

DRAFT

**YEAR LEVEL** 3 & 4

**TITLE**  
**Prayer**

**STRAND** **PRAYER AND DISCERNMENT**

**SUGGESTED  
DURATION** 4 - 5 weeks

**ENDURING  
QUESTIONS** **Why is prayer important?**  
**How do I pray?**



## Unit Focus

In this unit students will be invited to deepen their relationship with God through prayer. They will have opportunities to be involved in different prayer experiences as individuals and in community. Students will begin to connect the purpose of different forms of prayer.

## Achievement Standards

By the end of Year 4, students should be able to:

**Students identify the need for prayer in their lives. They describe when and how they pray. Students engage in various forms of prayer. They explore the concept of prayer as a means by which people are able to grow in their relationship with God.**

## Unit Outcomes

By the end of the unit students should be able to:

1. Recognise that prayer involves a relationship with God and recall times they have experienced prayer.
2. Identify the different purposes and types of prayer within the Catholic Tradition.
3. Name some of the ways the Church honours Mary through prayer.

## Key Understandings for Students

- Prayer involves a relationship with God.
- There are many stories in Scripture that reflect the importance of prayer in the lives of God's people.
- We celebrate God's presence when we pray individually or in community.
- We, as a church, often pray to Mary.

## Student Context

As students move through Years 3 and 4, their understanding of themselves, their community and the wider world expands. They are less self-focussed and enjoy working collaboratively. Students in Years 3 and 4 have a better understanding of time and the sequence of events, therefore Scripture stories take on a new significance.

Involvement in prayer experiences that are related to the life of the student enables them to grow in their relationship with God, others and the world. Their involvement in liturgies through the preparation of sacred space, music, prayers, readings, role-plays, and so forth is very appropriate.

## Theological Background for Teachers

- Prayer involves a relationship with God.
- God is a mystery. We are called on a journey of discovery, of the many ways God is present in our everyday lives. We are always enfolded in God's love. What we need is to grow in awareness.
- In prayer we discover more and more of God's wonders.
- We discover God in the depth of our being, in other people and in the created world.
- We express our thoughts and feelings, joys and sorrows, hopes and dreams to God.
- As we grow in prayer we may reach the stage where silence and stillness become an important way in which we pray.
- When we pray as individuals, other people and the whole of creation are part of our prayer and we can become more aware of the world and its needs.
- Through prayer we are motivated to reach out in love to our fellow human beings.
- The Scriptures are a rich source of nourishment for personal and communal prayer.
- Prayer leads us to reflect on our relationship with God.
- The ultimate truth of human life is that all our searching leads to God. In St. Augustine's timeless words, "You have made us for yourself O God and our hearts are restless until they rest in you."
- In prayer we try to be attentive to the Spirit speaking in our heart.
- Throughout the ages the Church has prayed through Mary, to intercede for us to God.
- Refer also to Maurice Ryan. (2003) *Expressions, Prayer and Mary*, p32.

## Scripture

### Mk 1: 35

In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place and there he prayed.

### Lk 22: 41

Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed,

## Major Assessment Task

**With a partner, create a prayer liturgy to share with the class.**

- Choose a prayer of praise, thanks, forgiveness or petition.
- Select three visual elements to create your prayer focus.
- Invite people to pray.
- Choose an appropriate place to lead your prayer service.

Your presentation could take the form of a poster, a digital presentation book, an oral presentation, a mural etc.

## Suggested Teaching & Learning Experiences

### Focusing Activity:

To set the scene for this unit, establish a new sacred prayer space within the classroom and have it ready at the beginning of the day – establish a climate of wonder.

- 'Prayer Walk' to develop awareness by consciously looking, listening, wondering and appreciating the presence of God in nature. For example: a small plant struggling to grow through a crack on the cement; a particular shape of a cloud, tree, hill, flower; the sun / shadow (light / darkness) reflected on leaves, water, windows, pathways, ground; sketch the aspect of nature that spoke to you. Follow this activity with a guided reflection for entry in the prayer journal. Sample reflections may include:

*This aspect of nature appeals to me because...;*

*God I see you in this aspect of nature.....*

*In my life I am like this aspect of nature when....*

- Make an individual prayer journal to be used for reflection.
- Reflect on language and movement that occurs during prayer. Ask students to create a list of words and prayer starters, these can be added to throughout the unit.  
<https://www.togetheratonealtar.catholic.edu.au/craft/gestures-and-actions-assembly/>. This link has images and explanations of some of the actions that are used in communal prayer.
- Jesus prayed. In reference to particular passages eg Mark 1:35. Luke 22:41. Responding to the question prompts how, when and why. Students depict these in a visual arts form.

- End of Day Reflection: Gather, reflect on your own growth using a journal. (What did I do well today? Name one challenge for tomorrow.)
- Make a class big book of Prayers, devote a number of pages to particular types of prayers, prayers of sorrow, morning prayers, Mary prayers, prayers of thanks, blessing prayers, etc. Students write and illustrate these, for use during class prayer times.(Ryan, M. *Expressions*, Book 1 p34)
- Discuss how our prayers vary at different times in our lives and different times of the year. Use Godly Play, The Season of the Year, & The Church's Year to explore colours and symbols for different Season of prayer in the Church.
- Piggybacking: Writing a Psalm of praise – each child adds a line.
- Share experiences of friendship that have been times of joy and happiness for you. Write a prayer of blessing about this experience.
- Invite students to think about what is happening in their own lives and in the lives of other people all over the world. Provide them with some quiet time and then encourage each person to pray a spontaneous prayer.
- Lead students through a guided imagery exercise. Allow time for students to reflect on their experiences through small group discussion, journal writing or artwork.
- Use clay, paint, fibre, construction material to model the form / shape that comes to your mind when you think of something you are grateful for and want to give thanks for.
- Introduce and teach children the Hail Mary. ([Read pg 52 & 53 Beth Nolen, Prayer Strategies](#))
- In groups children create PowerPoint, movement, freeze frames, camera images representing the text for the Hail Mary.
- Song is a form of prayer. Select a song that is used often in liturgical celebrations in your school. In small groups ask students to make up either actions for the song, or illustrate each verse.

## Prayer Ritual

Using the class prayer space, create a roster for students to share their prayers from the class prayer book. Students could also create a prayer ritual to lead/present to the class during prayer time.

## Resources

- Godly Play - The Season of the Year
- Godly Play - The Church's Year
- The Church's Year 2D Masters