

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Prayer*

LESSON AT A GLANCE

Facilitator Notes:

- For Your Journey episodes can be found on the [NAC USA YouTube](#) channel *and* in the [NAC USA mobile app](#)
- Sermon clips can only be found in the [NAC USA mobile app](#)

I wonder...

- What is prayer?
- What should a prayer consist of?
- What does prayer do for us as Christians and why is it necessary?

I believe...

- Prayer is an opportunity given by God for human beings to have a connection with Him. (Catechism Q&A question 715)
- Prayer should come from the heart and should consist of adoration, thanksgiving, intercessions, and pleas. (Catechism Q&A question 723)
- Prayer is described as the "breathing of the soul" and allows us to connect to God through conversation. (Catechism Q&A question 716)

Materials:

- IGNITE Bible
- Catechism Q&A
- District Apostle sermon clip 29 - Did you think to pray?
<http://subsplash.com/nacusa/v/98f6cff>
- Poster/chart paper, markers
- Dictionaries or dictionaries on phones
- For Your Journey
 - [Episode 16 – Can God Be Influenced By Our Prayers?](#)

References:

- Bible verses: Matthew 6:6-13, Philippians 4:6-7
- Catechism Q&A questions 622, 715-728
- Catechism Q&A page 254 (Lord's Prayer)

PRE DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENT (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

Think of a friend that you talk with a lot. What method to you use to talk? Phone call? Text? In person? God gave us prayer as a way for us to talk with Him and for Him to talk with us. Join us tomorrow for small group at _____ where we'll be talking about prayer .

MESSAGE TO PARENTS (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

Facilitator Notes:

- Please feel free to add local information and customize as necessary
- Consider including a link to one of the For Your Journey episodes listed in the "References" section above.

Dear Parents,
 This week the "I Wonder...." questions focus on prayer. We discussed what prayer is, what it consists of, why it is necessary, and the effects that our prayers have. The students were given time to not only look at the way they currently pray, but were also given the opportunity to discover ways to strengthen their prayers. This week, share your experiences with your student of how you learned to pray and take time to pray aloud together.
 As always, if you have questions about the topic, please feel free to contact your Youth Leaders.

SUNDAY SERMON REFLECTIONS (up to 10 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- Allow 2-3 students to share their reflections. For larger groups, vary who shares from week to week.

- What Bible verse was used for the basis of last Sunday's sermon?
- What were some of the main takeaways? What did you learn?
- So far this week, how have you applied what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?
- Going forward, how will you apply what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?

HOOK (up to 15 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- Allow 2-3 students to share their reflections. For larger groups, vary who shares from week to week.
- Be sure not to read too fast, as this is an activity that should allow the prayer to sink in.
- Remind the students to read together and not read it as fast as they can. Sometimes starting them off by saying the first few words with them will allow them to follow the tempo.
- If a smaller group is present, you may also have students do this individually.

- How are you and how are you feeling today?
- Who would like to share their point to ponder or call to action from last week?

The Lord's Prayer is Jesus' example to us of how to pray. We pray it in every divine service before Holy Communion, but because we pray it so much, it could become habit for us. To keep our prayers from becoming habitual, sometimes we need to examine them.

Read the Lord's Prayer aloud to the students while they follow along from the student copy of the lesson. Then read it aloud as a group.

- Prayers that include adoration and worship, thanks, intercessions, and petitions do not need to be long to be meaningful.
 - While the Lord's prayer is not very long, it includes many components for a sincere prayer.
 - Have the students identify the different components of the Lord's Prayer, line by line. Identifying these components will potentially help in the next activity.
- Form the students into groups of two or three. Have them rewrite the Lord's Prayer using language that makes sense to them. Explain to the students that the meaning of the prayer should stay the same, but it can be rewritten in everyday language. Some of the words may be tricky for the students. It may be helpful to have dictionaries for them to look up words and find synonyms.
 - If the group seems open to it, share some of the rewritten prayers.

SET THE STAGE (up to 1 minute)

Facilitator Notes:

- Preview the "I wonder" questions with the students.

I wonder...

- What is prayer?
- What should a prayer consist of?
- What does prayer do for us as Christians and why is it necessary?

LESSON (up to 25 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- Student groups can be chosen in several ways:
 - Counting off by 4's.
 - Allow students to choose their own groups.
 - Split the class into 4 even groups.
 - Choose them ahead of time.
- If time allows, have the groups present and explain their posters to the rest of the class.

The Lord's Prayer was given to us by the Lord Jesus as an example of a sincere prayer. Every time we pray, we should be having a deep and meaningful conversation with God. It is our chance to connect with God and feel that He is there with us. Chances are our prayers do not sound like the Lord's Prayer every time. However, each time we pray, we should try to have four main components.

Student Question #1 What are the main components of prayer?

- Adoration and Worship
- Thankfulness
- Intercession
- Pleas and Petitions

While our prayers may not always contain all four components, we should try to incorporate as many as we can when talking with God.

Divide the class into four groups to discover more about each of the four components of prayer. After the groups have been created, hand each group a dictionary, the Catechism Q&A, and a poster board or chart paper. Assign each group one component to research and learn more about.

- Tell each group to create a poster that has the following information on it:
 - The component of prayer that they were assigned (Adoration and Worship, Thankfulness, Intercession, or Pleas and Petitions).
 - The definition of the component.
 - The Catechism Question reference number.
 - Ways we can incorporate the component into our prayers including words, phrases, times, etc.
- Once the posters are finished, display them at the front of the room so the whole class can see and reference them throughout the lesson.

Prayer is sometimes described as the "breathing of our soul".

- We cannot go through our day without breathing, so why is it sometimes possible that we go through an entire day without praying?
- Another reference the students will understand is going an entire day without talking to their friends. God should be our best friend and we should always want to talk with Him.

- For the sake of preparing for the discussion, the full Bible passage is included in the facilitator guide. However, in the actual discussion with the students, it is encouraged that the facilitator look up the passages in a physical Bible along with the students to reinforce the importance of using one's Bible and Bible literacy.

- Ask students to share their thoughts if they are willing and remind students to be respectful of others who are sharing.

- The students should understand that our prayers strengthen our relationship with God when we pray with thoughtfulness and purpose, and that while we may not always receive an answer right away or ever, God listens to each and every prayer.

As Christians, we enter into prayer as a way to know that God is present, that God hears us, and that God answers. Time spent praying is when we can be most honest with God and truly open our hearts and our souls to Him.

Student Question #2 What are the effects of prayer on us and those around us?

When we speak with Him in prayer, some of the effects are:

- Strength for the future
- A stronger belief in Him
- A stronger relationship with Him
- Comfort in knowing God is there
- A better understanding of ourselves as a result of opening up to God

When we go through trials and obstacles in our lives, prayer can bring us the assurance of God's presence and peace.

- Ask a student to read Philippians 4:6-7
 - *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*
- Prayer connects us to God and can strengthen us from the inside out.
- No matter what we bring to God, He will listen to us. This is the best way to talk with Him.

Student Question #3 How can or should or prayers change over time?

- When we first learned how to pray, we may have prayed for small and earthly things. As we grow older and more mature, our faith should inspire different and deeper prayers.
- While it is okay to pray for earthly things, such as health and safety, we should also pray for spiritual things, such as:
 - Our personal growth and faith in God
 - Opportunities to help and pray for others
 - Seeing the Holy Spirit in our lives
 - Loving Jesus more and allowing His love to change us
 - The Lord's return as He has promised

When we pray openly and sincerely, amazing things can happen. Have a conversation with the students about times in their lives where their prayers have been answered.

- How were you sure your prayer was answered?
- How old were you and was it your prayer or someone else's?
- What happened in those moments?
- Have you ever prayed for something and your prayer was not answered in the way you would have liked?
 - Did this make you lose faith in God?
 - Remind the students that God answers prayers when the time is right – not right when we WANT an answer.
 - Remind the students that sometimes God's answer to our prayers is "No" or "not now."

	<p>Ask the students about some ways that we can strengthen our prayers. Possible answers are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Include the four components. ➤ Pray with only one component (i.e. all adoration and worship). ➤ Try to pray differently each time and not fall into a routine of what and who we pray for. For example, we could easily form a habit in our mealtime prayers because we are praying for one particular thing in these prayers. ➤ It isn't necessarily about praying MORE, but about praying more DEEPLY and HONESTLY to connect our hearts with God's. ➤ Ask a student to read Matthew 6:6-7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathens do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.</i>
WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME? (up to 15 minutes)	
<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Your Journey episodes can be found on the NAC USA YouTube channel <i>and</i> in the NAC USA mobile app • Sermon clips can only be found in the NAC USA mobile app 	<p>Wrap up the lesson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If time allows, watch one or both of the videos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. District Apostle sermon clip 29 - Did you think to pray? http://subsplash.com/nacusa/v/g8f6cff b. For Your Journey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Episode 16 – Can God Be Influenced By Our Prayers? <p>Close with the "I Believe..." statements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ As you review each statement, stop and check in with the group to be sure there are no misunderstandings or misconceptions. ➤ Allow the students to state an "I Believe..." statement for each of the "I Wonder..." questions in their own words. ➤ Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to "surrender myself to you in belief". <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Prayer is an opportunity given by God for human beings to have a connection with Him. (Q&A question 715) ➤ Prayer should come from the heart and should consist of adoration, thanksgiving, intercessions, and pleas. (Q&A question 723) ➤ Prayer is described as the "breathing of the soul" and allows us to connect to God through conversation. (Q&A question 716) <p>A Point to Ponder....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How much time do you spend in prayer compared to other activities in your life? What adjustments can you make to your schedule to give prayer a more prominent focus? Or, how can you incorporate prayer into what you're already doing? <p>A Call to Action...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Research 'vigorous verbs' online. Find one to incorporate into your prayers this week. Write that phrase out and bring it to the next small group.

Weekly Reflections

What Bible verse was used for the basis of last Sunday's sermon?

What were some of the main takeaways? What did you learn?

So far this week, how have you applied what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?

Going forward, how will you apply what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?

Point to Ponder.....

Call to Action.....

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Prayer*

I wonder... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is prayer? ➤ What should a prayer consist of? ➤ What does prayer do for us as Christians and why is it necessary? 	I believe... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Prayer is an opportunity given by God for human beings to have a connection with Him. (Q&A question 715) ➤ Prayer should come from the heart and should consist of adoration, thanksgiving, intercessions, and pleas. (Q&A question 723) ➤ Prayer is described as the “breathing of the soul” and allows us to connect to God through conversation. (Q&A question 716)
References: Matthew 6:6-13, Philippians 4:6; Catechism Q&A questions 622, 715-728; Q&A page 254 (Lord’s Prayer)	

Read the Lord’s prayer and write it using your own words:

From the gospel of Matthew: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.	Your own words: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
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1. What are the main components of prayer?

2. What are the effects of prayer on us and those around us?

3. How can or should our prayers change over time?

Point to Ponder: How much time do you spend in prayer compared to other activities in your life? What adjustments can you make to your schedule to give prayer a more prominent focus?

Call to Action: Research ‘vigorous verbs’ online. Find one to incorporate into your prayers this week. Write that phrase out and bring it to the next small group.