**Our Prayer Place**

**PART I**

**YOU WILL NEED:**

\* a small table ready

\* a box or basket containing a green cloth, Bible/bookstand, candle, cross and matches next to your chair

*Invite children to sit reverently in a circle in the part of the classroom where you intend to set up a prayer place. Begin by saying…*

**In our classroom we are going to make a special prayer place to be with God. It is a place we can be quiet with God. We can listen to God and talk to God. In this prayer place we will have some special objects to help us to be with God. Let’s look at some of these special objects.**

*Place the table in the prayer place.*

**First we will put this table in our prayer place to keep our special things on.**

*Cover the table with the green cloth.*

**At this time of the year we put a green cloth on the table. Green is a colour that reminds us that God is with us all the time.**

**I wonder what else we might put in our prayer place. Let’s see…Here we have a Bible.**

*Take out and hold the Bible up for all children to see. Be conscious of handling the Bible in a reverent manner.*

**The Bible is a special book which has lots of stories. We can hear some of the special stories of God from the Bible, here in our prayer place. I wonder where else you hear special stories about God …**

**When we carry our Bible or when we read from our Bible we hold it carefully and gently just like this.**

*Demonstrate how to carry, lift and hold the Bible in a reverent manner. Invite one or two children to demonstrate how to carry, lift and hold the Bible. Give praise.*

**Let’s put our class Bible in a special place in our prayer place.**

*Place the Bible on a stand on the table.*

**I wonder what else we might put in our prayer place…Let’s see.**

*Take out cross and show to children.*

**Here we have a cross. I wonder where else you might see a cross…**

**This cross reminds us of our special friend Jesus. In our prayer place we can hear some of the special stories of Jesus from the Bible and we can wonder about Jesus together. Let’s put our cross in a special place on our prayer place.**

*Place the cross on the table.*

**I wonder what else we might put in our prayer place…Let’s see.**

*Take out candle and show to children.*

**Look, a candle. I wonder why we have a candle for our prayer place…**

**In our Church we light candles to remind us that Jesus is always with us. We can light the candle when we are talking to God or when we are listening to special stories of God from the Bible.**

**Let’s put our candle in a special place.**

*Place the candle on the table.*

**This is our prayer place.**

*Point to all four objects as you name them again.*

**It has a green cloth, a Bible, a candle and a cross. It is a very special place.**

**When we are in our prayer place, it is a special time in class when we can talk to God. When we say a prayer to God we hold our hands like this, watch:**

*Demonstrate how to hold hands together for prayer.*

**Let’s see if you can do it… Give praise.**

**We can begin with a special prayer called The Sign of the Cross. It goes like this, watch:**

*Say and make the Sign of the Cross.*

**In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**Let’s see if you can do it…**

*Continue to demonstrate and encourage children to copy the words and action for the Sign of the Cross. Give praise.*

*Engage with ‘I wonder’, KWL p9.*

**Resource Sheet 2**

**Our Prayer Place**

**PART II**

**You will need:**

* 6-8 tea light candles
* matches

*Invite children to come to sit in the prayer place.*

**Let’s see if we remember some of the special objects in our prayer place.**

*Briefly point to and name the special symbols on the prayer place, green cloth, Bible, candle, cross.*

**When we are in our prayer place we can talk to God. Do we remember how to hold our hands together for praying… Let’s begin with our special prayer called The Sign of the Cross. Let’s see if we remember how it goes. It goes like this, watch:**

*Say and make the Sign of the Cross.*

**In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**Let’s see if you can do it…**

*Say and make the Sign of the Cross together.*

**When we are in this prayer place we try to walk more gently and talk more quietly so we do not disturb others. We try to listen carefully to others. In this special prayer place we can be with God, we can talk to God and listen to God. We can hear some of the special stories of God from the Bible and we can wonder about God together. When we come to our special prayer place we need to get ourselves ready to be with God. Let’s see how we will get ourselves ready to be with God.**

**When we come to the floor or the circle we need to walk gently and slowly and find a space to sit.**

*Invite a child to walk to their table/desk and back again. Give a few children a turn. Practice with whole class walking to their seats and back again.*

**Another thing to remember when we are in our special prayer place is to speak in a quiet voice and to listen to others when they are speaking. We need to give everyone a chance to speak and wonder about God. If we are too noisy we might disturb someone who is speaking to God or listening to God. Let’s see if we can speak clearly and listen quietly. Ready? Listen: My name is….**

*Give all children an opportunity to say their names in a clear voice. My name is…*

**When we are getting ready to listen to one of the special stories of God from the Bible we need to sit in a special way. We sometimes sit by crossing our legs and putting our hands in our laps. Sometimes, when it is a special story from the Gospel our Church always stands, so we do this too. I wonder if you can do that.**

*Invite a child to demonstrate how we need to sit and how to stand. Encourage all children to have a go. Give praise.*

**When we are listening to one of the special stories of God from the Bible we need to become very quiet. We can get quiet by making ourselves very still. Let’s try to make our bodies very quiet and still. This is how. Close your eyes and listen to the quietness…Make your whole body still…See if you can make your legs and feet very still…See if you can make your arms and hands very still…See if you can make your head and shoulders very still…Feel all of your body getting very still. Now feel your own breathing… Feel yourself breathing in and breathing out…breathing in and breathing out… in…and out… Feel your breathing become slower and quiet… Now we are ready to listen to one of God’s special stories. Open your eyes and be ready. This is a story about the Light.**

*Place the candle from the prayer place in front of you where all children can see it.*

**Once there was someone who seemed so wonderful that lots of people wanted to be near him. They followed him everywhere. They wanted to know more about him and all the magnificent things he did. One time he said to them ‘I am the Light of the world’.**

*Light the candle on the word ‘Light’.*

**Let’s enjoy the light together.**

*Sit quietly enjoying the light.*

**Many people followed the Light and loved the Light. People who love the Light became one with the Light. Watch.**

*Hold up a tea light candle and say…*

**This is one person’s light.**

*Light the tea light candle from the class candle and place it next to the class candle. Take up another tea light and say…*

**This is another person’s light.**

*Light the tea light candle from the class candle and place next to the first tea light. Repeat action and words for a further four candles, then say…*

**Look at the light. It is growing and getting bigger. All the light came from the Light here.**

*Point to the class candle.*

**The Light is in many places at the same time.**

*Point to the small candles and light one or two more.*

**The Light is not smaller. It is still the same…I wonder how the Light can stay the same even though so much light is given away.**

*Point to the class candle.*

**Many people come to the Light and receive their light. They become one with the Light because they love the Light. Your light and my light can become one with the Light too. Watch. This is my light.**

*Light another tea light and place with the others.*

**Let’s enjoy the Light.**

*Sit quietly enjoying the light.*

**Let’s make something that shows how this story about the Light feels to you. I will give you some crayons and some paper and you can make a picture about the Light. You can work on your table or on the floor here.**

**Resource Sheet 3**

**Our Prayer Place**

**PART III**

**You will need:**

* Bible
* class candle
* matches
* bookmark

*Invite children to come to sit in the prayer place.*

**When we are in our prayer place we can talk to God and we can listen to God too. We begin with a special prayer called The Sign of the Cross. Let’s join our hands together and see if we remember how it goes. It goes like this, watch:**

*Say and make the Sign of the Cross.*

**In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**Let’s see if you can do it… Give praise**

*Take the Bible and hold it up for all children to see.*

**The Bible is a special book. We can listen to God by reading the Bible.**

**And we light our class candle to remind us that Jesus is still with us as we listen to the Word of God in the Bible.**

*Light the class candle.*

**The story we heard before about the Light is in the Bible. Let’s look.**

*Open the Bible to John 8:12 and turn it so the children can see the words. Then read the words slowly and reverently. Pause for a moment and then lead children through ‘I Wonder’ questions…*

**I wonder who is like the Light.**

**I wonder how it feels to be one with the Light.**

**I am going to put a bookmark in the Bible to mark the place where the story about the Light is found. You might look at these words yourself later, or someone might read them to you.**

*Put the bookmark in the Bible and place the Bible reverently back on its stand in the prayer place.*

**Now let us talk to God and say thank you to God. You can say one thing you are thankful for or you might say something about the story of the Light. You can say your prayer out aloud or you can say it quietly. God can hear us even if we don’t speak out aloud. God listens to us all the time. If we want to pray aloud we need to remember to wait for our turn. If one person is speaking we have to listen and wait for our turn. Let’s join our hands together ready to pray…**

*Give enough time for prayer. Encourage silent spaces. When the praying is over, say…*

**Let’s finish by making the Sign of the Cross together.**

*Say and make the Sign of the Cross.*

**In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

*Invite children to walk quietly back to tables/desks.*

**Resource Sheet 4**

**Our Prayer Place**

**PART IV**

**YOU WILL NEED:**

* small bowl of water

*Invite children to come to sit in the prayer place.*

**When we are in our prayer place we can talk to God and we can listen to God too. Our prayer place is a special space we can be with God. I wonder if you know other special places to be with God…**

*Encourage a variety of responses.*

**The Church building is a special place where lots of people gather to be with God, to talk to God and listen to God. It is a big space so there is room for everyone. When people enter the Church they move slowly and quietly and talk gently as a sign of reverence. I wonder what it means to be reverent…**

*Invite a child to walk to the door and back again in a slow, gentle manner. Give a few children a turn. Practise with whole class walking around the room and back to the prayer place again.*

**When people enter the Church they dip their fingers in holy water and make the Sign of the Cross just like this…**

*Demonstrate how to dip fingers in the water and make the Sign of the Cross.*

**People bless themselves with holy water and make the Sign of the Cross to show that God is with them.**

*Invite one or two students to have a go at blessing themselves. Practise with everyone.*

**Let’s put the bowl of water on our prayer place to remind us about blessing ourselves with the Sign of the Cross to show that God is with us.**

*Place bowl of water on prayer place.*

**Another thing people do to get ready to be with God in the Church is to genuflect just like this…**

*Demonstrate how to genuflect. Repeat a few times as you say…*

**People genuflect when they come into the Church to show they know Jesus is with them in a special way in the Church.**

*Practise genuflecting with students. Give praise.*

*Visit the Church building and identify some key objects there – altar, statues, font, lectern, tabernacle, cross. Practise blessing with holy water and genuflecting. Allow a short time for students to sit in silence and enjoy the quiet and stillness.*

The script for **Our Prayer Place** is based on ideas from:

*To Know Worship and Love* – Kindergarten, Chapter 1, (2005), James Goold House Publications, Melbourne, Victoria

Stewart Sonja M and Berryman Jerome W (1989), *Young Children and Worship*, Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville