

Lesson Plan for Lesson 37

Praying Together

Preparation and Supplies

- Study chapter 37, “Praying Together,” in the handbook.
- Gather one or two articles from Catholic reference materials or other resources that provide background information for each of the traditional prayers and devotions listed in the Live It! activity of this lesson. Prayer books, Catholic encyclopedias, and Catholic Web sites are good resources.
- Make copies of the handout “Saying Yes to God” (Document #: TX003433), one for each participant.

Pray It! (5 minutes)

Tell the participants that class will begin with a communal prayer of the Church, a portion of the Eucharistic Prayer from the Mass. **Direct** them to turn to the Pray It! “From Age to Age We Gather,” on page 407 in the handbook. **Read** the prayer and conclude with the Sign of the Cross.

Study It! (35 to 45 minutes, depending on your class length)

A. Praying Always

1. **Direct** the young people to form groups of three or four. **Ask** each group to brainstorm a list of cheers, mottoes, pledges, or songs used by a school or community group. For each example on their lists, **ask** them to discuss the following questions:
 - When does the group use or share this example?
 - How does this example contribute to the group’s identity?
 - What beliefs does this example express?

Invite a representative from each group to share an example. If there is time, **brainstorm** with the participants a list of common prayers and statements used by the Catholic community.

2. **Direct** the young people to read the chapter introduction and the sections “Praying Always,” “The Importance of Communal Prayer,” and “The Centrality of Sacred Scripture,” on pages 404–408 in the handbook. The content covers points 1 through 5 on the handout “Lesson 37 Summary” (Document #: TX003432).
3. **(Optional)** **Lead** a discussion on the Reflect questions on page 407 in the handbook.



B. The Centrality of the Eucharist

1. **Ask** the participants to find a partner and discuss the following questions:
 - What do you think is the most important aspect of communal prayer?
 - Why is attending Mass so important?

Invite volunteers to share their answers with the class.

2. **Direct** the young people to read the sections “The Centrality of the Eucharist” and “Eucharistic Devotions,” on pages 408–410 in the handbook. The content covers points 6 through 8 on the handout “Lesson 37 Summary.”
3. **(Optional) Invite** questions and observations on the content. You might also invite discussion on the Scripture Connection “Let Your Whole Life Be a Prayer,” on page 410 in the handbook.

C. Liturgy of the Hours

Direct the participants to read the sections “Liturgy of the Hours” and “Other Ways of Praying with Groups,” on pages 410–414 in the handbook. The content covers points 9 and 10 on the handout “Lesson 37 Summary.”

Note: If you are running short on time, you may wish to just briefly summarize this section of the handbook.

Live It! (15 to 20 minutes)

1. **Direct** the young people to form groups of three or four. **Distribute** to each group the resources you have collected for this activity (books, Web site printouts, articles, and so forth). **Assign** each group one of the following prayers or devotions:
 - forty hours’ devotion
 - first Friday devotion
 - Eucharistic devotion
 - benediction
 - exposition
 - the Liturgy of the Hours
 - novenas
 - the Rosary

Explain the task as follows:

- Each small group is to find out as much as possible about its assigned prayer or devotion, using the resources I have provided.
- Consider the following questions in your search:
 - Where did this prayer originate?
 - Who is the author?
 - Does the prayer have a scriptural reference? If so, what is the reference?
 - How, when, and where is this prayer most commonly used?



2. After the groups have had time to conduct their research, **invite** a representative from each group to present the group's findings to the rest of the class. **Share** the following comments in your own words:
- The Church teaches that it is always possible to pray and that regular prayer is a vital necessity. Prayer and Christian life are inseparable.
 - Those who pray regularly feel a constant effect in their lives. They report clarity in decision making, calm in the face of adversity, strength in the face of temptation, and growth in loving other people. They also note that in the absence of prayer, it is much easier to fall back into sin.
 - The Church invites us to be in constant prayer in one other important way: by praying together as a community. By the very nature of what it means to be a Christian, prayer is more than your own personal response to God's initiative.
 - The forms of prayer you have just studied were developed within the Church to provide regular and meaningful prayer opportunities. They have been tested by centuries of Christian experience. Take advantage of them whenever you can.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Following any announcements, **select** two readers and **distribute** a copy of the handout "Saying Yes to God" (Document #: TX003433) to each participant. Conclude by **leading** this prayer service.

