

LESSON 11: Our Need for God



AIM

To raise the children's awareness of their need for God in their daily lives. (3.2.1)

OUTCOME

Learners value the time given to being consciously in the presence of God.

WHAT YOU NEED

- * Flashcard (1)
- * Bible (2)
- * Paper, pens (5)
- * Copies of the worksheet or A3 paper (7) ⇨
- * Colouring pencils, scissors, coloured cellophane paper, glue box (7)

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

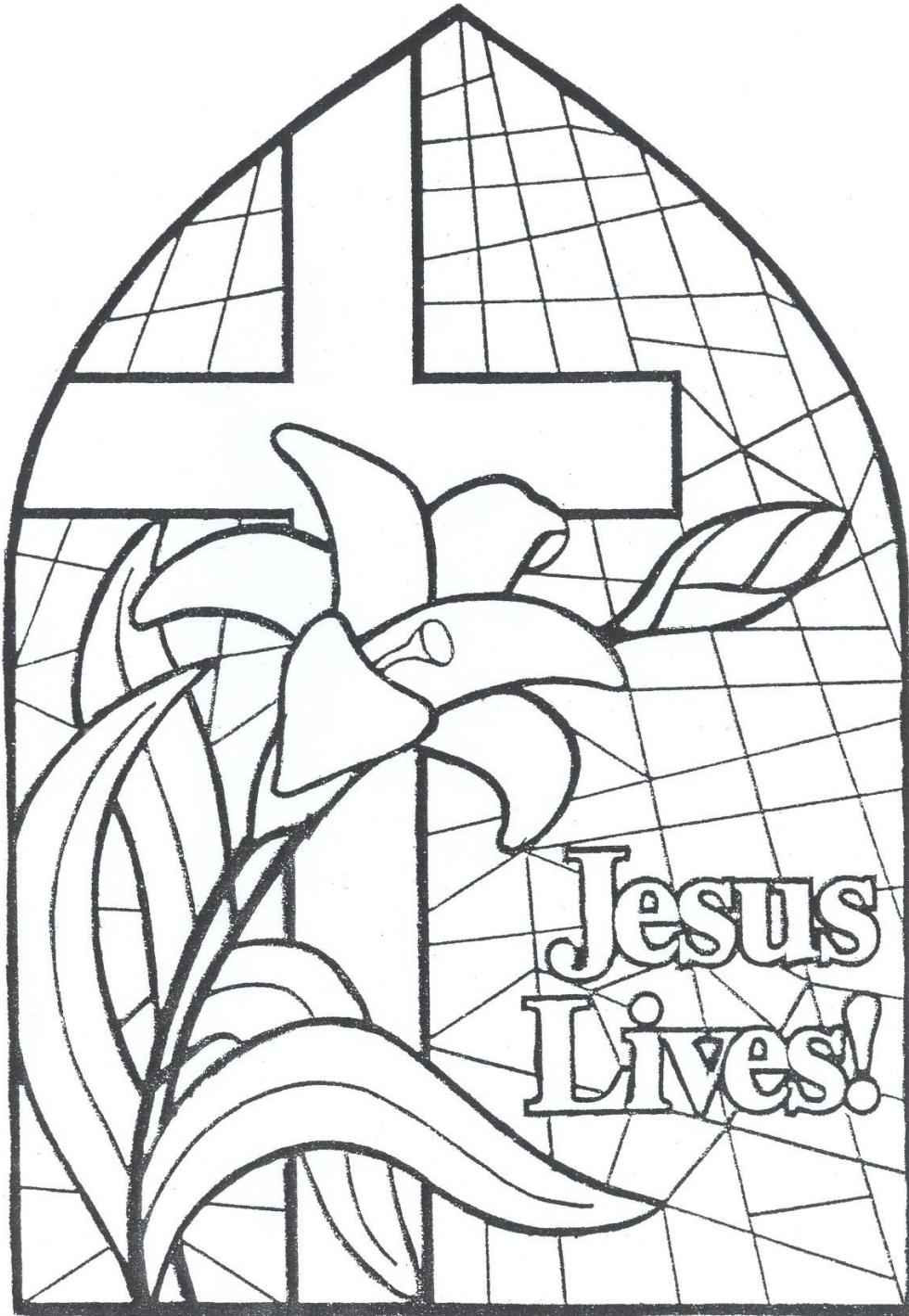
- 1 Put the following words on the board, or as a flashcard:
MAY GOD HELP US FIND THE TREASURES HE HAS FOR US.
- 2 Tell, in your own words, **the story of the wise man** who built his house upon rock. [Matthew 7:24-27] Discuss the story drawing out from it our need for God in our lives to nurture us, to shelter and protect us, and to help us make wise decisions.
- 3 **Oral discussion** with the class. Ask the following questions:
What do you know about God?
How do you feel about God?
Where do you find God?
Does God think of you?
- 4 There are different **ways of being close to God**, for example: in nature, in quiet places, in praying and singing; at communion in the Eucharist, in being creative, and at prayer. Let the children add to the list.
- 5 If you could phone God now, what would you say to him? Allow the children to write their own **prayers to God** in cut-outs of a telephone or on ordinary paper.



ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 6 Allow the children to sit outside **in a garden** and let them be with God and pray for their own needs.
- 7 **Create an altar** in the classroom. Enlarge to A3 the stained glass window template found on the worksheet. ⇨ (Or let each child make their own.) Colour the flowers and cut the cross out. Place coloured cellophane in place of the cross. Put a prayer box in front of the stained-glass window for children to place their own petitions.
- 8 **God says:** "Do not be afraid. I have called you by your name, you are mine" [Isaiah 43:1]

Hello God, It's Me!



LESSON 12: What Is Prayer?



AIM

To help the learners understand that prayer is talking and listening to God, and that this can be done in different ways (4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.2.4, 4.3.1)

OUTCOME

Learners understand the meaning of prayer, and are familiar with different kinds of prayer.

WHAT YOU NEED

- * Bible (2)
- * Samples or pictures of phylactery, mezuzah, cross, crucifix, medal, rosary (3)
- * Worksheet (4) ⇨
- * A picture of a star with four flash cards: SORRY, THANKS, ASK, and REJOICE (5)

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1 **What is prayer?** Prayer is a special time to talk to God. When we pray often, we grow closer to God and we can sometimes feel his Spirit even though we cannot actually see him. When we look and listen carefully, we see God answering prayers in his own way.

2 **“Pray at all times”** [1Thessalonians 5:17] What does it mean to be praying at all times? Invite the learners to suggest how this may be possible. You will need to deepen their understanding of prayer as being in God’s presence, not so much talking, as listening!

3 **Religious customs:** You might introduce the Jewish custom of wearing phylacteries, small boxes containing key scripture passages which were tied round the head or left arm to constantly remind the wearer of the presence and the law of God. Similarly Jewish families place a mezuzah (see right), containing small scrolls at their front door.



Similarly Christians wear crosses, and many Catholics wear crucifixes and medals, and carry rosaries in their pockets.

4 What **do we talk to these people about?** Hand out the worksheet to small groups. Ask them to discuss the above question. Each member of the group can make his or her own response on the worksheet. ⇨

PARENTS SPORTS TEACHER PERSON IN A LIFT PRIEST
FRIEND SHOP KEEPER GOD

5 **Kinds of Prayer:** Drawing on feedback from the previous activity, suggest that there are the following kinds of prayer, which can easily be remembered using the letters of the word ‘star’. Draw a large four-pointed star on the board, with the words SORRY, THANKS, ASK, and REJOICE at the points. Or you could use a picture of a star with four flashcards.

SORRY

REJOICE THANKS
ASK

Explain the words:

SORRY: For hurting God, others and ourselves.

THANKS: For how God has helped us.

ASK: For help / advice / something.

REJOICE: Praise for good.

- 6 Divide the class into 4 groups corresponding to the letters S, T, A, R. Ask the learners to write a letter to God to say sorry, to say thank you, to ask, or to rejoice in praising God, depending on which group they are in.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 7 Let the children present the star to the school as an assembly and have one of each of the prayers read out loud.
- 8 When Jesus spoke to God, he used ideas and words like those we find in the prayer he taught his followers. This prayer is called the Lord's Prayer or Our Father. The children should know this, but it can be revised.

TO REMEMBER

Prayer is talking and listening to God. In prayer we praise God, thank God, ask God for what we need, and say sorry to God for having done wrong.

What Is Prayer?

After discussion in your group, write down the things you speak about to each of the following people:

PARENTS

.....
.....

A SPORTS TEACHER

.....
.....

A PERSON IN A LIFT

.....
.....

A PRIEST OR MINISTER

.....
.....

A BEST FRIEND

.....
.....

A SHOP KEEPER

.....
.....

GOD

.....
.....

LESSON 13: Being with God



AIM

To make the children aware of Jesus' teaching on and practice of prayer, and to give them time for being in the presence of God. (3.4.3, 3.4.4)

OUTCOME

Learners understand the need to make prayer a central practice in their lives.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 Display either or both of the following **flashcards**:

WHEREVER TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED TOGETHER IN MY NAME, I SHALL BE THERE WITH THEM. [Matthew 18:20]

ASK AND IT WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU; SEEK AND YOU WILL FIND; KNOCK AND THE DOOR WILL BE OPENED TO YOU. [Matthew 7:7]
- 2 **Jesus valued prayer.** We know this by the things he said about prayer. Point to the two flashcards. Ask the children if they know any other things he said. Some Scripture passages are referred to below. Jesus also showed that he valued prayer by doing it himself. He prayed daily, he prayed in desert places and on mountain tops, he prayed early in the morning, and sometimes all night. Again some Scripture references are given below.

WHAT JESUS SAID ABOUT PRAYER	WHAT JESUS DID ABOUT PRAYER
Matthew 6:1-9	Matthew 26:36-46
Matthew 7:7-11	Mark 6:45-46
Luke 11:1-13	Luke 3:21-22
Luke 18:1-8	Luke 5:15-16
Luke 18:9-14	Luke 6:12-16

- 3 Make enough **prayer cards** for all the children in the class. Each card asks the children to tell God about something in their lives. Hand the cards out. Let the children sit quietly on their own. Play soft, gentle music in the background.

WHAT YOU NEED

- * Flashcard(s) (1)
- * Bible (2)
- * Prayer cards; soft, gentle music; paper, pens, colouring pencils (3)
- * Pot plant, water (5)
- * A collection of prayer cards (6)
- * ♪ *Be Still and Know That I Am God* (7)
- * Objects on a table (7)
- * Prayer cards (blank) (8)

Example for cards: Tell God about a happy day; your pet, something new that you learnt, a sad day; a good friend or your family. Let the children draw pictures of the things they prayed about, under a heading, I OPEN MY HEART AND MY SOUL.

- 4 **Discussion and sharing:** Get back together as a class. Ask the children how this made them feel?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 5 Leave a **potted plant** to wilt slightly. Then start to water it. Explain to the children that just as the plant needs water to remain upright and healthy, so we need to pray. Prayer fills our hearts and souls and we become stronger.
- 6 For a **home activity:** Invite the learners to find a place in their home where they can build their own altar to God - a place where they feel close to God. They could spend time there everyday asking God to fill them with his Spirit. They could take a different prayer card home every day and practise being in God's presence
- 7 Place a **variety of objects** on a table. Sing *Be Still and Know That I Am God*. Ask the children to be as still as the objects on the table. Then in a quiet voice ask the following:
What are you thinking?
What are you feeling?
Catch your thoughts and feelings and put them on the table with the other objects.
Jesus sits next to you at the table. Talk to him about the things you put on the table.
- 8 **Blank prayer cards:** You could also hand out blank cards and ask the learners to write down on them what they, individually, would like to pray for. The cards could then be collected and displayed, or put in a box from which one could be drawn each day at random to give a focus for the class prayer.

TO REMEMBER

When we pray we turn our hearts and minds to God so that we can talk to God and hear what God says.

LESSON 14: Ways of Praying



AIM

To give the learners the experience of a variety of kinds of prayer and ways of praying, and to increase their self-esteem through creative gesture and movement in prayer (4.2.2, 5.3.2)

OUTCOME

Learners are familiar with a variety of ways of praying.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 **Jesus** spent his life remembering that he was in the presence of God. He found strength and guidance from the time he spent with God. He called God “Abba” which means father. He prayed with his disciples and friends, but also spent time alone in the desert or on the mountains. He taught us how to pray in the words of the ‘Our Father’.
- 2 There are many other examples of **people who prayed in the Bible**. Refer to the extensive list at the end of lesson. ⇒ Hannah was a woman who prayed a special prayer and we can read from the Bible that her prayer was powerful [1 Samuel 1-2]
- 3 **Hannah’s story:**
Hannah was very sad, because she had no children. She wanted a baby very much. One day she and her husband went to worship God at the Tabernacle. Hannah prayed to God there. She cried and said, “If You will give me a baby, I will let him work for You all his life.”
The priest, named Eli, saw Hannah. He knew something was wrong. Hannah told him what she was doing. He said, “Go home in peace, may God give you what you have asked Him for.” Hannah went home. God remembered her prayer. He gave Hannah a baby boy. She held him in her hands. His name was Samuel.
(From *The Beginner’s Bible*, Struik, 1993)
- 4 The children trace round their own left or right hand, and write or draw their **own petitions** inside the hand outline. They cut out the hand and stick it next to the teacher’s example, which could reflect Hannah’s prayer. If there is a time limit, have the required number of hand cut-outs ready before the lesson for the children to write one word on.
- 5 We often pray with our hands and eyes looking towards heaven. By kneeling with arms outstretched we show humility and expectation. Our **actions** can add meaning to our prayers. In groups, let the children put their own creative movements to the prayer provided or let them write their own prayer. You could substitute a prayer that would be

WHAT YOU NEED

- * Bible verses relating to prayer (2) ⇒
- * Bible (2)
- * Hands cut out of cardboard (4)
- * Prayer cards (5)
- * Sign language (6) ⇒
- * Pairs of white gloves (7)
- * Pictures (8)
- * Recorded music, blanket (9)
- * Request board (10)
- * *Whisper a Prayer* (11)

GRADE 3

more appropriate, or in the children's mother tongue. The following prayers could be photocopies and pasted onto cards.

GROUP 1

Loving Father, hear our prayer for your children everywhere, however different they may be. All girls and boys belong to you.

GROUP 2

And those who live so far away are just as much your family. Loving Father, hear our prayer for your children everywhere.

GROUP 3

The children of Africa, Europe and of the East, the children of America and Russia, of the islands and the mountains and the lands of snow.

GROUP 4

They have lovely gifts to bring to you. May we learn together how to serve you here on earth.



ALL

Amen

(Amen is a Hebrew word which means 'It is sure' or 'There is no doubt about that'.)

Each group presents their section of the prayer with gestures and movement. Musical instruments could also be used at the discretion of the teacher.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 6 Teach the children **the language of the deaf**, and let them sign a prayer. Perhaps visit a school for the deaf and present the prayers they have developed in groups. See the worksheet.  
- 7 When presenting an **assembly**, use gestures as a group to words of a prayer. If the children wear white gloves, the gestures are more effective as a group.
- 8 Have **pictures** from magazines or books showing different ways of praying. Go into a discussion of the prayers of other religions, perhaps drawing from the learners' own experience.
- 9 In a large area allow the children to **move to music**. Stop the music. They crouch down and close their eyes. Cover one child with a blanket. They try to guess who is underneath. Uncover the child. The children place their hands on the child and pray a prayer.
- 10 Put up a **request board**. Write down the children's prayer requests. Pray as a class. Watch how prayers are answered.
- 11 Song: *Whisper a Prayer*

MATERIALS

*BIBLE VERSES
RELATING TO PRAYER*

2 Chronicles 7:14

Psalm 21:2

Psalm 28:6

Psalm 34:17

Psalm 37:4

Psalm 55:17

Psalm 86:7

Psalm 91:15

Isaiah 38:5

Jeremiah 33:3

Matthew 7:7

Matthew 21:22

Mark 11:24

Luke 11:10

John 15:7

Romans 8:32

Hebrews 11:6

James 1:5

James 5:16

1 John 3:22

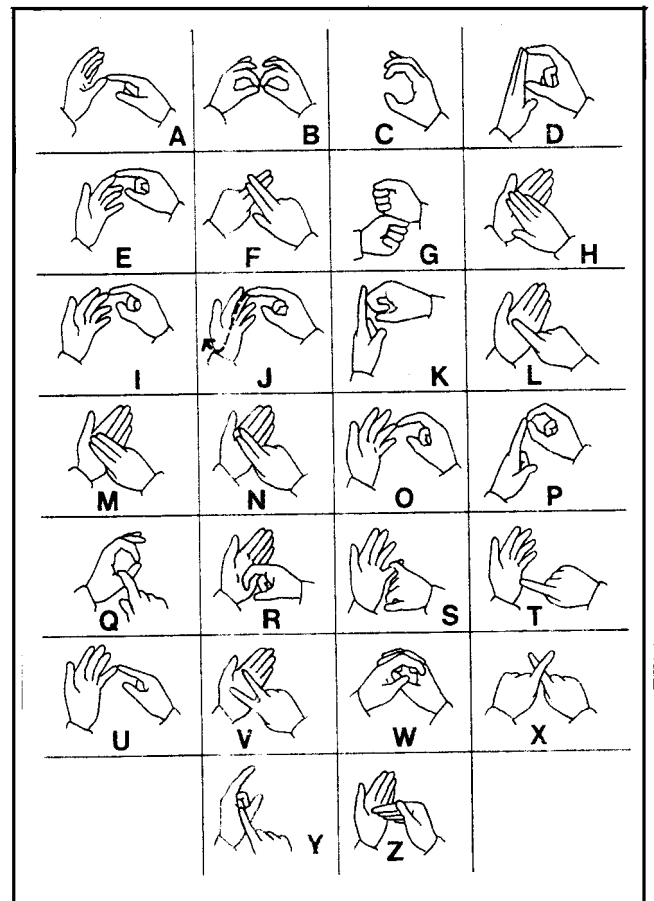
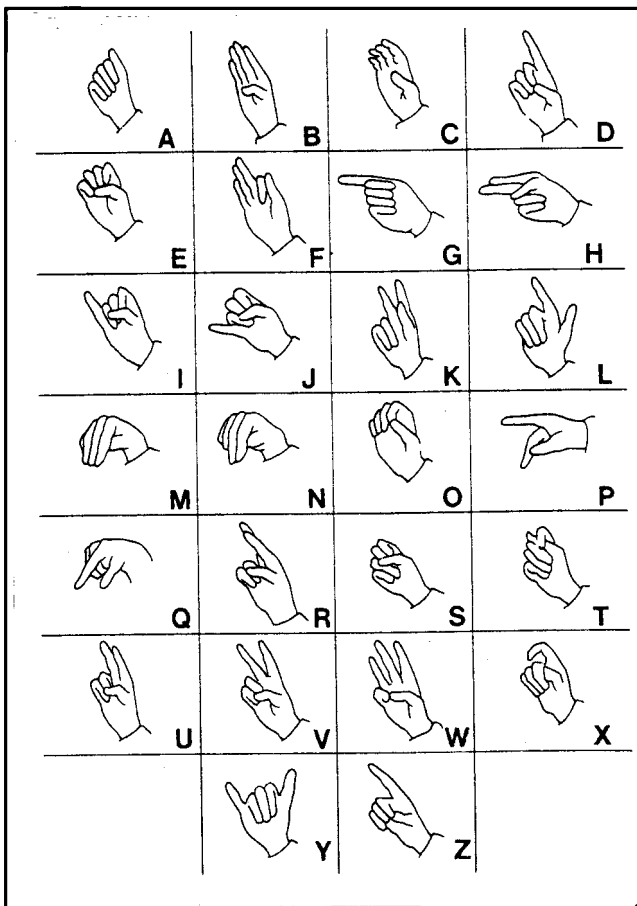
1 John 5:14,15

Sign Language

Fingerspelling is a language that uses hands and finger shapes to represent the letters of the alphabet. This is called a manual alphabet. Two common examples, one for the right hand, and the other for two hands are given here.

With practice you can learn fingerspelling quickly. Fingerspelling can be used as a way of communicating with the deaf, but also by touch with those who are blind.

DO NOT LAUGH AT US,
 LAUGH WITH US.
 DO NOT TALK ABOUT US,
 TALK WITH US.
 DO NOT REJECT US,
 JOIN THE DEAF.



(Message from a deaf person)