

# YEAR

6

# UNIT G

## PRAYERS IN THE LIVES OF FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST

### ABOUT THE UNIT

In this unit children gain a greater knowledge and understanding of the traditional prayers of the Church and some of the signs and actions associated with prayer. They will also study some prayers that are found in the scriptures and engage in the study of the Mass as the central prayer for Catholic Christians. The unit will be concluded with a study of some customs of prayer in other religions.

### WHERE THE UNIT FITS IN

The unit builds on many previous units where children have reflected on different styles of prayers and signs and symbols associated with prayer.

### PRIOR LEARNING

It would be helpful if the children have:

- knowledge of some traditional prayers
- an awareness of some customs and traditions associated with prayer.

### SKILLS

Research skills, ICT, dance, music, publishing skills, interpretation of actions and symbols.

### VOCABULARY

Prayer, traditional, Parable, Psalm, Magnificat, Eucharist, Mass.

### ASSESSMENT

At the end of this unit:

**Most children will** know a range of traditional prayers used by the Church and be able to discuss the meaning of the words contained in them. They will be able to write their own Psalm prayer and be able to identify important actions and gestures associated with prayer. They will know that the Mass is the central prayer of the Catholic faith. They will also know about some customs of prayer in other world religions.

A.T.1    A.T.2

4a    4a  
4b    4b  
4c    4c  
4d    4d

**Less able children will** know and be able to discuss some traditional Church prayers. They will be able to identify elements of prayer found in the Psalms and in the Magnificat. They will also be able to explain the meaning of some gestures and actions used in prayer.

3a    3a  
3b    3b  
3c    3c  
3d    3d

**More able children will** know a wide range of traditional prayers of the Church and be able to explain why Christians attach such importance to these prayers. They will identify images of God in scriptural prayers and be able to use some of these images in the prayers that they write. They will know and understand a wide range of actions and gestures associated with prayer. They will also be able to say why prayer is important to people of other world faiths.

5a    5a  
5b    5b  
5c    5c  
5d    5d

## PROGRAMME OF STUDY

**C12** A variety of prayers and prayer forms, formal and informal, used for personal and community prayer.

## TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Discuss with the children some reasons why prayer is considered as being important to Christians today.
- Brainstorm with the children names of different prayers that they have learnt over their time in primary school. These should include: Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be, I Confess, Meal time prayers, Angelus, Creed, Glory to God in the highest, Holy holy, Holy Spirit prayer, Eternal rest.
- Provide the children with copies of these prayers. In small groups they are to discuss the meaning of some of the words contained in the prayers.
- What do these prayers tell us about God? What are we asking for if we pray some of these prayers?
- Bring together the reflections and observations in a class discussion.
- Make a book of class prayers using the ones that the children have studied. Include some of their reflections on the meaning of the words contained in these prayers. This could be part of a class publishing project.
  
- Throughout his ministry Jesus taught people to pray and to turn to God in their need.
- Read *Mt. 7: 7-11*. What might this tell us about the importance of prayer?
- Read *Lk. 18: 1-8*. What image of prayer do we find in this Parable?
- In discussion ask the children if they think prayers always get answered. When we do not receive what we ask for, does this mean that God has not heard our prayer? Why might God refuse to give us something we ask for in prayer?
  
- The Scriptures are filled with examples of people who turned to God in their need and praised God for his goodness to them. One of the best examples is that of Mary in her Magnificat.
- Read the Magnificat from *Lk. 1: 46-56*.
- Why does Mary praise God?
- What has God done for her that is so marvellous? What has he done for other people that is so great?
- What images of God does Mary's prayer portray?
- Explain to the children that the Church uses this prayer every evening as part of its formal Evening prayer. Why do you think that it is given such importance?
- Play the children some musical recordings of the Magnificat.
- Learn a version to sing during collective worship.
- Using music set the prayer to dance.
  
- Revise with the children that the Psalms are a book of prayers of the Jewish people and that Jesus would have prayed many of these prayers.
- Explain to the children that the Church uses the Psalms each day as part of its formal prayer which is called the Divine Office or the Liturgy of the Hours. Throughout the world priest, monks, religious and other people pray the psalms and other prayers at different hours of the day.
- Read with the children a version of *Psalms 139*.
- What does this psalm tell you about the person and their relationship with God? What does it tell you about how God knows the person?
- Ask the children to identify the words and phrases that they like the best and explain why they might be important.
- Children to write their own version of *Psalms 139*.
- This could be set to music or explored through dance and drama.
  
- Ask the children to consider that prayer is not just about words, but is also about actions and the way in which we live our lives.
- Brainstorm with children some of the different actions and gestures that are used as part of prayer.
- These should include genuflection, blessing with holy water, kneeling, bowing your head, closing your eyes, sign of peace, making the sign of the cross at different times, silence, using your imagination to recall images from the life of Jesus, praying together with others.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

**C12** Of some traditional prayers; of the variety of forms of prayer in the Church.

- Know some traditional prayers of the Church.
- Understand and be able to discuss the meaning of some of the words and images found in these prayers.

- Know some of the teachings of Jesus about prayer.
- Understand that Jesus called his followers to value the practice of prayer and ask for God's help
- Be able to explain reasons why requests made in prayer might not be granted.

- Know that the Magnificat is Mary's song of praise to God.
- Understand why Mary might have praised God for his goodness.
- Be able to explore some of the images of God found in this prayer.

- Know that the Psalms are a form of prayer found in the Scriptures.
- Be able to create a Psalm prayer.

- Know a range of actions and gestures that are used in prayer.
- Understand some meanings attached to these actions.
- Be able to explain why it is important to use more than words in prayer.

## FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Can the children recall the foundations of the Our Father and the Hail Mary in Scripture?

Make sure that copies of these prayers are displayed in the class room.

Find other Psalms that are a form of prayer. Consider *Psalm 15 (16)*.

Make a visit to the church building. Why is this a special place of prayer?  
Provide children with an opportunity to explore the building and reflect on what is important in this building for the prayer life of God's people.

Write reflections about a visit to the church and what they appreciate about this building.

continued...

## PROGRAMME OF STUDY

## TEACHING STRATEGIES

**L1** Ways of prayer in other faith communities.

**L13** Respect for celebrations of other faith communities and an appreciation that prayer has a place in their life.

- Explore with the children some of the meaning that is attached to these actions (e.g. why do we genuflect to the tabernacle in church?)
- In what way do these actions and gestures help us to pray?
- Create a story-board booklet about some of the actions and gestures used in prayer and why we use them. This could be shared with younger children in the school.
  
- Explain to the children that for Catholic Christians the most important prayer is that of the celebration of Mass.
- Revise different elements of the Mass from previous learning in Year Three. Use pictures and missals to recall the important parts of the Mass (e.g. gathering together, listening to God's Word, celebrating the Eucharist, going out to bring Christ to the world).
- Why is each part of the Mass important?
- Explore some of the prayers that are used during the celebration of Mass and recall the meaning of the words.
- Explore the words of dismissal that are used at the celebration of Mass. "Go in peace to love and serve the Lord."
- What does this mean?
- How can we live out this command that is given to us at the end of our celebration of Mass.
- Explore with the children that prayer and the actions of our lives as Christians are two things that go hand in hand.
- Would life as a Christian have much meaning if you did one without the other?
  
- Research information about the customs and practices of prayer in the Muslim and Hindu religions.
- In what way does prayer form an important part of the lives of people of other faiths?

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

## FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

- Know that the Mass is the central prayer of Catholic Christians.
- Understand what takes place during the four parts of the Mass.
- Be able to make links between prayer and the action of daily living.

**L13** That other faith communities have a variety of forms of prayer.

- Know about some prayer customs in other world religions.
- Understand some reasons why prayer is important to people of other faiths.

Visit a place of worship of another world religion to explore their customs of prayer and worship.

## RELATED SCRIPTURE

*Mt. 7: 7-11* – Jesus' Teaching on Prayer

*Lk. 18: 1-8* – The Parable of the Unjust judge

*Lk. 1: 46-56* – The Magnificat

*Psalm 139* – Prayer to God who knows us

## OTHER LINKS

Many important music, dance drama and ICT links in this unit of work.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

- Create a class book of traditional prayers and reflections and use these during prayer time.
- Use a range of Psalms as a special prayer. Split the class in two and recite alternative verses. Psalm 139 is very important.
- Use different gestures and actions associated with prayer during class worship. These should include the sign of peace, sign of the cross, silence, and imaginative prayer.

## EVALUATION

**What went well?**

**Which areas of planning need to be developed/adapted next time?**

**What needs to be revisited/developed in a later unit?**