

Prayer, God's Gift Discussion Guide

TEACHER RESOURCE

Prayer is first a gift from God

- › **Action:** Point finger toward the sky.
- › **Ask:** When do you get gifts? *Birthdays, Christmas, graduation, and so forth.*
- › **Ask:** Why do you get gifts? *As a sign of our family's love for us, to celebrate a special day, to help us remember a special time.*
- › **Discuss:** Prayer is a special gift that God gives us. We can receive this gift every single day, not just when we go to Mass or when we pray in class. Just as when we say, "Thank you" for a birthday gift, we can say, "Thank you" for God's gift by responding to him, using prayer, and actually talking to Him.

and guess what... It's free!

- › **Action:** Prayer hands (*palms together, fingers pointing up*). Open hands flat. Palms face up.
- › **Ask:** What is free? *The gift of prayer.*
- › **Discuss:** You don't have to be rich to pray. *Anyone and everyone* can pray! Your mom, grandpa, brother, neighbor, principal, and so forth. You don't have to do anything to receive the ability to pray. In our next lesson, we will learn about a story from the Gospels about a Samaritan woman at a well, and how her story shows that she didn't need to do anything; Jesus began the conversation.

It comes from my heart.

- › **Action:** Rub heart with closed fist.
- › **Ask:** Where does prayer come from? *The heart.*
- › **Discuss:** When we pray, we can use words (such as "Thank you, God") or actions (such as the Sign of the Cross). The Bible says more than a thousand times that prayer comes from the heart. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* tells us that "the heart is the dwelling-place where I am, where I live" (2563). That means that our deepest, realest selves are in our hearts. There, we are who we really are.

Where God knows me best.

- › **Action:** Point to your heart.
- › **Ask:** Why does prayer come from our hearts? *We know God best in our hearts.*
- › **Discuss:** When we say we pray from our hearts, we don't mean that our heart suddenly grows lips and speaks with a voice. It means "the heart is our hidden center, beyond the grasp of reason and of others" (CCC 2563). God knows us *fully* there, our deepest wants, needs, fears, and joys.
- › **Ask:** Which people know you well? *Accept reasoned answers, such as parents, siblings, best friends, doctors, and so forth.*
- › **Discuss:** As well as we might know these people, God knows us better than even they do! Even our closest friends and family don't know what we hold in our hearts as well as God does.

He has a relationship with me!

- › **Action:** Wrap arms around your body, as if giving yourself a hug.