part – the person is invited to respond. Here experience becomes expression. Prayer activities will enable the person, not just receive a message but become a '**Creative communicator of their own spirit**'. You can make a poster of all they share, even noises that are made during prayer are important expressions, you should also write down facial expressions that you might notice.

## How to interact with the symbols : Symbolic placement and communication circles ©Gangemi,Tobanelli,Vincenzi, Swinton 2010

You will be asked to use '**Placement**' = A tangible method of combining the following:

1. Visual resources
2. Physical skills and spaces/ Audio guidance
3. Movement and symbolic representation

Placement is a way of achieving the link between what you want to achieve and what is actually done, this is called 'Cause and Effect'. Placement works well when seeking to connect activities.

The idea is that you encourage the person to look and point at the symbol - match it to something they see, feel hear or do (based on personal abilities, needs and skills). They then are guided (or they guide) to place the symbol in an allocated space so as to communicate their ideas and ways of participating. You can also do this by using social media platform such as Skype, Zoom etc

It would be [very creative to explore how you might do this.](#)

[For example:](#)

**You :** "We pray with Christ, Who prays ?

**The person** " We do"

**You both then place your name or photo in the allotted space.**



## To share the prayer creatively you can,

Where possible and adhering to strict hygiene regulations, we suggest that you make a prayer space in the house/room with some pretty material and a symbol. It could be a place people look towards, then they pray. Alternatively, if you cannot go to the prayer space, take a photo of the prayer space and then you could each look at that photo, in your own space, as you pray

**Play a set piece of music when you start and finish** the prayer time, this will indicate that it is time for prayer and will help you to structure time together. Invite the person to pray, where you are at a distance, lift up an object (for example a picture of Jesus)

**Using the symbol sheets** Remember you are praying together, not teaching and not praying *at* a person. It is a time to be together.

1. Please read the symbols sheets, decide on some images you may need and make preparations.
2. Type or write all names of people praying. Cut these out ready for sticking, looking at or holding up.
3. Share the prayer sheet either by having a copy each, on a Tablet or via virtual means.
4. Look at the symbols and explain **'WE are making space to be with Jesus'**
5. Read out the words under the symbol and encourage explanation of what a person sees. If the person is nonverbal just read out what you see and leave space for body language.
6. Using your chosen methods invite the person to stick or hold up the symbol as you pray. For example, **'I pray for the world' ... Who prays?... 'Me'** (place image in the allotted space virtually, with glue or holding up'. If none of these are possible, you can place the symbols of people present and share **'we pray together'**

You can be as creative as you like. The symbols are there to encourage you to pray and have some pictures to help you join with people all over the world who are praying for well-being, for others and for God's love to be shared amongst us.



*WE hope that you will share Grace as you turn your gaze to God*