

LESSON 5: Prayer of the Church



REFERENCE

Page 172 [EXP]



WHAT YOU NEED

- (1)(2) LSM: 'Morning Prayer'

AIM

- To give the learners an experience of the Prayer of the Church

OUTCOMES

- EXP Learners will experience praying the Prayer of the Church.

TEACHER'S NOTE

If possible, this experience of the Prayer of the Church should take place within the community, but care must then be given to prepare both the learners and the community. It would be a good idea if somebody from the community were to talk to the learners before the prayer time. The learners need to spend some time becoming familiar with the structure of the prayer. If this is not done, they will be so concerned about who is doing what that any possibility of meaningful prayer is greatly reduced. If it is not possible to engage the community, then the prayer could be said as a class, preferably in a school chapel or prayer room.

Most breviaries – books containing the Prayer of the Church – use a system of different pages for the hymns, psalms, canticles, etc. This means turning pages back and forth during the prayer time. Once a person knows the system, this is not a distraction. For a newcomer, it does become the central issue. Therefore it is suggested that the learners, and the community, be given a complete printout of the prayer such as is found on the Lesson Materials page.

The Prayer of the Church changes from day to day and from season to season. The Lesson Materials page contains a slightly adapted version of Morning Prayer for a weekday after Easter. Depending on when you do this lesson, it will be necessary to change the hymn and some other elements to fit the occasion.

LESSON OUTLINE

I Introduction

Explain to the learners that they will be joining the whole Church in its official Morning Prayer. Explain the structure well, and the method of praying the various sections. The prayer is normally prayed in choir. This means that the group is divided into two sections, left and right, which alternate in saying the verses of the psalms. The antiphons are said (or sung) by chosen individuals. If possible, get a community person to share her/his experiences and thoughts on the prayer.

2 Prayer Time

Create a climate and an environment for the prayer, ideally not in the classroom. Is there a church or chapel nearby which could be used? Encourage the learners to pray the prayer.

3 Debriefing

If there is time, ask the learners for some feedback regarding the experience.

OTHER IDEAS

4 Variations

If the prayer given on the Lesson Materials page is too long, a simple way of shortening it is to eliminate one or two of the three psalms with their antiphons. If you class enjoys singing, the experience will be enriched by teaching them a setting of the chosen psalm(s).

MATERIALS

LEARNER

- CIE. 2005. 'Morning Prayer'



Lesson Materials



Morning Prayer

Introduction

Leader

O God, come to our aid.

All

O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world
without end. Amen, Alleluia.

Hymn

Christ the Lord is risen again!

Christ hath broken every chain,

Hark, the angels shout for joy,

Singing evermore on high,

Alleluya!

He who gave for us his life,

Who for us endured the strife

Is our Paschal Lamb today!

We too sing for joy and say,

Alleluya!

He who bore all pain and loss

Comfortless upon the Cross,

Lives in glory now on high,

Pleads for us, and hears our cry.

Alleluya!

Now he bids us tell abroad

How the lost may be restored,

How the penitent forgiven,

How we too may enter heaven.

Alleluya!

Psalmody

Antiphon 1

In you they rejoice, those who love your name, Alleluia.

Psalm 5

Morning Prayer for Help

To my words give ear, O Lord,

give heed to my groaning.

Attend to the sound of my cries,

my King and my God.

Lesson Materials

MORNING PRAYER (cont)

It is you whom I invoke, O Lord.
 In the morning you hear me:
 In the morning I offer you my prayer,
 Watching and waiting.

You are no God who loves evil;
 No sinner is your guest.
 The boastful shall not stand their ground
 before your face.

You hate all who do evil;
 You destroy all who lie.
 The deceitful and bloodthirsty man
 the Lord detests.

But I through the greatness of your love
 have access to your house.
 I bow down before your holy temple,
 filled with awe.

Lead me, Lord, in your justice,
 because of those who lie in wait;
 Make clear your way before me.

No truth can be found in their mouths,
 their heart is all mischief,
 Their throat a wide-open grave,
 all honey their speech.

All those you protect shall be glad
 and ring out their joy.
 You shelter them; in you they rejoice,
 those who love your name.

It is you who bless the just man, Lord
 you surround him with favour as with a shield.

Glory be to the Father...

Antiphon 1

In you they rejoice, those who love your name, Alleluia.

Lesson Materials
MORNING PRAYER (cont)



Antiphon 2 Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all, Alleluia.

Canticle **To God Alone be Honour and Glory** [1Chronicles 29:10-13]

Blessed are you, O Lord,
the God of Israel our father,
for ever and ever.

Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power,
and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty;
For all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours:

Yours is the kingdom, O Lord,
and you are exalted as head above all.

Both riches and honour come from you,
and you rule over all.
In your hand are power and might:
and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to
all.

And now we thank you, O God,
and praise your glorious name.

Glory be to the Father...

Antiphon 2 Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all, Alleluia.

Antiphon 3 The Lord is enthroned as king for ever, Alleluia.

Psalm 29 **Public praise of the Word of God**

O give the Lord, you sons of God,
give the Lord glory and power
give the Lord the glory of his name.
Adore the Lord in his holy court.

Lesson Materials
MORNING PRAYER (cont)

The Lord's voice resounding on the waters,
the Lord on the immensity of waters;
the voice of the Lord, full of power,
the voice of the Lord, full of splendour.

The Lord's voice shattering the cedars
the Lord shatters the cedars of Lebanon;
He makes Lebanon leap like a calf
and Sirion like a young wild-ox.

The Lord's voice flashes flames of fire.
The Lord's voice shaking the wilderness,
the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh;
The Lord's voice rending the oak tree
and stripping the forest bare.

The God of glory thunders.
In his temple they all cry: "Glory"
The Lord sat enthroned over the flood;
the Lord sits as king for ever.

The Lord will give strength to his people,
the Lord will bless his people with peace.

Glory be to the Father...

Antiphon 3

The Lord is enthroned as king for ever, Alleluia.

Scripture

[A reading taken from Paul's Letter to the Romans (14:7-9)]

None of us lives for himself, none of us dies for himself:
if we live, it is for the Lord that we live, and if we die, it
is for the Lord that we die. Whether we live or die,
then, we belong to the Lord. For Christ died and rose
to life in order to be the Lord of the living and of the
dead.

Responsory

Leader The Lord has risen from the dead, Alleluia
All The Lord has risen from the dead, Alleluia
Leader For our sake he died on the cross
All The Lord has risen from the dead, Alleluia
Leader Glory be to the Father...

Lesson Materials
MORNING PRAYER (cont)



Benedictus

[Luke 1:68-79]

Antiphon

Peace be with you, it is I, alleluia; do not be afraid, alleluia.

Canticle

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
He has visited his people and redeemed them

He has raised up for us a mighty saviour
in the house of David his servant,
as he promised by the lips of holy men,
those who were his prophets from of old.

A saviour who would free us from our foes,
from the hands of all who hate us.
So his love for our father is fulfilled
and his holy covenant remembered.

He swore to Abraham our father to grant us,
that freed from fear, and saved from the hands of our foes,
we might serve him in holiness and justice
all the days of our life in his presence.

As for you, little child,
you shall be called a prophet of God, the Most High.
You shall go ahead of the Lord,
to prepare his ways before him,

To make known to his people their salvation
through forgiveness of all their sins,
the loving-kindness of the heart of our God
who visits us like the dawn from on high.

He will give light to those in darkness,
those who dwell in the shadow of death,
and guide us into the way of peace.

Glory be to the Father...

Antiphon

Peace be with you, it is I, alleluia; do not be afraid, alleluia.

Intercessions

Let us pray to Christ, who has revealed to us the knowledge
of everlasting life.

Response

Lord, may your resurrection enrich us with your grace.

Lesson Materials
MORNING PRAYER (cont)



Eternal Shepherd, strengthen us for the coming day with the bread of your word: - nourish us with the bread of the eucharist.

Response

Lord...

May your voice find a response in our hearts:- do not let your word be silenced by rejection or indifference.

Response

Lord...

You are at work in those who spread the gospel, confirming the truth of their message:- help us to manifest your resurrection by our way of living.

Response

Lord...

You yourself are the joy that can never be taken away:- may we leave behind the sadness of sin and experience eternal life.

Response

Lord...

As we look to the coming of God's Kingdom, let us say:
Our Father who art...

Concluding Prayer

Since it is from you, God our Father,
That redemption comes to us, your adopted children:
Look with favour on the family you love,
Give true freedom to us and to all who believe in Christ,
And bring us all alike to our eternal heritage.
We make this prayer through our Lord, Jesus Christ who lives
and reigns with you
And the Holy Spirit, For ever and ever.

All

Amen

The Lord bless us and keep us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

All

Amen.

LESSON 6: Defining Prayer



REFERENCE

Page 174 [KUI]



WHAT YOU NEED

- (2) LSM: 'What is Prayer?'

AIM

- To help learners develop an understanding and a definition of prayer

OUTCOMES

- KUI Learners understand the meaning of prayer.
- SKL Learners develop a personal definition of prayer.

TEACHER'S NOTE

The definitions students come up with in Activity 3 need to be short enough to commit to memory, and should be shared with you and the class so that they can be critically appraised.

LESSON OUTLINE

1 Introduction

To begin with give learners a few minutes to recall the numerous prayer experiences, both 'good' and 'bad' which they have had through the five years of high school.

2 What is Prayer?

Give each learner a copy of the Lesson Materials page 'What Is Prayer?' It contains various definitions of, or sayings on, prayer. Ask each learner to select three statements which capture for them the essence of prayer.

3 Group Work

In small groups learners share their responses and then each group negotiates a definition of prayer.

4 Sharing and Discussion

Groups share their definitions and give the rest of the class an opportunity to discuss them. Is it possible to develop one definition for the class? If time allows, you could try this.

OTHER IDEAS

5 Pray or Love

This could be used for discussion. Learners read the following text and prepare some thoughts to share on the discussion questions that follow.

Prayer is much the same as real loving. It is less activity or “doing” than “being”. In fact, prayer is loving and, as such, cannot be approached as practical or useful. Approaching prayer from what I can get out of it or what it can bring me will simply lead to impatience, restlessness, and disillusion. There are times when prayer seems to get me nowhere or lead me no place. It seems a “waste of time”, impractical, because I cannot see its results, I can’t see what it’s doing. Prayer at this time should be surrendered to in love and faith. I pray at like this not because I’m ‘getting something out of it’, but because I love, and because in my poverty, I can praise God and come before Him daily as a sheer act of fidelity to that love. As someone once said, ‘If prayer is not love, then what is it?’

Questions for Discussion:

- (a) Do you think most people approach prayer in terms of what they can get out of it?
- (b) If prayer is loving, then can we ask for proofs in our prayer?
- (c) Do you think people consider daily prayer or meditation a waste of time? Could this be a temptation? Or a rationalization? Have you been tempted to feel this in meditation?
- (d) Can we have goals for our prayers?
- (e) Can we come to prayer with needs? Why? Should we expect prayer to fill our needs?

6 Personal Definition

Some learners will find it more meaningful to develop their own personal definition of prayer. Encourage this, and invite them to share without calling for comment from the class.

MATERIALS

LEARNER

- CIE. 2005. ‘What Is Prayer?’
- Michael Burke. 1991. ‘Prayer – more descriptions’, 142 in *Connections*. Pietermaritzburg: Centaur Publications, p 135



Lesson Materials



What Is Prayer?

PRAYER DESCRIPTIONS

- Prayer means appointments with God.
- Prayer means becoming present to God's presence - consciously being with God.
- Prayer is listening and responding to God's loving communication.
- Prayer means learning to know Christ by heart before we can recognise Him in the world (just as the artist must first discover the lion in his heart before seeing him in the block of marble).
- Prayer is both bringing one's world to the Lord, and bringing one's Lord to the world.
- Prayer is contact with God, which may come through our attempts at communication with God, or God's communication with us (Caprio).
- Prayer is that activity which helps bring people back in tune with their best selves (Crawford & Rossiter).

© Michael Burke. 1991. 'Prayer – more descriptions', 142 in *Connections*. Pietermaritzburg: Centaur Publications, p 135

- Prayer is being with God.
- Prayer is listening for God as well as speaking to God.
- Prayer is an expression of love complete and total in itself.
- Prayer is not trying to convince God to do what we want, but us waiting to do God's will.

PRAYER IS NOT...

Prayer is not asking things of God, but receiving what he wants to give you;
it is not being heard by God, but hearing God praying to you;
it is not asking God's forgiveness, but opening yourself to his forgiveness;
it is not offering yourself to God, but welcoming God offering himself to you.
(Louis Evely)

LESSON 7: Our Prayer Journey



REFERENCE

Page 173 [EXP] 176 [DAP]



WHAT YOU NEED

- (2) LSM: 'Our Prayer Journey'
- (3) LSM: 'Stay In Touch'

AIM

- To encourage the learners to evaluate their prayer-life, and to plan for the future

OUTCOMES

- DAP Learners have a positive attitude towards developing their prayer lives.

TEACHER'S NOTE

This lesson facilitates a look at the learner's prayer journey over the last few years and encourages them to make some concrete decisions for the future.

LESSON OUTLINE

1 Introduction

Explain the purpose of the lesson. To round off this unit, and, indeed, the five-year process of Prayer Education, the learners are given an opportunity to reflect on where they have come from and where they are going in relation to prayer in their lives. What has the journey been like? What is the destination?

2 Five-Movement Evaluation

With the aid of the Lesson Materials page, 'Our Prayer Journey', encourage both a personal and class reflection. It is suggested that learners are given a copy of the page. Perhaps there could be a few minutes quiet reflection on each movement before some sharing. You the teacher should participate as an individual on the same journey. The questions are suggestions only. Change them to suit the class.

3 Final Reflection

If time permits, distribute the Lesson Materials page 'Stay in Touch', and read or have it read as a closing reflection.

OTHER IDEAS

4 Attitude in Prayer

Discuss the necessary attitude one should have in prayer. We need to strive for a humble attitude – humility as to *who* I am and *how* I am:

- not expecting 'something' to happen, but believing that God is working in me ("Be still

GRADE 12 Prayer

- and know that I am God")
- not anxiously looking for deep lessons/conclusions/ resolutions, but sitting childlike on the Father's lap ("Unless you become like little children, you cannot enter the Kingdom of God")
 - remembering that I am a sinner ("Have mercy on me, a sinner")
 - remembering that prayer is God's gift ("Lord, teach us to pray")
 - paying trustful attention ("speak, Lord, your servant is listening")
 - being open, through faith ("Your will be done, not mine")

(Michael Burke. 1991. 'Praying humbly means...', 146, in *Connections*. Pietermaritzburg: Centaur Publications, p 136)

MATERIALS

LEARNER

- CIE. 2005. 'Our Prayer Journey'
- Unknown. 'Stay in Touch'



Lesson Materials



Our Prayer Journey

This exercise to evaluate one's prayer journey incorporates evaluation, challenge and response. It is based upon Thomas Groome's five-movement 'Praxis' format.

First Movement

Articulating our present vision and practice of prayer:

Sharing-questions like these may help:

- Do you pray? Why?
- In what circumstances, and how often, do you pray?
- How do you feel about your prayer?
- Do you find it easy to pray?
- What difficulties do you experience?
- What are the reasons for these difficulties?
- Do you have a special place to pray?
- How do you pray?
- How has your prayer affected or changed your life?

Second Movement

Critical uncovering of the roots of our vision and practice of prayer.

Examine the influences that have brought us to our present prayer-life – share memories of:

- Childhood training
- School prayer practices
- Inspiring people
- Stories, films, and plays
- Books and talks
- Things and places that have touched the imagination.

Third Movement

A challenge to a more adult prayer life.

Which of the following am I willing to incorporate into my prayer-life?

- Being faithful to a regular prayer-time of 5 - 10 minutes daily.
- Using spiritual direction regularly.
- Listening not to my unruly inner voice, but to the voice of God.
- Responding when I am conscious of God's voice.
- Not being anxious in noise or in silence – for God can communicate with me in both.
- Being more conscious of my feelings, desires, hopes, and accepting God in these.
- Resting with and in the Lord without concern about the results of my prayer.
- Resting and pausing in prayer when I feel that the Lord is near.

Fourth Movement/...



Lesson Materials

Stay In Touch

Some people feel
that prayer cannot be programmed.
It has to flow naturally,
like water from a cool spring.
If prayer does not flow spontaneously
from your heart,
you had better not pray at all.
Forced prayer is false prayer.

At first, this sounds convincing.
But when you take a closer look
at who man is
and how he operates,
you begin to see that
this is a simplistic position.

There is no question
that prayer sometimes comes unplanned
from within.
For example,
some unexpected good news
may send your spirits soaring.
Or some disaster strikes,
and you automatically turn to God.
Or you suddenly become aware
of God's hidden action
in some event.
When this happens
you stand still –
struck with awe and reverence.

The events of life
can lead you to God.
On the other hand,
just the opposite can happen.
Life can, at times,
stand like a massive wall
separating you from God.
Problems or failures
can so cloud your life
that you begin to see nothing
but gloom and darkness.

The saying/...

Lesson Materials

STAY IN TOUCH (cont)

The saying that "sorrow teaches people to pray" is only half true.

Sorrow can so overwhelm
and embitter you
that you can't even stand
the thought of God.

Even success and temporary happiness
can obscure God
from your consciousness.
They can so take over your life
that you are no longer aware of God.
The realisation of God's presence
can so completely vanish from your life
that you may go for months
without thinking of him.

If you hope to build your life
around spontaneous prayer only,
you may soon find yourself
not praying at all.
You run the risk of being like an athlete
who has tried to build his career
on spontaneous enthusiasm,
instead of training and practice.
Such a career would be fanciful.
It would be doomed to disaster
before it ever got off the ground.
The same is true of a person
who tried to build his spiritual life
on spontaneous prayer only.