



LESSONS 1 and 2 CONTENT GOALS FOR OCTOBER:

- ☐ Recite this month's Scripture Memorization
 - "Whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in Him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." (John 4:14)
- ☐ Define the following:
 - Prayer
 - Covenant
 - Covenant of Drama
 - Mediator or Intercessor
- ☐ Understand that Prayer is a gift from God.
- ☐ Explain how God always initiates the call to prayer.
- ☐ Describe how Abraham and Moses are examples of the drama of prayer.
- ☐ Tell the Story of Our Lady of Fatima
- ☐ Tell the Story of St. Teresa of Avila.
- ☐ **ALL: Complete your Monthly Prayer Board Activity!**

I. What is Prayer? – Lesson 1

MAIN IDEAS: “In order to have a relationship with God, we must pray. Prayer is a gift from God. He is the one who always initiates the call to prayer, and our prayer is a response to His call. Only in humility can we open ourselves to the gift of prayer. God the Father dwells in the innermost depths of our hearts, and so when we pray, we are developing an intimate relationship with Him” (*FF Parent Guide, Vol IV, p.14*).

God calls our families “to enter into the life of prayer, and thus to grow in relationship with Him and share in His saving mission in this world” (*FF Leader Guide, Vol IV, p.20*).

Vocabulary Word	Definition	In other words...
*Payer:	The raising of one’s mind and heart to God. It is a conversation with God.	Talking and listening to God Conversation of the heart with God by which we are transformed.

MASS CONNECTION: We raise our hearts in prayer at Mass. “Lift up your hearts” “we lift them up to the Lord.”

GOD ALWAYS TAKES INITIATIVE IN PRAYER: Jesus invites us into conversation so that our lives can be transformed. Our prayer is a response to God! It’s like picking up the phone to call a friend and having them be on the line already because they called you first (*The Catholic Faith Handbook, p.307*)

Example – The Samaritan Woman at the Well: Samaritan woman is a sinner and goes to the well in the heat of the day to avoid the stares and derisions of others. Jesus is sitting by the well and he says, “Give me a drink.” They begin a conversation and despite her sin, Jesus says that “he can give her the life-giving water so that she will never thirst again, and she asks to receive that living water. Jesus reveals to the Samaritan woman her heart, and she in turn believes Him to be the Messiah. Because of the conversation, the Samaritan woman’s life is transformed” (*FF Parent Guide Vol IV, p.286*). *Also Jesus “thirsts” on the cross – not just physical thirst, but for our love and our affection.

PRAYER WITH GOD: “He comes near to us, draws us into speaking with Him in order to give us life. In the process we are transformed” (*FF Parent Guide Vol IV, p.286*).

WE MUST BE HUMBLE TO RECEIVE THE GIFT OF PRAYER: Humility is the foundation of prayer” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church 2559*). When we are humble we understand that God is in charge and that we are reliant upon Him. In humility we can open our hearts up fully and honestly, acknowledging our sins and weaknesses along with our gifts, and we trust in his will.

GOD LIVES IN OUR INNERMOST HEARTS: Prayer is an intimate relationship with God. The heart is where the scripture speaks to us. The heart “is where we are made in the image and likeness of God. It is where we know, we love, and we choose” (*FF Parent Guild Vol IV 287*). Sometimes we use the word soul.

“Prayer is not just thinking about God or speaking words to God. Prayer is when our hearts are united to heart of God. It is an intimate relationship with God” (FF Parent Guide Vol IV, p.287).

-How do you speak to God? How often do you speak to God? Do you open yourself up honestly in full humility?

PRAYER IS SPEAKING AND LISTENING AND GROWING IN RELATIONSHIP: At the heart of prayer is a relationship where you grow in RELATIONSHIP together.

When we don't have words: Sometimes we don't have words or the “proper attitude of peace and openness.” Sometimes the attitude of the heart is held in the quietness of the heart. We can ask for this right attitude of peace and openness – that he will transform our hearts.

PRAYER AS COVENANT: “when our heart responds to the invitation from the heart of God to enter into a relationship with Him, we have entered into a covenant” (FF Parent Guild Volume IV, p.287).

Vocabulary Word	Definition	In other words...
*Covenant:	<p>A sacred, permanent bond of family relationship.</p> <p>“A solemn agreement between human beings or between God and human beings in which mutual commitments are recognized” (The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth, p.406).</p>	<p><i>A faithful agreement between God and His people</i></p>

When we say that Christian prayer is a covenant relationship between God and man in Christ, we acknowledge God is our Father and we are His children. This begins with Baptism, is kept alive through the other sacraments and through relationship in prayer.

HOOK QUESTION FOR YOUR CHILDREN: How do you pray? When do you feel closest to God?

OLDER KIDS: Prayer is raising your heart to God in conversation. Can you tell the difference between just saying words and raising your heart to God? How does it feel different?

II. Prayer in Salvation History

MAIN IDEAS: “When our heart responds to the invitation from the heart of God to enter into a relationship with Him, we have entered into a covenant. By observing the development of prayer in the Old Testament figures of Abraham and Moses, we can see how this covenantal relationship reaches its fulfillment through the prayer of Jesus Christ. The Church singles out God’s relationship with Abraham as the start of the drama of prayer because of Abraham’s great faith; Moses is an example of the one who prays for God’s people; and the drama of prayer is fully revealed to us in Jesus, as His will is in complete conformity with His Father’s will” (FF Vol IV Prayer, Parent Guide p.15).

Word	Definition	In Other Words...
Salvation History	“The pattern of events in human history that exemplify God’s presence and saving actions. In Catholic thought, all of history is salvation history, even though God’s presence may not be recognized” (The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth, p. 424).	The story of God’s people and His saving actions.
*Covenant Drama	The story of God’s relationship with His people as it unfolds in history.	A Story of God and His people as they learn how to pray and become God’s faithful people.
*Mediator or Intercessor	Someone who speaks for one person or group to another.	Someone who prays on behalf of another

God has fostered a relationship of prayer with His people throughout Salvation History.

ABRAHAM, MOSES, and JESUS: “By observing the development of prayer in the Old Testament figures of Abraham and Moses, we can see how this covenant relationship of prayer reaches its fulfillment through the prayer of Jesus Christ” (FF Parent Guide Vol IV, p.289).

PRAYER IS A COVENANT DRAMA: “We can read the series of events in the Old Testament, where God pursues a people that constantly breaks its covenant to Him through pride and sin” (FF Parent Guide Vol IV, p.289).

God doesn’t stop thirsting for His people!

“This drama culminates in the New Testament with the ultimate sacrifice of God’s own beloved Son on the Cross” (FF Parent Guide Vol IV, p.289).

The Story of Abraham – An Example of Great Faith in Prayer (Genesis 15:1–21 & Genesis 22:1–19):

We pray because we trust God. We have faith in God.

–God calls those he created into relationship with Him – First does this through the Jewish people.

–Beginning of Drama of Prayer begins with Abraham (founding Father of the Jewish people).

When Abram was 75, God called him to move away from his family and country. Abram responded in faith. God established a covenant with Abram (God changed his name to Abraham). “God promised that He would make Abraham ‘ the father of a multitude of nations’ (Genesis 17:5) so that his descendants would be numerous as the stars” (cf Genesis 15:5).

It was likely difficult for Abraham and his wife as they were old and Abraham’s wife was beyond child-bearing years. But Abraham responds in fidelity to God.

God granted Abraham a son Isaac. Later, God tests Abraham’s faith by commanding him to sacrifice his only son to Him. Abraham was prepared to do so because he trusted fully in God and His ability to raise people even from the dead. In the last moment, God stopped Abraham. Abraham proved his full and unconditional trust in the Lord. Abraham is a model of true faith. As such he is rewarded with the descendants that God promised.

“This call and response is an act of prayer. To have an attentive heart that follows the will of God is essential to prayer” (FF Parent Guide Vol IV, p.290).

The Story of Moses–Praying for Others (Exodus 3:1–22 & Exodus 32:1–14)

“The drama of prayer continues in the life of Moses, whom God chose to lead the Jewish people out of slavery in Egypt and to whom God gave the Ten Commandments” (FF Parent Guide Vol IV, p. 290).

God called Moses from the midst of a burning bush which was burning but was not consumed by the flames. God reveals himself to Moses. In this moment, Moses learns to pray.

Moses converses with God as you would an intimate friend. “Moses begs God to forgive the Israelites for worshiping the golden calf. Moses intercedes for his people, begging God, ‘Turn from your burning wrath; change your mind about punishing your people’ (Exodus 32:12). God hears his prayer and spares His people through Moses’ intercession. Moses is the forerunner of Jesus Christ, who with His coming becomes for all times ‘ the one mediator between God and men’ (1 Timothy 2:5)” (FF Parent Guide Vol IV, p.291). Moses is conversational: he debates, questions, and makes excuses and God responds and listens to his prayers.

AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD REQUIRES ABSOLUTE TRUST: *Our relationship with God requires absolute trust even if what you are called to seems impossible or if what we are called to doesn’t happen on our schedule.*

JESUS FULFILLS THE DRAMA OF PRAYER:

“The drama of prayer is fully revealed to us in Jesus. Jesus’ will is in complete conformity with His Father’s will” (FF Parent Guide Vol IV, p.291).

*Most poignant episode in Jesus’ life that exemplifies the drama of prayer is Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. It is a “dialogue and surrender to the Father’s will” (FF Parent Guide Vol IV, p.291). Jesus says, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me, yet not as I will, but as you will” (Matthew 26:39).

-God allows his only Son to die on the cross for the Salvation of Mankind – God so loved the world he makes the sacrifice that he spared Abraham.

“God the Father did not desire His Son’s death, but he knew that fallen humanity’s response to Jesus’ call to radical conversion of heart would be to put Him to death” (FF Parent Guide Vol IV, p.291).

JESUS AS SOLE MEDIATOR: Jesus acts as the sole mediator to God the Father which is why we pray “through Jesus Christ, Amen.”

-he initiates prayer and carries our prayers to the Father.

-We imitate Jesus so we can pray as we should (The Our Father)

-As with Jesus, we learn we can trust God in all things even the impossible.

This trust in God’s promise can only be developed in a life of prayer, when we lift our hearts and minds to God” (FF Parent Guide Vol IV, p.291).

HOOK QUESTION FOR YOUR CHILDREN: Is it hard or easy to trust God? Does God call you to things that are difficult for you to do? Describe.

OLDER KIDS: God calls us to His will not our own. Is it easy or hard to figure out what is God’s will versus your own? What keeps you from trusting in God’s plan?

IN SUMMARY:

- God always takes the initiative in prayer.
- We must be humble to receive the gift of prayer.
- God lives in our innermost hearts.
- When we enter into a relationship with God, we enter into a covenant with Him.
- Abraham is an example of someone who has great faith in prayer, and Moses is an example of someone who prays for others.
- The covenantal relationship of prayer reaches its fulfillment through the prayer of Jesus Christ.