Level: 3
Title: PRAYER
Strand: CHRISTIAN PRAYER:
Relationship with God, personal and communal, listening and responding to God’s Spirit.

Suggested Duration: 4 weeks

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.

Level Outcome
By the end of Level Three students should be able to:

* Name different forms of prayer and liturgical celebrations.

Unit Outcomes
By the end of this unit students should be able to:

1. Recall experiences that enriched their understanding of the presence of God in their lives.
2. Recognise the need for prayer in their own lives.
3. Name some of the ways the Church honours Mary through prayer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRAND</th>
<th>DOCTRINAL CONCEPTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>God</td>
<td>4. God calls us to reach out in love to each other.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scripture</td>
<td>1. The Scriptures are intended to make us think and reflect about our lives.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. In our prayer and worship we listen to the Scriptures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christian Prayer</td>
<td>1. People celebrate and pray together at different times and in different ways.</td>
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<td>3. When we pray together we celebrate God’s presence.</td>
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<td>4. We grow in relationship with God through prayer.</td>
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<td>5. We honour and celebrate Mary through prayers, feasts and seasons of the Church’s liturgical year.</td>
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<td>CATECHISM REFERENCE</td>
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<td>1706, 1822</td>
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<td>141, 2653, 2654</td>
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<td>2660, 2691, 2720</td>
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<td>2558, 2565</td>
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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 Church, often pray through Mary, to intercede for us to God.

Curriculum Links - VELS

Victorian Essential Learning Standards
The unit Prayer can be used to assess a range of VELS. The table below gives examples of how Level 3 standards could be assessed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strand</th>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Key elements of Standards Students….</th>
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<tr>
<th>Physical, Personal and Social Learning</th>
<th>Interpersonal Development</th>
<th>Building Social Relationships</th>
<th>Interdisciplinary Learning</th>
<th>Information and Communications Technology</th>
<th>ICT for Visual Thinking</th>
<th>ICT For Creating</th>
<th>Thinking</th>
<th>Reasoning, processing and inquiry</th>
<th>Creativity</th>
<th>Reflection, evaluation and meta-cognition</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-“demonstrate respect for others and exhibit appropriate behaviour for maintaining friendships with other people. They support each other by sharing ideas and materials, offering assistance, giving appropriate feedback and acknowledging individual differences. They work with others to reduce, avoid and resolve conflict.”</td>
<td>-“cooperate with others in teams for agreed purposes, taking roles and following guidelines established within the task. They describe and evaluate their own contribution and the team’s progress towards the achievement of agreed goals.”</td>
<td>-“contribute to the development and support of class rules and participate in school celebrations and commemorations of important events. They describe some of the roles and purposes of groups in the community. They work with other students to identify a local issue and plan possible actions to achieve a desired outcome.”</td>
<td>-“use ICT tools to list ideas, order them into logical sequences, and identify relationships between them. Students retrieve their saved visualising thinking strategies and edit them for use in new, but similar situations. They explain how these strategies can be used for different problems or situations.”</td>
<td>-“create information products to assist in problem solving in all areas of the curriculum. With minimal assistance, students use ICT tools to capture and save images. They use simple editing functions to manipulate the images for use in their products.”</td>
<td>-“collect information from a range of sources to answer their own and others’ questions. They question the validity of sources when appropriate. They apply thinking strategies to organise information and concepts in a variety of contexts, including problem solving activities. They provide reasons for their conclusions.”</td>
<td>-“apply creative ideas in practical ways and test the possibilities of ideas they generate. They use open-ended questioning and integrate available information to explore ideas.”</td>
<td>-“identify strategies they use to organise their ideas, and use appropriate language to explain their thinking. They identify and provide reasons for their point of view, and justify changes in their thinking.”</td>
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Student Context

As students move through Level Three, their understanding of themselves, their community and the wider world expands. They are less self-focussed and enjoy working collaboratively. Level Three students 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 and role-plays is very appropriate.

Theological Background for Teachers

- Prayer involves a relationship with God.
- God is 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.
- Prayer is the essence of a relationship and open communication with God in daily life. Prayer flows from life and is attuned to God, the originator of all creation, the one continually calling us into love and relationship. Prayer is the response of faith (2561), faith that engenders our lives with the knowledge of God's continual and energised love for us. Doyle, T. et al “Prayer: Communicating with God,” in Handing on the Tradition: A guide to the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Blackburn, Victoria: Victorian Printing Prop Ltd, 1994, 163-169.

Scripture

Teacher References (NRSV)

Isa 42:6-7

I am the LORD, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I
have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.

1 Kings 19:11-13 *Elijah Meets God at Horeb*
He said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by." Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

Student References

Ps 147:1, 4-8, 11, 14 *In Praise of God the Almighty*
Praise the LORD!
How good it is to sing praises to our God; for he is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting. He determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names. Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure. The LORD lifts up the downtrodden; he casts the wicked to the ground. Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving; make melody to our God on the lyre. He covers the heavens with clouds, prepares rain for the earth, makes grass grow on the hills. The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his steadfast love. He grants peace within your borders; he fills you with the finest of wheat.

Ps 105:1-5 *God and His People*
O give thanks to the LORD, call on his name, make known his deeds among the peoples. Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wonderful works. Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice. Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually. Remember the wonderful works he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he uttered,

Ps 61: 1-4 *A Prayer for Protection*
Hear my cry, O God; listen to my prayer. From the end of the earth I call to you, when my heart is faint. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I; for you are my refuge, a strong tower against the enemy. Let me abide in your tent forever, find refuge under the shelter of your wings.

Mk 1: 35 *Jesus prayed*
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 *Jesus prayed*
Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed.

Mt 6: 9-13 *The Lord's Prayer*
"Pray then in this way: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one."

Lk 1:36-46 *Mary greets Elizabeth*
And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.’ Then Mary said, ‘Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.’ Then the angel departed from her. In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.
Assessment tasks for this unit may include:

**Outcome 1** Students recall experiences that enriched their understanding of the presence of God in their lives.
- Express in artistic or information technology form, a time you may have experienced the presence of God in your life.

**Outcome 2** Students recognise the need for prayer in their own lives.
- Students use a graphic organiser to show when they pray during each day and at special times eg when I need help, when I want to thank God.

**Outcome 3** Students name some of the ways the Church honours Mary through prayer.
- Identify the origins of the Hail Mary in Scripture and learn the Hail Mary to recite from memory

N.B Outcome 3 is suitable for reporting in the dimension of Knowledge and Understanding.

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**Suggested Teaching & Learning Experiences**

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

- Make an individual prayer journal to be used for reflection, throughout this unit and could be continued throughout the year.
- Provide an opportunity for prayer where students are invited to recall and reflect on the presence of God in their lives
- Develop breathing exercises that the students can use to become still, quiet, receptive, ready to listen and reflect.
- Reflect on how, when and why Jesus prayed in reference to particular passages eg Mark 1:35. Luke 22:41. Depict these in a visual art forms.
- ‘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….*

- To stimulate discussion and share ideas the students engage in a Piggybacking strategy (refer to icon in Planning Tool) Students makes statements about what prayer is to them, including concepts of how, when, where, why etc.
- Gathering Prayer Time: Children express; “Today I feel…” (This enables children to be themselves before God and each other.)
- End of Day Reflection: Gather, reflect on own growth using journal. (What did I do well today? Name one challenge for tomorrow.)
- Investigate body language and the use of gestures for prayer. Put gestures to a morning and afternoon prayer/ song.
- Use hands to bless themselves and/or one another at the end of the day.
- Investigate different forms of prayer prayers of sorrow, morning prayers, Mary prayers, prayers of thanks, blessing prayers, etc
- Re investigate the different forms of prayer ie sorrow, thanks, blessing etc. Students, working in groups complete a graphic organiser and then share with the whole class.
Create prayer wheel. (Ryan, M. *Expressions*, Book 1 p47)

Use newspaper headings/pictures to encourage spontaneous prayer for our world.

Use photos, things of nature, the work of our hands, prayerfully reflect on the gift of sight and/or other senses.

Share experiences of friendship that have been times of joy and happiness for you. Write a prayer of blessing about this experience. Ref: Nolen, B. *Prayer Strategies* 2nd Edition p 73-75.

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 imagination exercise. Allow time for students to reflect on their experiences through small group discussion, journal writing or artwork.

Use clay, paint, fibre, construction material model the form/shape that comes to your mind when you think of God.

Regular guided reflection and prayer in the classroom to internalise the experience of praying.

Whole class prayer celebrations led by children.

Discuss the idea of asking the saints to intercede for us and relate it to how we pray through Mary.

Introduce and teach children some traditional prayer/s to Mary eg Hail Mary, The Rosary. Discuss with the students the scriptural origins of these formal prayers

Use of Scripture for prayer – meditation, reflection, psalms, prayer service

Involve children (in groups) in prayer preparation, setting up of prayer table, morning prayer, emphasise the need for appropriate use of symbol and colour ie. Liturgical year.

To create variety and maintain interest the following could assist children to grow in their relationship with God:

- Oil burners/incense.
- Reflective music.
- Paintings and other works of art.
- Religious symbols.
- Water features.
- Banners.
- Mantras (short prayer phrases that are repeated in time with your breathing).
- Mandalas (circle prayer)
- Journalling
- Movement
- PowerPoint prayers/reflections
- Silences

List the different names we have for Mary eg Our Lady Help of Christians

Lk 1:36-46 To PREPARE TO HEAR the Word – explore how God acts towards those who trust God, the faith of Elizabeth and Mary, and the relationship between the two women. Identify the children carried in the womb of each of the women and their role in the salvation of the world.

Lk 1:36-46 To ENCOUNTER the Word after reading the text, students record Elizabeth’s words of greeting to Mary and identify the relationship of these words to the Hail Mary

Lk 1:36-46 To RESPOND to the Word – students write their own litany of praise for Mary, invite students to suggest titles or attributes of Mary and compose these into a litany e.g. Mother of God We honour and praise you

Lk 1:36-46 To RESPOND to the Word - In groups children create PowerPoint, movement, freeze frames, and camera images representing the text for the Hail Mary.

Lk 1:36-46 To RESPOND to the Word – Learn the Hail Mary
- Lk 1:36-46 To RESPOND to the Word – sing an appropriate Mary song e.g. Burland, J. A song for Mary

**Resources**

For resources to support this unit, refer to the online planning tool. For additional resources, refer to the Resource Centre Catalogue: [http://www.ceoballarat.catholic.edu.au](http://www.ceoballarat.catholic.edu.au) and follow links to Resource Centre.