

Content Standard

Students in the Diocese of Bridgeport will learn about and participate in prayer as an integral part of life. They will develop the ability to pray through the presentation and experience of a variety of prayer forms, as well as develop a personal relationship with God (*CCC: 2558-2857, 487-511, 721-726, 829, 963-975, 1691-1696, 1704-1715, 2045, 2742-2745*).

Rationale

Prayer, at its most basic level, is talking with God, while spirituality is our way of being in relationship with God. Prayer opens our hearts to God's presence creating a living relationship of the children of God with their Father who is good beyond measure, with his Son Jesus Christ and with the Holy Spirit (*CCC 2565*). Spirituality is the thread that weaves its way through all that we believe, profess, celebrate, and respond to in life (*CCC: 2562-2565*).

*At every opportunity pray in the spirit, using prayers and petitions of every sort.
(Ephesians 6:18)*

*So we give the name of spiritual exercise to any process which makes the soul ready and able to rid itself of all irregular attachments; so that, once rid of them, it may look for and discover how God wills it to regulate its life.
(Spiritual Exercises, St. Ignatius Loyola)*

Performance Standards

1. Students will understand that prayer is a dialogue that takes place between God and man, a living relationship of the children of God with their Father, his Son Jesus Christ, and with the Holy Spirit (*CCC 2565, 2653*).
2. Students will know that prayer is a personal relationship with God expressed in these specific forms revealed in Scripture: blessing and adoration, contrition, intercession, petition, praise and thanksgiving (*CCC 2565*).
3. Students will develop the means of communicating the three major expressions of prayer: vocal, meditative, and contemplative (*CCC 2699*).
4. Students will realize that prayer is both a gift of grace and an active response on their part (*CCC 2725*).
5. Students will understand that through prayer every Christian works for the coming of the Kingdom (*CCC 2632*).
6. Students will meditate on the Word of God in personal prayer, practice it in liturgical prayer, and internalize it at all times in order to bear fruit in a new life in Christ (*CCC 2688*).

Grade Level Competencies

By the end of Pre-K—Kindergarten, students will be able to:

1. Recite and demonstrate the Sign of the Cross.
2. Recite a mealtime prayer and explain its purpose.
3. Tell how and when we pray.
4. Participate in formal prayers such as the Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, and Glory Be.
5. Participate in simple examples of spontaneous prayer.
6. Demonstrate appropriate and respectful participation during Mass and/or prayer.
7. Identify that God is everywhere.
8. Recognize that God loves them.
9. Relate that all things are a gift from God.
10. Understand that they are a unique and special creation of God.

By the end of Grade One, students will be able to:

1. Recite the Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, and Glory Be.
2. Participate in an age-appropriate Stations of the Cross during Lent.
3. Participate in Mass prayerfully.
4. Prepare and assume different roles in communal prayer.
5. Share reasons why and when they pray.
6. Realize through active participation in a variety of prayer forms that God is present in their lives in a special way.
7. Know that silence helps enter into and attend to God's presence in prayer.
8. Tell ways that God shows love for them.
9. Experience the love of Jesus in their lives.
10. Know that they can pray alone; however, that the church building is a sacred place for prayer.
11. Understand that they belong to their family and God's family, the Church.

By the end of Grade Two, students will be able to:

1. Recite an Act of Contrition.
2. Participate in the Rosary.
3. Describe how prayer is important to their relationship with God.
4. Compose a personal prayer.
5. Know that the Lord's Prayer was given to us by Jesus.
6. Know that God hears their prayers.
7. Express their love for Jesus and Jesus' love for them through the reception of the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist.
8. Participate in a guided examination of conscience.
9. Know that we can ask Mary and the saints to pray for us, especially in times of need or temptation.
10. Describe that we gather as a Catholic family at Mass to celebrate the Life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus.
11. Indicate that the sacrament of Penance/Reconciliation is a way to say we are sorry for our sins and to receive God's forgiveness.
12. Know that the Mass is our greatest prayer.
13. Understand that Jesus is our model of love and goodness.
14. Respect ourselves and others as a gift from God.
15. Name and thank God for the gifts that he has given them.

By the end of Grade Three, students will be able to:

1. Identify the meaning of the Stations of the Cross.
2. Prepare and assume different roles in communal prayer experiences in the classroom.
3. Compose prayers for different occasions and needs.
4. Offer their own morning and evening prayers to include personal needs and needs of others.
5. Understand the importance of both communal and personal prayer.
6. Learn how to pray the rosary.
7. Participate in an examination of conscience.
8. Observe each of the liturgical seasons with an understanding of their significance.
9. Show how God takes care of them and is always faithful to them.
10. Develop a deeper devotion to Mary and the saints.
11. Study the lives of the saints and understand the communion of saints as the life of the Church.
12. Know that Christians forgive those who hurt them, bear wrongs patiently and pray for those both living and dead.
13. Respect all life as a gift from God.
14. Recognize and respect that all people are made in the image and likeness of God.

By the end of Grade Four, students will be able to:

1. Recite the Apostles' Creed and explain its meaning and importance.
2. Tell the meaning of the Act of Contrition.
3. Define prayer and identify the four basic categories of prayer (praise, petition, thanksgiving, and contrition), and give examples of each.
4. Describe the difference between public and private prayer.
5. Prepare for and assume different roles in communal prayer services and in the Mass.
6. Describe and participate in different kinds of prayers and devotions. (Feast of Saints, Stations of the Cross).
7. Show a desire to incorporate prayer in their daily lives as Jesus did.
8. Recite a spontaneous prayer.
9. Respect all life as a gift from God.
10. Recognize and respect that all people are made in the image and likeness of God.

By the end of Grade Five, students will be able to:

1. Participate in guided meditative prayer based on Gospel stories.
2. Pray the litany of the saints.
3. Understand the role of Mary and the saints as intercessors.
4. Describe what prayer means to them and why it is important in their lives.
5. Examine Jesus as the model for prayer in the gospel.
6. Discuss difficulties in prayer and strategies to overcome them.
7. Explore how sacramentals (holy water, palms, candles, ashes, rosary, medals, scapulars, crucifixes, images, statues, etc.) help enhance their spiritual lives.
8. Perform a personal examination of conscience.

By the end of Grade Six, students will be able to:

1. Discuss the importance of perseverance in prayer to overcome difficulties.
2. Recognize saints as witnesses of faith whose example they can emulate (**CCC 2683**).
3. Know that the Psalms, rooted in the Judaic community, were prayed by Christ and are used today as personal and communal prayer.
4. know that God's covenant with us, beginning with Abraham, calls each person to a life of prayer in communion with him and continues with each person in prayer to renew them in God's likeness
5. Name and explain the mysteries of the rosary (Joyful, Luminous, Sorrowful, Glorious).
6. Understand and practice the Church's traditions of Lenten devotions and penance.
7. Deepen their understanding and appreciation of the rosary and other Marian devotions.
8. List and explain the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy.

By the end of Grade Seven, students will be able to:

1. Understand that Jesus is our role model of prayer.
2. Explain the meaning of the seven petitions in the Lord's Prayer and understand that this is a compilation of the Gospel message.
3. Discuss how trust in God is the basis for prayers of petition.
4. Understand and practice the Church's Advent tradition of the waiting and longing for the coming of the Lord.
5. Understand and practice the Church's Lenten tradition of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving in preparation for the celebration of the Paschal mystery.
6. Identify the Beatitudes and understand them as the pattern of the Christian way of life.

7. Reflect more deeply on their spiritual relationship with the Lord.
8. Learn that the rosary is the epitome of the Gospel expressing devotion to Jesus through Mary.
9. Explain and appreciate the role of Eucharistic spirituality and devotion, such as Eucharistic Adoration, Eucharistic Benediction, and visits to the Blessed Sacrament.
10. Understand the importance of weekly participation in the Sunday Mass as the foundation of Catholic spirituality and prayer.

By the end of Grade Eight, students will be able to:

1. Take leadership roles in working with students at other grade levels in preparing and directing a communal prayer service or liturgy.
2. Evaluate practice of personal prayer and describe how they will make changes to strengthen their prayer lives.
3. Explain and use various expressions of prayer (vocal, meditative, and contemplative).
4. Discuss how prayer can deepen their appreciation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in their lives.
5. Review how prayer inspired men and women of faith in the Scriptures.
6. Identify and explain each of the Theological Virtues (Faith, Hope, and Charity).
7. Practice the Moral (Cardinal) Virtues (Prudence, Justice, Temperance, and Fortitude) in order to strengthen their spiritual lives.
8. Pray for an open and generous response to God's call in their lives and future vocation.
9. Pray the rosary using all four sets of mysteries as the basis for meditation on the life and mission of Christ.