

## **Start-Up/Third Grade Lesson Plan**

### **Session 5 – Signs and Prayers**

#### **Materials needed:**

Situation cards (in tub)

Pencils (in tub)

“Praying as Jesus Prayed” handout – 1 per student

“Wrap Up Your Love” handout – 1 per student

#### **Prayer:**

Our Father/Hail Mary/Glory Be

Say:

**You know what I really look forward to in the summer? A family vacation! Everyone piles in the car and we all go somewhere fun. Do any of you do that?**

**Car trips are great and in my family before we’re even halfway there, someone gets hungry! So we start looking for signs – signs that say “Food and gas 5 miles” or “Eat at Joe’s”.**

**Sooner or later, someone spots a “McDonalds – Next Exit” sign and we all get excited and happy. Why? Can we see the McDonald’s? No, it’s probably at least 5 miles away! How do we know it’s there? (We can read the sign and we know that even though we can’t see the McDonald’s restaurant, it’s there.)**

- **Did you know that we also have signs in the Catholic Church?**  
They are a lot like that McDonald's sign on the road.
- **Even though we couldn't see the McDonald's restaurant, we knew from the sign that it was there. Catholic signs are things we can see that let us know about the reality of things we can't see.**
- **We learned about some of those things at our church tour, didn't we? Can you remember any of them?** (Candles – the presence of God/ Saint statues – the saints who are in heaven and pray for us/Sanctuary lamp- Jesus is in the tabernacle/Holy water – we are sons and daughters of God/ The Stations of the Cross – Jesus suffered and died for us etc.)
- **One of the most important signs is one that we make ourselves called “The Sign of the Cross”. Can you show me how it's done?** (Practice the correct way of making the Sign of the Cross with the kids)
- **Okay, good! You showed me how it's done, now tell me why you do it!** (Give kids a chance to tell you why they think we make the Sign of the Cross.)
- **We make the sign of the cross because:**
  - † **it shows we believe in the Trinity because we pray in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.**

- † it places us under the protection of God.
- † it shows that we remember how Christ died for us.
- † it blesses anything we set out to do (as long as it is in God's will).
- † it strengthens us and helps us in times of temptation.
- † it says we profess and believe in Jesus in everything we do.
- † it makes us remember the price Jesus paid for us whenever we might be angry or hateful or in trouble.
- † it makes the devil run!
- † it is a gesture of thanksgiving
- † it brings God close to me in any situation
- † it is our signature of faith showing the world that we are Catholic believers.

**All of that in one little gesture!**

**Let's see how the Sign of the Cross should be a part of our everyday lives – not something we only do in church. I need 12 volunteers!**

(Give each student a cardstock "situation" card. Ask your volunteers to come to the front of the room one at a time and read the situation that is on their card.

If you do not have 12 students, you and your assistant can take part or the kids can take turns. After the student has read his card, have the class decide on an answer.)

**Hopefully, you can now see what an important gesture the Sign of the Cross is to Catholics. You should make it often and never take it for granted. God is always close to us but when we make the Sign of the Cross, it helps us to know, without a doubt, that He is near.**

## **PRAYER**

- **We all have friends, don't we? How often do you talk to your friends? How often do you talk to your BEST friend? I bet most of us talk to our best friends once a day or at least several times a week.**
- **What would happen if you NEVER talked to your best friend? Would you be best friends for long?**
- **How often do you talk to God? You may not know it, but Jesus is the best friend you will ever have. And although Jesus will always love you, it will be hard for you to know that if you don't talk to Him. And if you spend your life not talking to God, you show God that He is not important to you.**
- **Praying simply means talking to God. You don't need anything special - God is happy with any kind of communication from you. Tell Him about your day. Let Him know your troubles, fears, and joys. God wants to be close to you and prayer should be a part of our everyday lives.**

- **Jesus taught us a very special prayer. We pray it before every class. Do you know what it is? (The Lord's Prayer)**

(Give each student a "Praying as Jesus Prayed" handout.)

- **Let's try together and see how much of the Lord's Prayer we can fill out by heart.**

(Fill out the handout together as a class.)

- **There is one special word that is in every single prayer. Do you know what that word is? (Amen)**
- **What does "Amen" mean? I think sometimes we just think it means "The End"? No, that's not right. Well then, why do we always say it?**
- **Amen is a Hebrew word that means "truly it is true". In other words, it means "I believe".**
- **When you say "Amen" at the end of a prayer, you are saying "I believe everything I just said."**
- **Are you beginning to see why praying every day is so important?**
- **Here is a morning prayer that you can take home and tape to your mirror or place in your bedroom so that you see it each day. It will remind you that God loves you and will be a part of everything you do each day.**

(Give each student a "Wrap Up Your Love" handout. If you have time, kids can color and cut out the prayer to take home.) Cont.

End your class by praying the Quiet Time Prayer (at the bottom of the “Praying as Jesus Prayed” handout) together.