

Praying Together

Core Activity

A Search for Traditional Prayers and Devotions

1. Begin by offering the following comments in your own words:

- Traditional prayers and devotions unite us with God and with other members of the Church, both living and dead.
- Worshipping with those prayers and devotions unites us with the worldwide Catholic community, and gives us the chance to pray with one voice.
- The Church's prayer tradition can supply us with words when it is just too difficult to come up with our own words.

Ask the students to name traditional prayers and devotions that they are familiar with or have heard of. It might be helpful to list them on the board.

2. Tell the students they will explore prayers and devotions that are a part of our Catholic Tradition. Ask them to break into small groups of three or four, and provide each group with a copy of *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth, Third Edition (CFH)* and other relevant resources such as *Liturgy of the Hours* and *The How-to Book of Catholic Devotions: Everything You Need to Know but No One Ever Taught You*, by Mike Aquilina and Regis J. Flaherty (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2000). Assign each group one of the following prayers or devotions:

- the Eucharistic Adoration
- novenas
- the Liturgy of the Hours
- the Apostles' Creed
- the Act of Contrition
- the Rosary

3. Explain to the groups that their task is to find out as much as possible about their prayer or devotion using the resources you have provided. They should consider the following questions:

- Where did this prayer or devotion originate?
- Does the prayer or devotion have a scriptural reference? If so, what is the reference?
- How, when, and where is this prayer or devotion most commonly used?
- What other interesting information can be shared about this prayer or devotion?

Allow about 15 minutes for the groups to prepare presentations.

4. Gather the students and ask for a spokesperson to share the results of the research. Add comments as needed.

(This activity is adapted from the *TC: Prayer* manual.)

Core Activity Extension

Journal Activities

Assign each student a journal activity that includes responses to the following questions and instructions:

- What is the first traditional prayer you remember learning? Who taught it to you?
- What is your favorite traditional prayer, and why is it your favorite?
- Choose a traditional prayer or devotion. Draw symbols and pictures that come to mind when you hear that prayer or practice that devotion.

(This activity is adapted from the *TC: Prayer* manual.)

Additional Activities

The Liturgy of the Hours



Conduct the prayer experience on the handout “A Morning Prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours” (Document #: TX003210). A leader and a reader will need to be designated. If there is time for advanced planning and if there are students willing to share their musical talents, an opening song and a musical setting to Psalm 63 would be most fitting. Otherwise, follow the prayer as designated. (This activity is adapted from the *TC: Prayer* manual.)

Patron Saints

1. Make a list of your students, using either their first names, or their Confirmation names if they have already received the Sacrament. Beside each student’s name, write the name of her or his patron saint.

2. Using one of the saints listings on the Internet, such as the patron saints index at www.catholic-forum.com (hosted by the Catholic Community Forum and Liturgical Publications of Saint Louis), print information about each of the saints assigned to the students. Give each student the information about his or her patron saint.

3. Ask the students to do additional research and write a one-page paper on their patron saints.

(This activity is adapted from the *TC: Prayer* manual.)

A Living Rosary

Create a living rosary. Each person represents one of the beads and holds a candle, and everyone sits on the floor in the outline of a rosary. As the prayer is said for each "bead," the candle that person is holding is held high to help everyone keep track of where they are in their prayer. (This activity is adapted from Diocese of Allentown, "Rally for Mary.")

(The material labeled *Catechetical Sessions on Christian Prayer* or *TC: Prayer* is from *Total Catechesis: Catechetical Sessions on Christian Prayer*, by Mary Shrader and Laurie Delgatto, in the Total Catechesis series [Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 2004]. Copyright © 2004 by Saint Mary's Press. All rights reserved.

The activity "A Living Rosary" is adapted from "Rally for Mary" [Diocese of Allentown, PA, 1986].)