

THE ARCHDIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM

**Sacred Heart Catholic Primary
School**



'To Grow in Wisdom and in Grace'

Planned Opportunities for Prayer

Planned Opportunities for Prayer 2023-2024

Class	Autumn Term		Spring Term		Summer Term	
Reception	Thankful Playdough	Blessed with Love	Sorry sand	Forgiveness stones	Bubble Prayers	Thankful ribbons
Year 1/ 2	Please beads	Blessed with Love	Pipe cleaner people	Forgiveness stones	Thankful ducks	Peace Garden
Year 3	Inside out boxes	Blessed with Love	Glow stick prayers	Forgiveness /sorry stones	Friendship Flowers	The Wheelbarrow
Year 4	Remembrance Ribbons	The Manger	Narnia: The Wardrobe Door	Sorry stones	Under my Umbrella	Plastic Planet
Year 5	Remembrance plaits	Shining brightly with Gods love	Patchwork cross prayers	Sorry stones	Shine for Jesus	Playing card prayers
Year 6	Opportunity Keys	Response Prayers	Big Questions	Sorry stones	Flower prayers – gifts and talents	Flag Prayers

Sorry Sand

- Equipment Tray to house some sand. Sand
- Instructions Draw or write in the sand something that you are sorry for. The Bible says that when we say sorry, God forgives us. There might also be a person you want to say sorry to. Wipe the sand clean. When you are forgiven, you get a fresh, clean start.



Pipe Cleaner people

Inspired by Simon of Cyrene, who was special because he helped Jesus carrying the cross, we reflect and pray for a special person in our life while creating 'a pipe cleaner model'.

Equipment: **pipe cleaners**

Instructions

Simon was a very generous person for he helped and carried the burden of the One who was suffering. Think of someone you know, someone in your family, or a close friend who is special to you, for example, someone who takes care of you, makes you happy, listens to you and/or encourages you.



- **As you think about what makes this person special to you, make a model of them out of pipe cleaners.**
- **You may say a silent prayer for this special person in your life.**

Hiding our Lights

: 'No one lights a lamp and puts it in a place where it will be hidden, or under a bowl. Instead they put it on a stand, so that those who come in may see the light' Luke 11:33

Using electric tea lights ask pupils to think about their gifts and talents and then turn on the light. As they look at it, they can think about the ways in which they use their talents. Now get them to place their hands over the light and consider the ways in which they block or hold back on using their gifts and talents. Prayerfully consider why these barriers are there and ask God to help them lift them. As the bowl is removed, say a prayer committing to using specific gifts and talents and asking for God's help and guidance



Patchwork cross prayers: You will need:

a cross made of wood or very thick cardboard.

Give each pupil a scrap of paper (scrapbook/collage paper works well for this) and ask them to think about the things for which they need forgiveness and write these on the back of the paper. Paste everyone's prayers onto the cross so the writing is face down. Apply an extra layer of glue and leave to dry. Once it is dry and shiny, show the pupils the cross and explain that our sins have moved from us to the cross, where Jesus has dealt with them all.

Wisdom Tiles

Equipment Scrabble style Letter Tiles

- Instructions Use the letters to spell out your name. Use the extra letters to make another word through your name, that is a feature of God, such as 'love' or 'forgiving' or 'truthful'. Think about how you are special and how wise God is wise.



Lent: Big Questions

Pontius Pilate asked about what is the truth, in this prayer space one is given the space to think about and write the question one would like to ask God.

Pontius asked a lot of questions. Like him, we too ask big questions about life.

- What are your big questions?
- If you could ask God one question right now, what would you ask?
- If you want, you can take a mobile template and tell your question to God in your heart. You can also colour the mobile template.



Western Wall 'Cross': Introduce pupils to the idea of the 'Western Wall' in Jerusalem and how people 'post' their prayers between cracks in the wall. Using cardboard tubes and a glue gun, create a cross that pupils can use to post their prayers or light LED tea lights.



Glow Stick Prayers – link to Candlemas?

Simeon recognised Jesus as the light o the world

This prayer activity invites pupils to take an unlit glow stick and think about something they don't want to be scared of anymore. Take an unlit glow stick, hold it in your hand, think about something you don't want to be scared of anymore.

When you're ready think about Simeon in the temple who recognised Jesus as THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD, and crack the glow stick so it shines bright. Keep the glow stick to remind you that Jesus is the light of world, with him there is only light not dark



Prayer Weave: Setting up a simple loom will provide many opportunities for prayer in your school. It can be a permanent prayer station, with long strips of paper always available for pupils to weave their prayers in. Alternatively, add a focus/title to the top of the weaving loom so that prayers are gathered on a central theme at set times. It provides a good illustration of community and how our prayers come together, along with our actions, to change the things that trouble us or express gratitude for the things that inspire us.



Thankful Play Dough



Instructions Think about all the good things in your life. Think of someone or something that you are really grateful for. Use some of the playdough to make a model of the thing you have thought of. If you want to, while you are making your model you can also say thank you to God.

Please Beads

- Equipment A beautiful bowl, probably not glass, a big tub of glass pebbles - maybe different colours.

- Instructions Have you ever tried praying before? Christians believe that God hears all prayers, even when we think they're small and silly. Here's a simple to try praying, if you want to. Take a bead and hold it in your hand. If you feel comfortable then talk with God quietly about whatever is on your mind. Then place your bead back in the bowl along with everyone else's prayers.



Friendship Flowers

Equipment A large board or wall space, brightly coloured card, Blu-tack or a stapler, pens, friendship quotes.

- Set up Place a small heart-shape on the wall space or on a large table where the flower can take shape. This will be the centre, so make sure there is plenty of space around it, and that pupils will be able to reach it.

Cut up the coloured card into petal shapes, big enough for pupils to write or draw their prayer, and put with some pens and pins/staplers/Blu-tack. Put a few quotes about friendship nearby to give pupils some inspiration as they think about those people for whom they wish to give thanks.



- Instructions

Who is your best friend?

Which friends support you and look after you?

What makes a good friend?

If you want to, write the first-name of a friend or someone in your family you are thankful for, and then write or draw a short thank you thought or prayer for them. Then add it to the Friendship Flower.

Inside Out Boxes

- Equipment 6 boxes (mixture of decorated shoe boxes, and 'well-used'/plain boxes), 3 plastic diamonds/coloured gems, 3 small stones.

- Set up To set up the activity, prepare a table with 2 boxes (you can add another box if you wish). Put the plastic diamond/gem (the 'valuable item') inside the plain box and place the stone inside the decorated box. Switch them out between every pupil to make sure the impact is 'fresh'.



- Instructions Look at the boxes in front of you. Think about what they might hold inside. Which box do you imagine has the most valuable item inside?

Open the boxes and have a look at the contents. Are you surprised? It's easy for us to judge people in the same way as we judge these boxes. We focus on how they look and what they wear, instead of discovering what they're like inside.

If you want to, as you think about this activity, you could ask God to help you not to judge people by what they look like to what they wear, but to care more about what they're like inside.

Fingerprint Prayers

Equipment Large sheet of paper/card, non-toxic child-friendly ink pads, pens, hand wipes.

- Set up Put the cardboard somewhere on the floor or securely on a wall. Put the ink pads, pens and hand wipes nearby. This activity works best with a team member to supervise use of the ink pad.
- Instructions Christians believe that God made everyone. And Christians believe that God loves everyone equally too, even you and me. Like snowflakes, we're all unique and wonderfully different. No other human being has the same fingerprint as you. If you want to, press one finger onto the ink pad and then add your fingerprint to the card as a way of saying thank you to God for making you unique and wonderfully different.



Flag Prayers

- Equipment A book of country flags, small pieces of paper, pens, washing line/net, pegs.

Optional: International news articles, atlas, straws, sellotape.

- Set up Hang up the netting, ensuring that it is securely tied to the walls. Place the flags book, the pens, pegs and pieces of paper nearby.

Invite pupils to think of a country – maybe one where they have relatives or friends, or one they've heard about on the news - perhaps getting ideas from an atlas or the flag book. Encourage them to draw the flag for that country on one side of the paper, and then on the other to write or draw a wish or a prayer for that country.



Pupils can then peg the flag to the netting. Alternatively, pupils could tape the flags they've drawn onto a straw.

While you draw, think about what you know about that country. What is it like? What do the people need? If you want to, you can write or draw your thoughts or prayers for that country on the other side of your flag.

Remembrance Plaits

This activity offers pupils the opportunity to think about and pray for people who are in danger, people who are sad, people long for peace.

Equipment: • You will need 30cm lengths of wool in red, white and blue.

- 3 baskets for the wool.

Instructions: The coloured lengths of wool will be laid out in separate baskets with the explanation labels for each colour beside the basket.

Red the colour used on warning signs to show danger. As we plait with the red wool we pray for those who are in danger.

Blue; feeling blue; represents sadness. As we plait with the blue wool we pray for those who are sad.

White the colour of a dove represents peace.

As we plait with the white wool we pray for those people who live where there is war long for peace.

It may be helpful to have out a few examples of plaits at different stages of construction.

Take one strand of each of the colours of wool and tie them together with a knot at one end. Now slowly and thoughtfully plait the three colours together.

As you plait with the red wool pray for those who are in danger.

As you plait with the blue wool pray for those who are sad.

As you plait with the white wool pray for those people who live where there is war and long for peace.

When you have plaited the whole length, knot the ends together to secure it. You may like to use this as a wristband or bookmark to remind you of the people you have prayed for

Opportunity Keys

• Equipment Lots of different keys (the more interesting the better), a large dish, the outline of a door.

• Set up This activity can be good at the beginning of a new school year or a new term as these are often times of opportunity and challenge. We are faced with lots of small opportunities and challenges every day, and then sometimes we face larger ones too. These opportunities and challenges can stir up feelings of excitement and anticipation, but they can also stir up feelings of anxiety and fear. This activity encourages the pupils to face their opportunities and challenges positively.

- Instructions Life offers lots of opportunities, and it also presents us with lots of challenges.

What opportunities and challenges are you facing? Maybe you've got an opportunity to do something new? Maybe a particular friendship is challenging? It could be at home, at school, or maybe it's personal?



Imagine that these things are like a door into something new. What key do you need to unlock the door? If you want to, place one of the keys in the bowl as a symbol of choosing to unlock your opportunity or challenge.

If you want to, you can quietly ask God to give you courage to face your opportunity or challenge.

Remembrance Ribbons

- Equipment A quiet(er) corner of the prayer space, a large 'cargo' net or something similar, strips of ribbon in 3 light/bright colours, pens, laminated images of world issues OR laminated images of a disaster or tragedy (be sensitive about which images you choose).



- Set up This activity invites pupils to reflect on world issues – wars, conflicts, etc. It can also be used to help pupils reflect on how they feel following a tragic event, and it gives them an opportunity to express these feelings. In particular, this activity invites pupils to think about the people who were or are involved.

Invite pupils to look at images from around the world (e.g. wars, conflicts, natural disasters) or of a recent event (e.g. fire, terrorist attack). Ask – Who has been hurt? Who is helping? Who, if anyone, caused this? What do you hope or wish or pray for those involved?

This activity works best with a team member alongside to talk with the students.

- Instructions: Have a look at the images on the table. Is there one that really stands out to you? Think about the different people who were involved. Who has been hurt? (Yellow ribbon) Who has helped? (Green ribbon) Who, if anyone, caused this? (Red ribbon)

Choose a piece of ribbon. If you want to, you can write or draw a thought or prayer on it for the people that it represents. Then tie your ribbon onto the cargo net.

Playing Card Prayers

Equipment This activity can be done using packs of playing cards, which the pupils can write their prayers onto with thin marker pens.

- Instructions: Choose one of the playing cards. Which suit is it? If you want to, you can use these themes as a guide for your thoughts or prayers:

Hearts - write or draw about someone who means a lot to you.

Clubs – write or draw about something difficult, something you need help with.

Diamonds – write or draw about something precious, that you are thankful for.

Spades – write or draw about something you need to work at, to 'dig deeper'.



Peace Garden

- Equipment Paper flowers or foam flowers, lollipop sticks, tray of soil, pens, table.

Instructions:

Sometimes in life we don't feel very peaceful. It could be a problem with a friendship, a feeling inside or something that's happening in the world. It can make us feel unsettled, confused or sad.

What makes you feel peaceful? How can you find peace?

Take a flower and write on it to complete one or all of the following:

- ❖ I feel at peace when...
- ❖ I wish there was more peace in...
- ❖ Peace happens when...



Plastic Planet

Laminated pages with facts about plastic (<https://lessplastic.co.uk/> Ways to reduce plastic use) and facts about the Planet Earth, a fishing net, used single-use plastics on display, luggage tags, pens

Instructions: The world we live in is beautiful, but human beings are slowly destroying it. One of the ways we are damaging the world is by using single-use plastic.

Take some time to read the facts about our world and how plastic affects it. Now read the ways that we can begin to reduce single-use plastic.

What could you do to help change the amount of plastic in our world? If you want to, you can write a promise or a prayer onto a luggage label and hang it onto the net along with everyone else's promises. Let's save the world together

Forgiveness Stones (EYFS/KS1)

Equipment Water, container, stones.

- Set up Place the container with water near the stones

. • Instructions

In the Easter story, while Jesus was on the cross, he cried out, 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do'. Even as he was dying he asked God to forgive those who had put him to death. Sometimes bad things happen, people hurt us and it is hard to let go of the pain. Sometimes it feels heavy inside us, like a stone. Think for a moment - is there anyone you need to forgive? If you want to, take a stone and gently drop it into the water as a step of forgiveness.

OR



Under My Umbrella

- Equipment Umbrella, something to suspend the umbrella from, carpet, string, pegs, paper, pens.
- Set up This activity encourages pupils to think about times when they've felt vulnerable and have been looked after or protected by others. Suspend an umbrella in a stable way. Pupils are invited to sit under the protection of the umbrella. N.B. Be sure to suspend the umbrella securely. If it falls on the children while they are sitting beneath it, it's likely that they'll miss the point of the activity(!)



- Instructions: Umbrellas protect us from the rain. When we feel scared or upset, we need people to look after us, and sometimes to protect us. Can you think of a time when you needed someone to look after you, or even to protect you? Maybe at school, or at home, or when you were out somewhere? Who looked after you, or protected you? If you want to, you can write or draw a simple thank you for that person onto a tag and peg it onto one of the strings.

The Wheelbarrow

- Equipment A wheelbarrow, small pieces of paper, pens, some rubbish.
- Set up Place some waste inside or around the wheelbarrow. Keep the pens and paper nearby so pupils can use these to write down or draw the 'rubbish on the inside of them' and throw it into the wheelbarrow.



- Instructions Farmers and gardeners sometimes use wheelbarrows to move rubbish from one place to another. We've all got rubbish in our lives, not just 'outside' rubbish like broken things and old clothes, but 'inside' rubbish too. What 'inside' rubbish are you carrying around? If you want to, you can write or draw about your 'inside' rubbish onto a piece of paper, and then screw it up and throw it into the wheelbarrow. Get rid of it.

Thankful Ribbons

- Equipment Lengths of ribbon and sticks (with non-sharp ends) or pre-made streamers, pens (ideally fabric pens). Optional: CD player, music.
- Set up: prepare lots of individual pieces of ribbons and sticks for each student. Ensure that pens are easily available. Encourage each pupil to think about one thing they are thankful for and to then write it down on the ribbon. If they want to, they can say a silent prayer as they do this. If you have enough space, younger pupils might enjoy swirling the ribbons around and even dancing to some music.



- Instructions Think of someone or something that you are really thankful for. If you want to, you can write or draw a thought or prayer about it onto the ribbon.

Thankful Ducks • Equipment A tough tray, hook a duck set, permanent marker, pens, hooks, bamboo canes, string.

On the underside of each duck write something which the pupils can be thankful for e.g. something you've seen, a family member, the best thing you've done this week, etc.

Try to come up with about different subjects. Half fill the tray so that the ducks float and place the fishing rods next to the pool. Invite the pupils to take a fishing rod and catch a duck. Encourage them to read the message underneath and to then quietly consider something relating to that subject for which they are thankful



If you want to, you can say a thank you prayer about the subject on the bottom of the duck. Make sure you return your duck to the pool.

Flower prayers: 'For the spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline' 2 Timothy 1:7

Using a template below copied onto plain or pastel-coloured paper, ask pupils to hold their flower shape and think about their talents and how they need God's help to make them bloom. Write a word or prayers in the centre of the flower and fold in the petals so the flower is flat. Set the flowers down carefully onto the surface of water in a large bowl. As the flower petals open, ask the pupils to say their own quiet prayers to ask God to help them to develop their gifts and talents.

