Level: 4
Title: PEOPLE OF PRAYER
Strand: CHRISTIAN PRAYER:  
  Relationship with God: personal and communal, listening and responding to God’s Spirit.

Suggested Duration: 6 weeks

Unit Focus
This unit builds on the students’ understanding of prayer as a relationship and deepens their appreciation of Christian prayer prior to examining prayers from other cultures. In this unit students explore:
  ● Jesus as a person of prayer in the Jewish tradition.
  ● The place of prayer in the life of Saint Paul OR Saint Peter;
  ● The link between prayer and action in our daily lives.

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

Describe the many forms of prayer that facilitate the movement of the Spirit in our relationship with God.

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

1. Experience prayer and develop an appreciation for the place of prayer in their lives.
2. Identify various kinds of prayer: thanksgiving, praise, sorrow, petition and adoration.
3. Explore some of Jesus’ prayer experiences and the place of prayer in the life of Peter or Paul as Jews, as outlined in Scripture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRAND</th>
<th>DOCTRINAL CONCEPTS</th>
<th>CATECHISM REFERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scripture</td>
<td>2. The Christian Scriptures teach us about Jesus and the early Christian communities.</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. The Hebrew Scriptures tell the story of the people of Israel’s covenant relationship with God.</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Prayer</td>
<td>1. In our communities we experience various kinds of prayer: thanksgiving, petition, praise, sorrow and adoration.</td>
<td>2626-2643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Prayer is expressed in different ways through music, movement and meditation.</td>
<td>2599-2607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Jesus’ prayer to God shows us how to pray.</td>
<td>2601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Through prayer the Holy Spirit enables us to open ourselves to acknowledging our sinfulness and experiencing the healing, reconciling power of God’s love.</td>
<td>2623, 2670</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key Understandings for Students
● The Scriptures show that God’s people prayed often and in a variety of ways.
● The people acknowledged their need for God and their belief in a God who cared for them.
● The Scriptures contain examples of many forms of prayer, some of these include: praise, petition, sorrow, and thanksgiving.
● The Scriptures are a guide enabling us to ponder, imagine, question and wonder about Jesus and his experience of prayer.
● Jesus’ prayer reflects his intimacy with God.
● Before important events in his life, Jesus withdrew to spend time in prayer.
● In times of prayer we become more conscious of the ways that God’s spirit is active in our lives.
Curriculum Links - VELS

Victorian Essential Learning Standards

The People of Prayer unit can be used to assess a range of VELS. The table below gives examples of how Level 4 standards could be assessed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strand</th>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Key elements of Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inter disciplinary</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Listening, Viewing and</td>
<td>“students summarise ideas and organise ideas and information logically and clearly in a range of presentations”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td>Responding</td>
<td>“identify features of an effective presentation and adapt elements of their own presentation to reflect them.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Presenting</td>
<td>“students summarise and organise ideas and information, logically and clearly in a range of presentations.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking</td>
<td>Reasoning, processing and</td>
<td></td>
<td>“develop their own questions for investigation. They collect relevant information from a range of sources and make judgements about its worth”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>inquiry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflection, evaluation and</td>
<td></td>
<td>“use a broad range of thinking processes and tools and reflect on and evaluate their effectiveness.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>meta-cognition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Curriculum Framework Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 4</th>
<th>Level 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prayer</td>
<td>People of Prayer</td>
<td>Communities at Prayer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Context

By Level Four, children see themselves as members of a community that extends well beyond their family and immediate surroundings. Many will be looking for adults, other than (and as well as) their parents, with whom they can identify so it is an appropriate stage to offer them examples of people who model a rich prayer life such as Jesus, Paul and Peter.

Students will bring with them to this unit a number of both positive and negative experiences of prayer methods. Their image of God may well be a childhood one which will now be found to be inadequate. In searching for a more personal image of God, children will often be open to different experiences of prayer such as mantras, meditations, music and praying through art and craft.

Theological Background for Teachers

- Prayer is an expression of our personal relationship with God.
- Times of stillness and silence help us to deepen this relationship and enable reflection to take place.
- Prayer is a means of encountering God as creator, healer, forgiver and lover in our everyday lives.
- Jesus and the early Christian community prayed within the context of the Jewish tradition.
- Jesus invites us to enhance our relationship with him through prayer.
- There are different ways in which people engage in prayer. There are times for personal prayer and prayer with the community.
- There are four basic types of Christian prayer: petition, praise, thanksgiving and sorrow. Prayer of petition; asks something of God; it centres on human needs. Prayer of praise; gives glory to God for God's own sake and acknowledges all that God has created. Prayer of thanksgiving; expresses gratitude, humility, and awareness of God's greatness. Prayer of sorrow; focuses on human failures and expresses contrition, but also focuses on God's ever-present offer of mercy and forgiveness to the sinful human community. (Ekstrom, 1995, *The New Concise Catholic Dictionary*, p. 207)
- There are times when the response to God's presence is one of song, movement, word, art, poetry or silence.
Teacher and Student References (NRSV)

Lk 6:12  *Jesus Chooses the Twelve Apostles*
Now during those days he went out to the mountain to pray; and he spent the night in prayer to God. And when the day came, he called his disciples and he chose twelve of them whom he also named apostles.

Mk 1:35  *A Preaching Tour in Galilee*
In the morning while it was still dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed

Mt 6:9-15  *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.

For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Lk 11:1-4  *Jesus’ Teaching on Prayer*
When Jesus had finished praying, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord teach us to pray, just as John taught his followers to pray.” So Jesus told them, “Pray in this way: ‘Father, help us to honour your name. Come and set up your kingdom. Give us each day the food we need. Forgive our sins as we forgive everyone who has done wrong to us. And keep us from being tempted.”

Suggested Assessment Tasks

**Assessment tasks for this unit may include:**

**Outcome 1**  Students experience prayer and develop an appreciation for the place of prayer in their lives.
- Create an information sheet highlighting at least one community prayer for: Christianity, Islam and Judaism.
  OR
- Create a prayer experience to celebrate the ways God has been present in your life, using a variety of forms of creative expression to reflect this understanding.

**Outcome 2**  Students identify various kinds of prayer: thanksgiving, praise, sorrow, petition and adoration.
- Prepare a booklet about prayer: create a chapter heading for different types of prayer – (i.e. praise, sorrow, etc.) – and collect/write samples of prayers for each chapter.

**Outcome 3**  Students explore some of Jesus’ prayer experiences and the place of prayer in the life of Peter or Paul as Jews, as outlined in Scripture.
- Using the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, find out about where and when Jesus prayed and who he prayed with?
- Learning Journal:
  - What do we know about Paul or Peter as a person of prayer?
  - What do we wonder?
  - What did we learn about prayer by learning about Paul’s or Peter’s experience?

N.B Outcome 2 lends itself to reporting in the dimension of Knowledge and Understanding
Focusing Activity:

Read John Marsden’s ‘Prayer for the 21st Century’ Create a new/different prayer space in the classroom to draw attention to the visual symbols we use to help us to pray.


- Brainstorm examples from Jesus’ life that show how he was a Jew steeped in the Jewish Tradition. (e.g. Jesus prayed in the Temple)


- Make an object from the Jewish tradition and bring to a prayer liturgy which includes, for example, reading a psalm scroll and the account of Jesus as a boy in the Temple, and a recommitment to our call to be people of prayer through a sprinkling and blessing ritual. Refer Ryan, M. (2003). *Expressions: Book 5*. (Topic 4: Jesus the Jew)

- Reflect on Paul’s prayers for different communities:
  - Phil 1:3-11 (thanksgiving)
  - Phil 4:4-8 (petition)
  - Eph 3:14-21 (growth)
  - Eph 3:20-21 (praise)

- Find a map of Paul’s journeys and name the places he visited. Refer Ryan, M. (2003). *Expressions: Book 7* (p.92)

- Write a letter to your community as though you are Paul. What might Paul say about the importance of prayer in our lives?

- Using Scripture, explore Jesus’ hopes for Peter (Mt 16:18-19) and Peter’s response to those hopes (Mt 26:69-75).

- Students reflect on their present hopes for themselves in a learning journal and teachers, through letter writing, share their hopes for their students.

- Look at The Lord’s Prayer, Mt 6:9-15. Discuss the meaning of the prayer for us in our daily lives.
  - Illustrate each stanza in a mural.
  - In the Lord’s Prayer locate the petitions for God and the petitions for ourselves.
  - Compare Matthew’s version of the Lord’s Prayer with that of Lk 11:1-4. How do they differ? Does the meaning of the prayer change?

- Use a range of musical version of the Our Father, eg Cliff Richard on *The Millennium Prayer* or *Cliff at Christmas*

- Describe different viewpoints, ways of living, language and belief systems in a variety of communities. Eg Islam, Judaism, Christianity and Buddhism, HOW, WHEN, WHERE, do these communities pray. What is their main philosophy of prayer.

- Students use www.sermons4kids website to create their own PowerPoint Show. Click on ‘Art by Henry Martin” scroll to bottom of page to “PowerPoint Slides’, click on ‘Paul and Silas in Philippi’ and follow instructions. To view a ready to use PowerPoint Show click on Paul and Silas in Philippi – PowerPoint.

- Mk 1:35 To PREPARE TO HEAR the Word - Mark has Jesus praying in a deserted place, the wilderness. This is the place where Jesus was tempted and where he was confronted with decisions that shaped his destiny. The deserted place was where Jesus was truly with God.

- Mk 1:35 To ENCOUNTER the Word after reading the text from the Bible, students create a Liquid Picture using the text.

- Mk 1:35 To RESPOND to the Word – Students use a triptych to illustrate; when, where and how do we communicate with God.
Prayer and Ritual
Create a prayer circle with the students' illustrated stanzas of the Lord’s Prayer as the central focus. Using the text Mt. 6: 9-15 pray the Lectio Divina.

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.