

Grade 6: January 9

Prayer Lesson 1: Introduction to Prayer

Opening Prayer

Thank you, Lord, for all the gifts you have given us, including the gift of prayer. Please open our minds and hearts as we begin to explore different ways of praying, which give us different ways to communicate and deepen our relationship with you. In your Son's name we pray. Amen.

Opening Discussion

- What did you think about praying the rosary a couple of weeks ago?
- Did you talk to your parents or family about it?
- Do you think you might like to pray the rosary again sometime? Why, or why not?
- Do you have a favorite prayer?
- Where do you pray most often?
- Why do you think prayer is important?
- Do you sometimes have a difficult time praying?
- What makes it difficult for you to pray?

Prayer in Scripture

- Read the following Bible passages and write down what they say about prayer:
 - Matthew 6: 9-13
 - Matthew 7: 7-11
 - Luke 6:12
- These are just a few of the many scripture passages that refer to prayer.
- The Bible is just one of the tools we can use to help us in prayer, but people often overlook using the Bible for guidance.
- The Bible is packed with praying people and we can learn from their examples.
- Sometimes we have to dig through Scripture for these prayer models and they are not always as obvious as the Matthew 6 passage that provides a prayer for us.
- But we can look for the stories of holy people and see how they prayed and handled different situations.
- Many Bible figures showed courage and faith, but others found themselves in situations that brought out qualities they did not know they had.

The Rosary

- While some people (even some of you!) feel praying the rosary can be long, or tedious, many people find comfort in the repetition of the prayers.
- They don't have to think too hard about what they are going to say – they know the prayers and can just say it.
- Some people really like feeling the beads so they don't have to count the number of times they are saying the prayers and they find their minds open to really begin to hear God speaking to them.

Mass

- Pope Paul VI said “The Mass is the most perfect form of prayer!” Next time you go to Mass, really take some time to pay attention to the prayers we are saying.
- Think about the Creed as you say it.
- After communion bow your head and block out everything around you and pray.

Daily Prayer

- Try to find a time every single day to pray.
 - For some people this is first thing in the morning.
 - For others it's right when they go to bed.
 - Some people pray in the shower, or on the ride to school.
- It doesn't have to be for a long time, but this week try to intentionally take at least a few minutes every day to pray.

If you're not sure what to pray for, or how to pray, here are few ideas:

1. **Pray the Our Father.** As you pray, open your heart to God. He knows you and knows your needs. Pray the Our Father with an open heart and God will hear your inner prayers that you can't yet put into words.

2. **PACT**

Remember this Acronym:

P-Petition. What do you need to ask God for?

A-Adoration. What do you want to praise God for? (this is a bit more like finding God in the world around us rather than being thankful for specific things in our own lives)

C-Contrition. What do you need to ask forgiveness for?

T-Thankfulness. What would you like to thank God for?

Start with at least one thing for each letter. Your prayer could be something like this:

Dear God,

Please help me with school, because I am having a hard time in Math.

I am grateful for the sunset, it was really beautiful tonight.

I'm sorry I yelled at my brother; he did not deserve that.

Thank you for my family. Amen.

3. Visualize

If you can't find the words, close your eyes and imagine a picture of what you need to pray for.

- It might be a person you know who is need of prayer.
- It might be yourself in a situation you're not sure how to handle.
- Once you have that picture in your mind, think of it in a giant bubble and let the bubble float up, up and up.
- Imagine it floating to heaven, straight up to God.
- God knows your heart and will understand what you need and are praying for!

Closing

- Did you learn anything today about prayer you did not know before?
- Which of the prayer tools (scripture, rosary, church) or ideas (Our Father, PACT, Visualize) sounds like something you'd like to try?
- How do you think you can fit a few minutes of prayer into your life each day this week?

On a piece of paper write PACT on the top of the page. Then write:

Petition: Please help me with _____

Adoration: I am grateful for _____

Contrition: I'm sorry that _____

Thankfulness: Thank you for _____