

Prayer

Pages M-1 through M-4
Fireside Catholic Youth Bible - NEXT

Song: Improvisation and Alleluia II

CD 2, Track 3

Words and Music by: In the Spirit of Taizé

FCYB Music CDs

Materials Needed

Fireside Catholic Youth Bible - NEXT, FCYB Music CDs, CD player, slips of paper with names of prayers for the “Setting the Stage/Opening Prayer” Large Group Discussion, miscellaneous props for the “Prayer Skit” Large Group Activity.

Setting the Stage/Opening Prayer/Discussion (10 minutes)

As teens arrive, randomly give them a slip of paper with the title of one of these three prayers written on it: “Hail Mary,” “Glory Be” and “Our Father.” Have the teens gather for the Opening Prayer. At the signal to begin, have everyone say the prayer that they were assigned - all at the same time.

Follow up with a discussion of how our prayer must sound like this to God sometimes. Encourage the teens that, in order for their prayers to be effective, they must be focused, sincere and from the heart. Even silence, which can be a great way to listen to God, is not effective if our mind is on something else the whole time. Conclude by saying a spontaneous prayer from your heart. Then, invite any of the teens that volunteer to join with their own prayer, following your example.

Insert Reflection (10 minutes)

Read or summarize the 1 on 1 With Christ article on page M-4 of the **Fireside Catholic Youth Bible – NEXT**. Then, discuss the teens’ answers to these questions:

What are the qualities of a friend?

What do you do to maintain the relationships with your friends?

What happens if you don’t communicate frequently with your friends?

Lead the teens to see that prayer is about developing a relationship with God.

Large Group Activity – “Prayer Skit” (40 minutes)

20 minutes for creating - 10 minutes for presentation - 10 minutes for discussion

Divide teens into two or three groups. Ask each group to develop a skit that demonstrates the power and/or meaning of prayer. Encourage creativity and spontaneity.

During development time, play the song “*Improvisation and Alleluia II*” by In the Spirit of Taizé. CD 2, Track 3 of the FCYB Music CDs to maintain a prayerful atmosphere.

Some possible settings for the skits might include:

- A conversation between a teen and God after each phrase of any given prayer.
- A conversation of one teen explaining the Rosary or the purpose of recited prayer to someone who has never encountered it before.
- A skit showing how daily experience in a teens life can be lived as a prayer.

Follow-up skits with a discussion of the teens' answers to the following (or similar) questions:

What did you learn about prayer from each of the skits?

Did any of the skits reflect your prayer life?

After watching these skits, would you consider changing how you pray in any way?

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Have the teens assemble in the middle of the room in a circle. Discuss the difference between prayers of petition (where we are asking something of God) and prayers of thanksgiving (where we are thanking Him for something in our lives). Tell the teens that for a closing prayer you want to offer alternating prayers of petition and thanksgiving. Begin with the following:

For those in need, that You will supply them through us,
Response: "Hear our prayer, O Lord!"

In thanksgiving for our friendships,
Response: "We give You thanks, O Lord!"

For those who suffer, may You comfort them in their time of need,
Response: "Hear our prayer, O Lord!"

For the gifts of plentiful food and nourishment,
Response: "We give You thanks, O Lord!"

etc.

Move around the circle having the teens continue this pattern of prayer. Close with a spontaneous prayer by an adult or teen.

Bed Thinks

When you go to bed tonight, think about this quote attributed to Mother Teresa of Calcutta . . .

***"The first requirement for prayer is silence.
People of prayer are a people of silence."***

How can you incorporate more silence into your life?

(Type this message on a small piece of paper and give to each teen as they leave.)

Prayer

Pages M-5 through M-8
Fireside Catholic Youth Bible - NEXT

Song: Improvisation and Alleluia II

CD 2, Track 3

Words and Music by: In the Spirit of Taizé

FCYB Music CDs

Materials Needed

Fireside Catholic Youth Bible – NEXT, FCYB Music CDs, CD player, markerboard or chalkboard to record the responses in the What Jesus Did Large Group Discussion, paper, pens/pencils notepads and a prayer journal (optional) for each teen during the What Jesus Said Large Group Discussion.

Setting the Stage

No special arrangements are needed to set the stage for this session plan.

Opening Prayer

Holy Spirit of God, come upon us as we gather today. Open our hearts and our minds to the topic of prayer. Give us a desire to grow in the discipline of prayer. Increase our faith to believe that You always answer prayer. Inspire us to pray for Your will. Help us to know and understand Your will for our life. In Your name we pray, Amen.

What Jesus Did

Large Group Discussion – “The Power of Prayer” (15 minutes)

Discuss the teens’ answers to this question: (Use a markerboard or chalkboard to record their answers.)

How many specific instances in Scripture can you remember that refer to Jesus praying?

After the teens have given all the examples they can think of, ask a couple of the teens to alternate in reading the Scripture verses highlighted above the What Jesus Did article on page M-5 in the **Fireside Catholic Youth Bible – NEXT**. Then discuss the teens’ answers to these questions:

If Jesus was “one with God” why do you think He needed to pray?

What do these examples have in common?

What does this suggest to us about how we should pray?

After the discussion, read together the What Jesus Did article on page M-5 in the **Fireside Catholic Youth Bible – NEXT**. Then discuss the teens’ answers to these questions:

When could you “carve out” a little time to connect with God? What would you do with that time? Would you read the Bible; pray for others; listen to inspirational music; be silent; say a rosary or other prayers you memorized when you were younger?

Why would you need to pray more in your life? What would you have to change about your life to find it easier to pray more? Do you pray daily? If not, why not? Do you have the discipline it would take to pray daily? What would it take for you to develop that kind of discipline?

What Jesus Said

Large Group Discussion – “God Answers Our Prayers” (15 minutes)

Read the What Jesus Said article on page M-6 in the **Fireside Catholic Youth Bible – NEXT**. Then, discuss the teens’ answers to these questions:

Share a time in your life when God taught you the lesson of “pray and believe.”

Share an instance where you think God answered your prayer with “yes” “no” or simply, “not now.”

After this discussion, ask the teens to spend some time in quiet reflection. Have them write down one specific prayer request that would be very important to them right now in their life. Challenge them to pray for this intention every day for the next week – according to God’s will.

As a conclusion to this discussion, encourage the teens to start a prayer journal. Share with them what this would look like and how they could approach this simple task each day. If possible, give each of them a small notebook for this purpose.

Putting My Faith Into Action

Small Group Discussion (15 minutes)

Divide the teens into groups of two or three to discuss the To Make or Break and the Tips for Talking entries on page M-7 in the **Fireside Catholic Youth Bible – NEXT**.

Break – Share with each other something in your life that is causing a wedge between you and God. Pray with each other for God’s forgiveness after each sharing.

Tips for Talking – Role play with each other about how you might respond to this question about what you get out of Mass. Discuss with each other why it is sometimes hard to remain focused at Mass. Suggest solutions to this problem to each other.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Prayerfully, read the In My Example article on page M-8 in the **Fireside Catholic Youth Bible – NEXT**. Encourage the teens to spend a few moments in silence reflecting on what this story means to them. Then conclude with:

A Disciple’s Prayer

*Dear Jesus, make me thankful for Your gifts and for all Your blessings in my life.
Give me the strength and courage to accept myself just as You made me and
the courage to always seek Your will and purpose for me.
With the intercession of Your Blessed Mother I pray, Amen.*

Mindful in the Morning

When you wake up in the morning, before you get out of bed . . .

Say the prayer that never fails: “Thy will be done [for me today.]”

(Type this message on a small piece of paper and give to each teen as they leave.)