

# PRAYER IN HEALTHCARE

IRIS MAMIER, PHD, RN & CARLA GOBER-PARK, PHD, MPH, MS, RN

## INTRODUCTION

- Iris Mamier is an Associate Professor at LLU School of Nursing, has a longstanding interest in whole person care and the link between spirituality and health. For the past 15 years she has been involved in research on nursing spiritual care.
- Carla Gober Park is an Assistant Professor, LLU School of Religion; Director, Center for Spiritual Life and Wholeness; and Assistant Vice President for Spiritual Life and Mission at LLU. She has worked in the area of spirituality and whole person care, with special emphasis on the relation between spirituality, health, and medicine. She also is a filmmaker and writer.
- Please tell us your name, where you work, and what prompted your interest in this session?

## CASE SCENARIO

*"P. J., age 72, is getting prepared for surgery that will take place soon. You sense she is apprehensive and nervous. She asks, 'Nurse, will you pray for me?'"* If you were the nurse,

*What would you likely say or do?*

1).....  
.....  
.....

*If you agree to pray, how would you likely pray?*

2).....  
.....  
.....  
.....

*If you agree to pray, are there any questions you'd likely ask before engaging in the actual prayer?*

3).....  
.....  
.....

## OBJECTIVES OF THIS PRESENTATION

After this workshop, participants will be able:

- To identify elements of prayer in a professional healthcare context.
- To describe teaching methods that can be used to prepare professional healthcare providers for a situation where a patient requests prayer from them.
- To identify pitfalls for praying with patients in a professional context

## CHECK YOURSELF

Please review the prayer you formulated and check which components you included:

- Open:** *How did you open the prayer?*
  - How did you refer to the divine listener?*
  - How did you make the decision of how to refer to the divine?*
- Set the stage:** *Did you...*
  - ...identify the patient by name in your prayer?*
  - ...connect with patient's feelings or immediate experience or the activity of praying together?*
  - ...consciously step into God's presence/ signal that you have arrived?*
  - ...focus on God's attributes, express thanks and or praise?*
- Request:** *Did you link patient's perceived needs with how God can help? Did you, for example, ...*
  - ...formulate requests for God's action?*
  - ...ask for God's qualities (e.g., God's peace, love, presence, strength, calmness, comfort)?*
- Wrap-up:** *How did you prepare for closing? Did you ...*
  - ...thank God and/or praise God?*
  - ...make faith statements?*
- Close:** *How did you signal the end of your prayer? Did you ...*
  - ...pray "in the name of...."? – is this wording fitting for this particular patient?*
  - ...end by saying "Amen"?*

## EVALUATION

After this workshop...

*What are the three most important insights you are taking away from this session?*

1).....

2).....

3).....

*What changes will you make in the way you address prayer in healthcare with your students?*

.....  
.....  
.....

*What other questions were prompted by this workshop - what might you want to be addressed next time?*

.....  
.....  
.....