

The Men's Intercessory Prayer Group

The Men's Intercessory Prayer Group was formed about twenty years ago for the men of the parish to pray for the Church and for one another, to place their lives, problems and celebrations in the hands of Christ. They met on Tuesday evenings in the sacristy. Members of the group included Everette Alexander, Horace Young, Alan White, Barrie Fox, Brian Scott, Roger Spack and Dane Wray. Was it a sober, long faced, glum gathering? Far from it. It became a lively and sometimes humorous evening of fellowship. The men became good friends who felt at ease with one another, often expressing their fears about various circumstances in their lives and praying about them.



One evening Alan White expressed his own concern about his upcoming hip replacement operation, and asked Horace Young, a doctor and pediatrician, what he should expect from such an operation. Horace had a quiet and dry sense of humour and asked Alan if he was going to have anesthetic or not. "If not, you will hear the grinding sound of the saw cutting off the hip bone!" As he went on in great detail, Alan grew increasingly pale. "You will know it is finished when you hear it drop into the bucket!" I remember Alan telling me that he was not the only one with this reaction. He noticed my husband, Dane, with his head down also a shade paler than when he had entered the

room. "However", Horace added with a little smile, "I am sure if you ask for anesthetic the surgeon will be happy to arrange that for you." The room was full of smiles and chuckles at Alan's expense. All joking aside, they prayed for Alan's surgery, and they also visited him at various times during his recovery which they did for one another.

However, the story is not over. Alan loved telling me his favourite part. One Tuesday evening, Alan's first time back at the Prayer Group, after the surgery and quite recovered, he returned the favour! He walked into the sacristy, and placed a plastic bag in the middle of the table. The sound of it hitting the table with a thud drew the attention of all of the men. "I thought I would bring you a souvenir of my surgery." Alan peeled back the plastic bag to reveal a large rounded bone. It wasn't clean. It was covered with sinews and blood - quite revolting. Alan told me with delight how Dane had his head down once again between his knees feeling sick. I asked Alan how he managed to get his hipbone from the hospital. Then he had the greatest laugh. "It wasn't my hip bone. I stopped off at the grocery store on my way to the Church and asked the butcher for the biggest, ugliest bone he had. He asked what I wanted it for, and so I told him my story. The butcher liked the prank. He brought me this big knuckle bone, not cleaned and very smelly, and put in a plastic bag marked Proviso!"

Marilyn Wray