

CESL SOURCE OF LIFE

UNIT OUTLINE



YEAR LEVEL	Foundation
TITLE	WE CAN PRAY TO GOD
STRAND	Prayer and Discernment
SUGGESTED DURATION	5 weeks (10 lessons)
ENDURING QUESTIONS	Why is prayer important? How do we pray?

Unit Focus

In this unit the students will begin to understand different ways of praying. They will experience prayer as a way of talking and listening to God. They will discover that prayer can take many forms, something that they can be involved in at any time and in any place.

Achievement Standards

By the end of Foundation, students should be able to:

Students identify prayer as an expression of God's relationship with each of them and a way of responding to this relationship. Students describe various ways they can pray.

Unit Outcomes

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

1. ***Understand that they can talk to God at any time and in any place.***
2. ***Join in simple formal and informal prayers.***

Key Understandings for Students

- We can pray in many ways and in different places.
- A way to be friends with God is to talk and listen to God.
- When we talk and listen to God we pray.
- All people can pray.

Student Context

Students come to school with a wide range of cultural, religious and social backgrounds. Some will have little or no understanding of prayer, others will come from different faith traditions. Most students will have developed a love of story and their lives will have been given structure by routines, which on many occasions have taken on elements of ritual. They will enjoy the elements of ritual associated with prayer such as the Sign of the Cross. They are beginning to learn to separate fantasy from reality and to understand the meaning behind symbols. When a candle is lit to signify God's presence during prayer time, this should be explained to the children. This will lead to an understanding of symbol and ritual in prayer.

While many students are very self-oriented at this level they begin to have an awareness of the needs of others. Their spontaneous prayer will not only relate to their pets and other personal needs but also to family members who need God's help in some way. It is important to recognise the students' tendency to imitate the expressions and behaviour of significant people, especially teachers. This is the time, too, for a strong response to the students' natural appreciation of rituals and symbols, and their liking for repetitive stories, poems, rhythmic sounds and movements.

Victorian Curriculum Capabilities

For further information on the Victorian Curriculum Capabilities and their links within the Source of Life Religious Education Curriculum please refer to page 72 in the Source of Life Core Document.

Theological Background for Teachers

- "Prayer can be described or approached in innumerable ways. Libraries have been written about the ways of prayer. But one thing is common to most forms of prayer: it is. Explicitly or incidentally, a striving for a deeper level of awareness-awareness of myself and of the mystery in which I live. The gospel assures us that the mystery of our life is in the hands of a faithful and loving Father. It may take time and a little practice, but every person has an inbuilt ability to come to this realisation - that is, to pray" (Doherty, 1989.)
- "Prayer is the experience of our relationship with God. It is a mysterious, personal, and sacred experience, never the same. We are all different. And God's relationship with each one is different ... God is at the heart of everything. We can be alone and pray or we can be alone and not pray. Prayer is an action of being in touch with God at the heart of our silence or at the heart of our words; at the heart of our solitude or at the heart of our activity. Prayer is a level of awareness." (Devine, 1988)
- "Prayer is a conversation between hearts. It includes the traditional praise and gratitude, an occasional scream for help, a fervent petition now and then, and some hard-nosed bargaining for a better deal. But it does not stop there. It encompasses the confiding of secrets, the admission of fears, and ecstatic dance. When you start a conversation with 'Abba' anything is liable to happen." (Doherty, 1989.)
- "Through his life, Jesus illustrated his teaching about prayer. He prayed in times of joy and sorrow; before important events and in thanksgiving. He prayed in public and in private, using both vocal prayer and mental prayer. He was drawn to prayer because of his relationship with God." (Sharing Our Story K-12, CEO Parramatta. 1991. p 250).

Scripture

The Three Worlds of the Text

	<p>FEATURES</p> <p>What is going on at the time the text was written?</p> <p>What is going on in the text?</p> <p>What meaning can we make of this text today?</p>	<p>Mk 1:35-39 (NRSV) <i>In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place and there he prayed.</i></p>
<p>The world behind the text is a <i>window</i>. Through this window we look to the <i>past</i>, to the time of the <i>author</i> who produced the text, and to the time in which the text was set.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Context: During the time of Jesus, it was customary for devout Jews to engage in regular prayer. Jewish tradition emphasized prayer as a way to maintain a close relationship with God. Solitude in prayer was a common practice among spiritual leaders and prophets. • Cultural Context: Jesus' practice of seeking a solitary place for prayer reflects the Jewish tradition of finding quiet and isolated spaces to commune with God. This practice was essential for spiritual leaders to gain strength, wisdom, and guidance. • Social Context: Jesus was at the beginning of his public ministry, which included teaching, healing, and addressing the needs of many people. The demands of his ministry made it necessary for him to seek moments of solitude for spiritual renewal and connection with God.
<p>The world of the text (also known as the world <i>within</i> the text) is a <i>picture</i>. This picture shows us the text as it is and what it says <i>now</i> through its literary features. The general approach is literary.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative: Mark 1:35 is part of the larger narrative describing the beginning of Jesus' ministry in Galilee. The previous verses detail Jesus' healing activities, demonstrating the busy and demanding nature of his work. • Structure: This verse serves as a pivotal point in the narrative, illustrating Jesus' pattern of retreating for prayer amidst his active ministry. It highlights the importance of balancing action with spiritual reflection. • Literary Elements: The verse uses vivid imagery to set the scene ("In the morning, while it was still very dark") and emphasizes Jesus' deliberate actions ("he got up and went out to a deserted place"). The phrase "and there he prayed" succinctly captures the purpose of his solitude.
<p>The world in front of the text is a <i>mirror</i>. In this mirror the <i>reader</i> sees oneself within the text, and sees other readers, the believing Church over many years, challenged to respond to it now and into the <i>future</i>. The general approach is theological ('faith seeking understanding').</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Application: For modern readers, this verse encourages the practice of setting aside time for personal prayer and reflection, even amidst busy schedules. It serves as a model for prioritizing spiritual health and connection with God. • Spiritual Practice: The verse underscores the importance of solitude in prayer for spiritual renewal and guidance. It challenges believers to seek regular moments of quietness to nurture their relationship with God. 	

Scripture

The Three Worlds of the Text

	FEATURES	Lk 22:41 (NRSV) <i>Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed.</i>
<p>The world behind the text is a <i>window</i>. Through this window we look to the <i>past</i>, to the time of the <i>author</i> who produced the text, and to the time in which the text was set.</p>	<p>What is going on at the time the text was written?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Context: As a Jew, Jesus belonged to the Jewish faith. Prayer was a critical aspect of this tradition. Jews prayed via The Torah and in The Temple and Synagogue.
<p>The world of the text (also known as the world <i>within</i> the text) is a <i>picture</i>. This picture shows us the text as it is and what it says <i>now</i> through its literary features. The general approach is literary.</p>	<p>What is going on in the text?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literary Elements: Jesus is portrayed as a man at prayer multiple times in all 4 Gospels. Jesus is the main character who moves from praying alone to being swamped by crowds, a typical Markan feature. In the Gospels Jesus prays before significant ministry experience.
<p>The world in front of the text is a <i>mirror</i>. In this mirror the <i>reader</i> sees oneself within the text, and sees other readers, the believing Church over many years, challenged to respond to it now and into the <i>future</i>. The general approach is theological ('faith seeking understanding').</p>	<p>What meaning can we make of this text today?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Application: This text does not tell us how to pray specifically except for its significant note regarding solitude—an essential to be able to listen to the Spirit moving within us. Let us try and build solitude into our prayer lives today. It is noteworthy that Jesus is praying outside. Today, we too can pray anywhere, in particular in and with creation.

Major Assessment Task

Lesson 5 – Image of God

Major Assessment Task – Marking Rubric					
Criteria	Well Below	Below	At	Above	Well Above
Identify name for God	Is not able to choose a name for God.	Chooses a name that is not appropriate.	Chooses a name that is adequate.	Chooses a name for God that is appropriate.	Chooses a name for God that is most appropriate and clear.
Create a matching image and write a descriptor	Is not able to create a matching image.	Creates a minimal matching image.	Creates a matching image that is adequate.	Creates a substantial matching image accompanied by a description in words.	Creates a substantial matching image accompanied by a description in words.

Praxis Movements				
Naming	Reflecting Critically	Accessing Christian Story and Vision	Understanding and Integrating	Responding
Naming life experience of self, others and world.	Critically reflecting on life experience.	Teaching and learning about the scriptures, Church Tradition and liturgical experience.	Integrating reflection and life experience with Christian Story and Vision.	Responding in order to authentically live out the Christian Story and Vision.
<i>Share experiences that are familiar to students.</i>	<i>Probe and reflect to understand our experience more deeply.</i>	<i>Present Scripture and Tradition related to the Topic.</i>	<i>Apply Scripture, Tradition to our own lives.</i>	<i>Decide what can be done. How can it be lived?</i>

Lesson 1 hour 15 min duration	Learning Intention and Success Criteria	Unit overview	Shared Christian Praxis Movement
Lesson 1	<p>LI- I will understand the meaning of the term – precious.</p> <p>SC- I can identify a precious person in my life.</p> <p>SC- I can make a link between precious people in my life and the person of Jesus.</p>	<p>Focusing activity</p> <p>Lesson overview: In this lesson students will be introduced to the notion of preciousness. They will identify precious people in their life and then be introduced to Jesus as a special person in their lives who we can form a relationship with and to whom we can pray.</p> <p>Lesson materials/resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paint and paper • prayer space items- candle, bible cross, green liturgical cloth <p>Lesson overview: Ensure students understand the meaning of the word precious and have identified a precious person in their life and linked this with the person of Jesus.</p>	Focusing activity
Lesson 2	<p>LI – I will learn about sacred space.</p> <p>SC – I can identify symbols that make up a sacred space.</p> <p>SC – I can explain the meaning of the symbols that make up a sacred space.</p>	<p>Lesson overview: In this lesson students will be introduced to the class prayer space and the significant Catholic symbols that contribute to it.</p> <p>Lesson materials/resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • green liturgical cloth • Bible • candle and matches • hand-held cross (if there are Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander students in your class you may like to consider adding an Aboriginal symbol to the prayer space). • large cards to display key words <p>Review of Learning: Students will be able to understand what a sacred space is the symbols that contribute to it alongside their meaning.</p>	<p>Accessing the Christian Vision</p> <p>Naming</p> <p>Reflecting Critically</p>
Lesson 3	<p>LI - I will understand that we can pray anywhere.</p> <p>SC - I can identify places we can pray.</p> <p>SC - I can participate in meditation as prayer.</p>	<p>Lesson overview: In this lesson, students will be introduced to ways of praying and experience one particular form of prayer. They will also be introduced to the concept of silence and listening within to the voice of God and their own heart space.</p> <p>Lesson materials/resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cards for word wall. <p>Review of Learning: Ensure students understand that we can pray in various places and that our relationship with God is central to prayer.</p>	Reflecting Critically

<p>Lesson 4</p>	<p>LI - I will understand that I can experience many feelings during life.</p> <p>SC - I identify core feelings through life.</p> <p>SC – I can trust Jesus and pray to him anytime, anywhere.</p>	<p>Lesson overview: In this lesson, students will learn about the importance of praying out of our life experience and being able to identify the various feelings that may become apparent during prayer. They will also learn that we can pray specifically to Jesus who is our spiritual friend in whom we can trust.</p> <p>Lesson materials/resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • crayons • candle, cross and green liturgical cloth <p>Review of Learning: Ensure students understand that our feelings are caused by certain life experiences and that we can trust Jesus in life and pray to him as a friend.</p>	<p>Naming</p> <p>Reflecting Critically</p>
<p>Lesson 5</p>	<p>LI – I am beginning to understand that there are many images of God.</p> <p>SC - I can articulate a few images of God.</p> <p>SC - I can articulate my favourite image of God.</p>	<p>Lesson overview: In this lesson, students will explore the many images of our God who is the giver of life, love and compassion. Students will refine their own image of God. Students will understand that human beings can experience God anywhere, in particular, through creation and relationships with other human beings (includes major assessment task).</p> <p>Lesson materials/resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bark, leaves, sticks, stones (or other) • crayons <p>Review of Learning: Ensure students understand that there are many images of God who is the giver of life. Ensure students can articulate their own image of God.</p>	<p>Accessing the Christian Story and Vision</p>
<p>Lesson 6</p>	<p>LI - I am beginning to understand the many places including the church where we can experience God.</p> <p>SC - I know that the church is made up of several special elements.</p> <p>SC - I know what my favourite part of the church is.</p>	<p>Lesson overview: During this lesson, students will explore the many different places we can pray including the parish church.</p> <p>Lesson materials/resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coloured paper and glue • the local parish church (if available) • poster paper • <i>Microsoft Paint</i> program • blank A4 paper <p>Review of Learning: Ensure that students know that God can be experienced in many places including the church and that the church is comprised of many special elements.</p>	<p>Accessing the Christian Story and Vision</p>
<p>Lesson 7</p>	<p>LI - I will understand that prayer was important to Jesus.</p>	<p>Lesson overview: During this lesson, students will learn about how important prayer was to Jesus. They will learn that Jesus prayed to God many times, in many places.</p> <p>Lesson materials/resources:</p>	<p>Accessing Christian Story and Vision / Responding</p>

	<p>SC - I can successfully participate I Godly Play session.</p> <p>SC- I can use resources to respond to a Godly Play session.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Godly Play responding materials (sticks, wool, Lego, leaves, or other) <p>Review of Learning: Invite students to share what they learnt about Jesus at prayer.</p>	
Lesson 8	<p>LI – I will participate in a meditation Mk 1:35-39.</p> <p>SC - I can articulate the beginning, middle and end of this story.</p> <p>SC - I can identify a special place I would like to pray.</p>	<p>Lesson overview: In this lesson, students will deepen their knowledge of Jesus at prayer through meditation outside.</p> <p>Lesson materials/resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> meditation Mk 1:35-39 (Appendix 2) appropriate outdoor space for prayer pastels (or other) <p>Review of Learning: Ensure students can identify their special place for prayer and the beginning, middle and end of Mk 1:35-39.</p>	Understanding and Integrating
Lesson 9	<p>LI - I will participate in the creation of a thanksgiving and asking prayer.</p> <p>SC - I can recite the sign of the cross prayer.</p> <p>SC – I can write the sign of the cross prayer in my book.</p>	<p>Lesson overview: In this lesson, students will learn about 2 important types of prayer – thanksgiving and asking prayers. They will also learn about the sign of the cross.</p> <p>Lesson materials/resources:</p> <p>Review of Learning: Ensure students can recite the prayer and have copied it correctly.</p>	Accessing the Christian Vision
Lesson 10	<p>LI - I will participate in Christian meditation.</p> <p>SC - I can identify what I like about prayer.</p> <p>SC - I can read out the key words related to prayer and describe what they mean.</p>	<p>Lesson overview: In this lesson, students will participate in Christian meditation. They will also demonstrate what they have learnt about prayer throughout the unit.</p> <p>Lesson materials/resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendix 3 – Christian meditation Signing Bowl (for meditation) word bank words <i>Microsoft Paint</i> program <p>Review of Learning: Ensure students can identify what they have learnt about prayer and can participate in a meditation.</p>	Responding

Prayer Ritual

I do:

Teacher: Let us now gather for prayer in a circle on the floor. Who would like to bring over our items from our prayer table and place them prayerfully on the ground, then we will begin with a song?

Action: *A few students create the sacred space.*

We do:

Teacher: Let us now make the sign of the cross, close our eyes and breathe quietly, coming into God's presence, breathing in God's love and breathing out any concerns or pain that you carry.

Action: *Students respond accordingly.*

You do:

Teacher: Now consider something you would like to thank God for from our learning during this unit. Would anyone like to share their prayer?

Action: *Students choose to share and complete the prayer with 'Amen'.*

Resources

- green liturgical cloth
- Bible
- candle and matches
- hand-held cross (if there are Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander students in your class you may like to consider adding an Aboriginal symbol to the prayer space)
- large cards to display key words
- crayons
- bark, leaves, sticks, stones (or other)
- coloured paper and glue
- the local parish church (if available)
- poster paper
- *Microsoft Paint* program
- Godly Play responding materials (sticks, wool, Lego, leaves – or other)
- Godly Play script – **Appendix 1**
- **Appendix 3** – Christian meditation
- Singing Bowl (for meditation)

Curriculum Adjustments

Student	Adjustment