

Prayer and Ritual Resource :



Classroom prayer and ritual

Adapted from resource prepared by Pat Lavercombe
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Time to Reflect....

What does prayer currently look like, sound like, feel like in your classroom ?

Questions to consider: Do I feel comfortable praying?Do I feel confident and comfortable with leading students and praying with them? Is prayer something I am enthusiastic about and value?Is prayer something I “DO” to students or is it a time when I facilitate and lead and model and empower them to nurture their prayer life?

What would you change in order to help your students pray more meaningfully?

What are challenges specific to prayer in homeroom?

What would you like the College to change about the policy and practice of prayer?

What changes are possible immediately?

What changes will I make? What actions will I take? What will I have a go at?

Key Messages about Prayer with Students

Authentic Participative Variety Ownership by students

Modelling and Structure Consistent Minimalistic

Routine Ritual Teaching about... Relevant

SETTING UP FOR SUCCESS!!!!

For Our Catholic schools, Prayer and Worship provide an opportunity for students, staff and parents to celebrate their life and identity as members of the Church. Prayer and worship helps create a sense of purpose and identity and draw the school community into an understanding of our shared humanity, link us with the Church throughout the world, and invites us to share the *Good News*.

- *Prayer, as the raising of the mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God, contributes to the faith growth of individuals and the building of Christian community.*
- Schools draw on the richness of the Catholic tradition, the wider Christian tradition and their own particular charism to nurture the prayer life of the school.

The Church invites the faithful to regular prayer: daily prayers; the Liturgy of the Hours; Sunday Eucharist; and the feasts of the Liturgical Year. Staff and students within a Catholic school should have opportunities to engage in prayer on a **daily basis**.

In the course of their years in Catholic schools, students will experience a variety of formal and informal expressions of prayer, appropriate to their age and development.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church identifies **three expressions of prayer, namely: vocal prayer; meditation; and contemplative prayer**. In vocal prayer a person, or a group, gives voice in an external way to the interior prayer of the heart following Jesus' example of prayer to God. Meditation is a prayerful quest engaging thought, imagination, emotion and desire. This may include readings, reflection, journalling, silence and stillness. At the heart of contemplative prayer is the simple act of being with God, recognising in stillness and silence, God's indwelling presence.

The essential **forms** of prayer in the Christian tradition are: blessing and adoration; petition and intercession; thanksgiving and praise. All of these forms are present in the Mass.

Sources of Christian prayer include Scriptures, Liturgy of the Church, the theological virtues of faith, hope and love, the created world, our relationships and life experiences.


There are various environments and resources for prayer. Prayer may take place in many different contexts and settings. In celebrating a significant feast day or liturgical season in the life of the Church, it may be appropriate to gather for a prayerful school assembly.

Meditation and contemplative prayer might be best experienced in a school prayer room or Chapel. Reflective walks or journaling may be more appropriate in outdoor settings or retreat venues.

Members of the school community are assisted to recognise the religious dimension in the everyday moments of life through the practice of daily classroom prayer.

When the school community gathers in prayer, it draws on the breadth of the Christian tradition to build an understanding that its prayer is joined with the prayer of the whole Christian community – the people of God. Schools draw on their charism as additional resources for prayer.

(Even a two minute prayer can have this structure)

<p>Gather</p> 	<p>We Prepare and Gather. (<i>Leaving the Ordinary</i>)</p> <p>This is about moving to a psychological space where we can enter into prayer. It is about creating a space and place both externally and on the inside. It is important to inform students about this and why it is expected and how it can help one to focus and be present or mindful.</p> <p>THE SPACE: What will this sacred space look like? Will it change? Will the students help to plan for it and create it? How will it be kept simple?</p> <div data-bbox="592 931 1302 1173" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"><p>Liturgical colour. \</p><p>Prayer mat or cloth —</p><p>Cross or crucifix /</p><p style="text-align: right;">The “Rule of Three”</p></div> <p>Preparing the mind and body to enter into prayer: (In a short prayer service, this may involve one simple action only)</p> <p>A signal for gathering or calling to prayer e.g. Sound of a prayer chime or bell Rainstick The lighting of a candle followed by 30 seconds of silence The Sign of the Cross Reflective Music Holding high a religious icon e.g. cross or bible and waiting for silence A greeting and response- e.g. Peace be with you/ And also with you. An invitation to silent reflection on what we are about to do/placing ourselves in the presence of God e.g. <i>Let us remember that God is with us..... Let us place ourselves in the presence of God....</i> Silence and stillness Breathing Stilling of body e.g. body relaxation exercise</p>
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Listen



We Listen


In a short prayer service, this can be the focus, or just a spoken invitation to **respond** (see next section).


The preferred source of our listening is the Word of God. The passage/s need not be long: in a simple prayer service, a one or two line reading with one focus can be powerful.

The ritual of taking up and opening, proclaiming, closing and replacing the text is an important part of the Listening process.

To support the reading you could include:

- A mantra e.g. *I am with you*
- Music or a shortened section of a song
- Song or sacred hymn
- Prayer from the School prayer Book
- Silence and Stillness – Listen to the quiet of your heart by focusing on breathing for 30 seconds or one minute.
- Images e.g. Images of Earthquake victims; religious art or icons, PowerPoint ; newspaper article/s
- Holding a collection of images of Jesus or Mary and selecting one for quiet contemplation.
- Reflection or excerpt from a story or poem
- A quote from one of the saints e.g. Mary MacKillop - *“Never see a need without doing something about it”*
- A quote from one of the representatives of the charism underpinning the school- e.g. *Catherine MacAuley; Edmund Rice; Nana nagle, or a modern member of their institutes.*
- A short summary of the life of the saint of the day. (See BCEO Liturgical Calendar)

<p>Respond or Do</p> 	<p>We Respond</p> <p>In a short prayer, this may be the focus, or it may simply be a silent reflection, or an action such as a sign of peace, or a statement such as “have a good day today”.</p> <p>Following the listening, there are a number of possible ways to respond. They can be simple or complex and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A moment of silence to add their own prayers to the one read out. • Invitation to silent reflection/prayer on what has been heard, or add the prayers of their own heart. • Reading a reflection on the text heard • Naming words/ideas heard from the text- with others or visually • Use a word or phrase as a mantra • Journalling • The sharing of spontaneous prayers of thanks and petition • Joining in formally prepared Prayers of Petition • Sharing a sign of peace, reconciliation or solidarity.
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<p>Go</p> 	<p>We Go</p> <p><i>Returning to the ordinary</i> can be a reverse of the <i>leaving the ordinary</i> ritual at the start of the prayer service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blessing • Extinguishing the “Christ” candle • The Sign of the Cross • Sound of a gong or chimes or water stick or bell • Use of music (“Recessional” music) • An invitation to go into the day at peace, or with hearts open to justice, or caring for each other.
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Resourcing Each Stage of the Template:

Some Examples of Greetings for Gathering and Preparing, or Going.

Students may need to be taught these responses, or they could be on cards, or on the screen.

Peace be in this place and with all who work here. And with your spirit.	The Lord be with you ! And with your spirit.
May the peace of God be with you! And with your spirit.	The grace and peace of the Spirit be with you today! And with your spirit.
Welcome and peace to you ! And with your spirit.	May God be with you in all you do and say today! And with your spirit.
Go in peace and safety! And may God go with us!	Let's put the worries of the day behind us and go to our homes in peace. Thanks be to God!

2. A Simple Formula for Creating Class/PC Prayers

(This could be part of the *Listen* or *Respond* phase)

You: Ever-present and companion God,
Who: out of love for us, you sent Jesus to be our strength and guide.
Do: help us to hear his voice today and guide our steps in the way he has shown us, as we find you in each other.
Through: We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.

Amen.

Simple structure for Composing Prayers

An easy way to compose a prayer for use as an opening or concluding prayer, or 'collect', is to follow the

YOU-WHO-THROUGH pattern.

YOU- begin by addressing God or naming God. "Loving God", "God of Mercy", "God who heals", "Father in Heaven".

WHO- name 'WHO' God is for us, for example: "Giver of all good gifts", "You are always ready to forgive", "Our strength and hope".

DO- we ask God to act, to 'DO' something: "Be with us as we gather in your name", "Grant peace to our world".

THROUGH- We pray to God in and THROUGH Christ, so our prayer concludes with a simple "Through Christ our Lord Amen", or "In the name of Jesus your Son, Amen."

This pattern or structure can be used to compose a prayer for any occasion; grace, opening prayer, closing prayer, blessing.

<p>YOU</p>	<p>God of new beginnings</p> <p>God, ever patient and loving</p> <p>God our creator</p> <p>Faithful God</p> <p>Ever generous God</p> <p>God, source of strength</p> <p>Loving God</p> <p>God of abundance</p> <p>Merciful God</p> <p>Loving God</p>
<p>WHO</p>	<p>You fill us with love and kindness</p> <p>You fill our hearts with faith</p> <p>You lead us in your ways</p> <p>You help us to love others</p> <p>You give us your word</p> <p>You guide us in this time of _____</p> <p>You give us your Spirit</p> <p>You bless us with gifts of creation</p> <p>You created us to live and love</p> <p>You know us and love us</p>

DO	<p>Send us your Spirit to make us strong in faith and active in good works</p> <p>Inspire us to care for all creation as you do</p> <p>Teach us courage to believe in you</p> <p>Give your Church the gifts of unity and diversity in every land and culture</p> <p>Lead all people to a future of dignity and peace</p> <p>Bless our country and open our eyes to those who need our care</p> <p>Help us to bring peace and joy to others</p> <p>May we follow the courage of Mary and say “yes” to your will</p> <p>May we act fairly to all people and treat them with respect</p>
THROUGH	<p>We make this prayer in Jesus’ name. Amen</p> <p>We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen</p> <p>We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen</p> <p>Through Christ our Lord. Amen</p>

3. Use of Short Scripture Passages for the *Listen* stage

A very short reading can be as effective as a long one. If the Listen stage is the prime focus for the prayer, it can be longer. Students could be invited to listen for a particular phrase or word which strikes them as appropriate for them that day.

In the box below, you can insert the name of the group where the dots are e.g. 11 Blue... or 12 PDW etc

<p><i>So then,, let us always seek the ways which lead to peace and the ways in which we can support one another (Romans 14:19)</i></p>
<p>....., If one part is hurt, all the parts share its pain (1 Corinthians 12:26a), if one part is honoured, all the parts share its joy (1 Corinthians 12: 26b)</p>
<p>....., be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you (Ephesians 4:32)</p>
<p>Therefore encourage one another,, and build each other up (1 Thessalonians 5:11).</p>

(See also Matthew Chapter 5 for short teachings of Jesus about how God expects us to live.)

One format for focusing on the *Listen* stage

(After preparing, Listen and then Respond and then Go)

Prepare by calling the group to stillness and having a student hold the Bible up high for 15 seconds.

Then Listen:

Read the passage slowly introducing it with e.g. *a short reading from.....*. You could have this quote written on a card or on the board.

Invite students to listen and choose a word or phrase from the reading e.g. *peace*

Breathe in the word *peace* and breathe out the word *peace*.

(Teach about a mantra and ask them to take the word or phrase into their mind and repeat the word/phrase over and over.)

Invite them to let the word rest in their hearts.

Respond by inviting students to respond in private, personal prayer.

Go by praying a simple blessing over the group for the day ahead.

4. Prayers of Intercession (For use in the *Respond* stage)

Format for the prayer: *Invitation, Petition, Response.*

Invitation: Trusting that our God is near, let us pray for the needs of the world.

Let us pray for...
We remember....
We put before God...
We thank God for...
Let us thank God for

Prayer Starters: That....
For

Petition: Lord hear us; Hear us, Our God.

Response: Lord hear our prayer; Hear and answer us, O God

An Example:

Invitation to prayer: Trusting that our God is near, let us pray for the needs of the world.

Prayers of intercession:

For all members of the church throughout the worldPAUSE Lord hear us

Response: Lord hear our prayer

For all people in our school and families PAUSE...Lord hear us

Response: Lord hear our prayer

For the care and protection of God's world.....PAUSELord hear us

Response: Lord hear our prayer

For peace in our world.....PAUSE..... Lord hear us

Response: Lord hear our prayer

For the prayers in our hearts today.....PAUSE.....Lord hear us

Response: Lord hear our prayer

Concluding Prayer: Loving God, we ask that you hear and answer these prayers we make through Christ our Lord. Amen

5. Blessings (For use in the *Respond* or *Go* phase)

A blessing prayer is one that calls on God's power to care for a person, place, thing or undertaking.

In praying a prayer of blessing, we ask for God's presence, goodness and protection to be evident in the lives of those the prayer is intended for or those who will enter the place that is being blessed e.g. a school, church, classrooms, library

There are many opportunities to use blessing prayers. It is a matter of recognising opportunities to use them. It is also important to teach about them so that students are familiar with the process and come to a sense of feeling comfortable in blessing situations.

Blessing prayers can be prayed:

- at the start of a new school year
- at the end of the day
- before a trip or pilgrimage or service learning activity
- on a birthday or anniversary
- before a retreat or camp
- for school student leaders
- to welcome new students
- to farewell teachers and/or students
- for the school holidays
- for a sports event
- for students preparing to celebrate a sacrament
- for fathers, mothers, grandparents, families

A blessing prayer is always included at the end of a mass and may also be included in other liturgical celebrations. They can also be used in the context of prayer assemblies and in the classroom.

How to teach about blessings:

- Explore the greeting used in the school e.g. May God bless you; Peace be with you. What does this mean? Why do we say it? What should we be thinking and feeling when we use this greeting?
- Invite students to name times that they may have experienced a blessing from someone else e.g. at baptism, confirmation, mass, liturgical celebration, class or school ritual.
- Discuss with students about times that they bless themselves e.g. making the sign of the Cross, using holy water, tracing the cross on their foreheads, lips and hearts before listening to the gospel.
- Encourage students to name when they have been involved in giving someone a blessing e.g. a farewell ritual, a birthday blessing, a blessing for a new student, blessing of student leaders, blessing of people going on a pilgrimage e.g. WYD
- Explore plaques or foundation stones in the school environment.

- Discuss the concepts in blessing prayers at the end of a mass.
- Explore blessings from Scripture: leaders often blessed people, especially when getting ready to leave them e.g. Moses (Deut 33; Joshua (22:6-7); and Jesus (Luke:24:50). The First Letter from Peter 1:3-9 has several elements of a blessing prayer beginning with giving thanks and praise to God.
- Learn Blessing songs which can be used at school and liturgical celebrations.
- Involve the students in writing blessing prayers for specific occasions. Use the structure of You, Who, Do, Through.

How to pray a blessing

There are many ways to pray a blessing, including having all those doing the blessing raise their hand over the person or group to be blessed. A blessing might also involve placing a hand on the person's shoulder or head.

How to write a blessing:

Using the You Who Do Through structure

YOU- begin by addressing God or naming God. e.g. *God of new beginnings .*

WHO- name 'WHO' God is for us, e.g. *You are our strength and hope*

DO- we ask God to bless, to 'DO' something e.g. *Be with us as we journey together this year.*

THROUGH - We pray to God in and THROUGH Christ, so our prayer concludes with a simple *Through Christ our Lord Amen*



Examples of Blessings using you-who-do-through

<p>Blessing for a Birthday</p> <p>Loving God, you are with us in all we do. Bless _____ as he/she celebrates his/her birthday. May he/she be blessed with blessed with peace & joy. May he/she continue to grow in your love. We make this prayer through Jesus, our loving friend. Amen.</p>	<p>Blessing for Mother's/Father's Day</p> <p>God of gentleness, you look after us and never stop loving us. Bless our mum/dad. May she/he know that I/we love her and that I/we appreciate all she does for me/us. May she/he know she/he is precious in the eyes of our God. Amen.</p>
<p>Blessing for School Student Leaders</p> <p>Spirit of God, you guide us and light our way. Bless our Year six/eleven students as they take on the role as leaders of our school/campus/college. Bless our community as we encourage and support them in their leadership role. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.</p>	<p>Blessing for a school camp/retreat</p> <p>God our guiding light, you are protector of us all Bless us as we experience new things on camp. Bless us all as we enjoy our time together and keep us safe. We make this prayer through Jesus, our loving friend. Amen</p>
<p>Blessing to welcome a new student</p> <p>Loving God, you love and care for us all. Bless (name) as he/she begins his/her journey with us. Bless us all as we welcome him/her to our class community. We make this prayer through Jesus your Son. Amen</p>	<p>Blessing for a Sports Event</p> <p>God of creation, you inspire us and protect us. Bless our class/school and help us to have fun at the athletics/swimming/sport carnival. We make this prayer through Jesus our brother. Amen</p>

Simple and short blessings to end homeroom prayer, a prayer ritual, liturgy or the day:

<p>May our God of Hope fill us with joy as we spend time with others . Amen</p>	<p>May the peace of Christ guide us as we journey through the day. Amen</p>
<p>May the Spirit of wisdom inform our thoughts. Amen</p>	<p>May God’s word live in our hearts and guide us in all we do and say. Amen</p>
<p>May God keep us safe and from all harm. Amen</p>	<p>May God’s wisdom guide us today and always. Amen</p>
<p>May God’s tender hand support us. Amen</p>	<p>May God’s love surround us now and every day. Amen</p>
<p>May almighty God bless us : the God we know as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen</p>	<p>May our creator God renew us today; Jesus our brother inspire us to goodness; and the Spirit of truth guide our way. Amen.</p>
<p>Some Simple Dismissal Sentences</p>	
<p>Let us go into this day in peace and friendship. Thanks be to God</p>	<p>Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord. We will, with God’s help.</p>
<p>Let us now go about our work and learning, inspired to be better people. Thanks be to God.</p>	<p>Let us try to remember today, to act with justice, peace and compassion. We will, with God’s help.</p>
<p>Inspired by what we have just heard, let us go into this day determined to make a difference in the lives of others. We will, with the help of God.</p>	<p>Having stilled our minds and bodies, let us try today to bring peace and stillness to all that we do. We will, with the help of God.</p>

6. Praying with Litanies (Used in the *Respond* Phase)

A **litany** is the name given to a repetitive form of communal prayer in which the assembly sings or recites a common response to a series of petitions or acclamations sung by a cantor or proclaimed by a reader. It comes from the Greek word *litaneia* which means petition or supplication.

Litanies were developed in Christendom for use in processions. In the West there were traditionally four days for these processional litanies, the Rogation Days. The Eastern liturgies make frequent use of litanies, recited by the deacon; the response is usually “Lord, have mercy.” The Kyrie eleison or Lord have mercy is a relic of such a litany.

A good example of a litany is the Litany of the Saints that is prayed during the celebration of Baptism.

All present are invited to invoke the saints:

Holy Mary, Mother of God

Pray for us

Saint John the Baptist

Pray for us

Saint Joseph

Pray for us

Saint Peter and Saint Paul

Pray for us

All holy men and women

Pray for us

This Litany of the Saints, dates from the 5th century and can be used on the feast of All Saints. Modelled on it are a number of nonliturgical (i.e., nonprescribed) litanies: Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus (15th cent.), Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary (or of Loreto; 16th cent.), Litany of the Sacred Heart, and Litany of St. Joseph.

A litany is a devotional prayer for two or more people gathered together. The principal phrase (versicle = v.) is said or prayed by one person, and the responses (r.) by the others in unison.

The

Mother of God *We honour and praise you*

Mother of the Church *We honour and praise you*

Mother of Jesus *We honour and praise you*

Mother of all *We honour and praise you*

Mary most faithful *Teach us to be like you*

Mary most loving *Teach us to be like you*

Mary most gentle *Teach us to be like you*

Mary most kind *Teach us to be like you*

Woman of strength *Show us the way*

Woman of goodness *Show us the way*

Woman of justice *Show us the way*

Woman of compassion *Show us the way*

Woman who listened *Remember us to God*

Woman who suffered *Remember us to God*

Woman who wondered *Remember us to God*

Woman who loved *Remember us to God*

Hail Mary Litany (Construct your own from choices below)

Hail Mary,

Source of peace...
Model of strength...
Model of gentleness...
Model of patience...
Woman of mercy...
Widowed mother...
Political refugee...
Woman, centered in God...
Woman of wisdom and understanding...

Response:

Pray for us
Be our guide
Transform us
Empower us
Pray to God for us

Holy Mary,

Source of peace...
Model of strength...
Model of gentleness...
Model of patience...
Woman of mercy...
Widowed mother...
Political refugee...
Woman, centered in God...
Woman of wisdom and understanding...

Response:

Pray for us
Be our guide
Transform us
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Planning for Prayer in the Classroom/Homeroom – Term Overview

This template can be a way of recording prayer experiences and can be easily adapted to suit the local context.

Prayers/ Prayer Experiences:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Prayers of Thanksgiving –											
Prayers of Praise - use photos or images as stimulus											
Prayers of intercession using set structures for starters and for response											
Prayers for forgiveness – Sorry Circle											
Lighting of candle followed by Silence											
Reflective music for relaxation and breathing											
Guided meditations											
Ignatian meditation using scripture											
Examen											
Scripture reading and response											
Praying with Mandalas											
Praying with Labyrinths											
Lectio Divina											
Blessings											
Sign of Peace											
Light a Candle website											
Reflective time using digital images											

An Example of a Two Minute PC Prayer:

Gather and Prepare:

Sound chime to call class to stillness and silence.

Light candle when all are silent.

Invite group to listen to our call as a Christian community gathered:



Listen:

The teaching of Jesus as told by Matthew:

You are the light of the world. No one lights a candle to put it under a tub. They put it on a stand where it shines for everyone. So too, your light must shine for all, so that, seeing the good you do, they too will come to know the love of God.

Pause, repeat the reading, pause.

Respond:

Let us pray:

Gracious God,

You ask us to continue the mission of Jesus by sharing our love with others.

Inspire us today to make a difference in others' lives.

Fire in our hearts the desire to make the world a better place.

We make this prayer in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Go:

May God the Creator, Source of All Life,
lead us in the way of truth. **Amen.**

May God the Son, our Brother and Teacher,
show us how to live a committed life. **Amen.**

May God the Holy Spirit, the Wisdom of God,
grace us with the wisdom to choose what is good. **Amen**

Let's go into this day at peace with one another.

(Extinguish Candle)

An Example of a 4-5 minute PC Prayer:

Gather and Prepare:

Call students to silence. Light candle.

Invite group to close their eyes and listen to the following piece of music and to allow their senses to soar with the cadences of the music or to regulate their breathing using a mantra such as “peace”; or “calm”; or “relax”; or just to listen to the lyrics.

Listen:



Play an appropriate piece of music such as Tomaso Albinoni's *Adagio in G minor* (4 mins 40); or Aled Jones' *Deep Peace* (3 mins 17); or *Be Still* (3 mins, 07); or *You raise Me Up* (4 mins

Respond:

Let us pray:

God of the silences,

Help us, when we wait here in the silence, to hear you whispering our name.

We make this prayer in the name of the Spirit of Jesus, who walks with us always.

Amen.

Or:

Let us offer each other a sign of peace as we leave today.

Go:

Let's go now to our homes, leaving the troubles of the day behind and at peace with one another.

(Extinguish Candle)

An Example of a Two Minute PC Prayer:

Gather and Prepare:

Sound rain stick to call class to stillness and silence.

Light candle when all are silent.

Sound rain stick again.

Listen:



Inform class of the presence of a new student. Either give, or have the student, tell a little of themselves.

Respond:

Let us ask for God's blessing on our new classmate and pray that we will be a welcoming community to all who join us.

Loving God, you love and care for us all. Bless (name) as he/she begins his/her journey with us. Bless us all as we welcome him/her to our class community.

We make this prayer through Jesus your Son. Amen

Go:

Let us ask God's blessing on us as we go into this day:

May our God of Hope fill us with joy as we spend time with others . **Amen**

May we try, each day, to live lives that reflect God's love for all people. **Amen.**

May we as a community, reach out from the security of our own groups to welcome others who come among us. **Amen.**

And may our loving God bless us: the creator, the redeemer and the Spirit of life. **Amen.**

Let's go into this day, carrying in our hearts the reminder of Mary MacKillop to never see a need without acting on it.

(Extinguish Candle)

An Example of a Two Minute PC Prayer:

Gather and Prepare:

Sound chime to call class to stillness and silence.

Light candle when all are silent.

Listen:



Invite group to listen to, or read, an extract of a recent article from the media; or to contribute news stories/events of the past few days.

Respond:

Let us put our prayers for the world before God:

For the people ofwho are suffering this day. We ask God's special presence.

Lord Hear us.

For ourselves, people of the minority world who have plenty: that we will have the courage and generosity to act where we can.

Lord Hear us.

For those who work and volunteer in places experiencing crisis: that God will protect and bless them in their work. Lord Hear us.

Loving God, you give us the freedom to choose our path in life. May the teaching of Jesus inspire us to act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly in our world. We make this prayer in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Go:

May our God of Justice call us to serve the world and our neighbour in every way we can this day and always.

Amen.

Let's go into this day, carrying in our hearts the reminder of Mary MacKillop to never see a need without acting on it.

(Extinguish Candle)

A Two Minute Meditation Exercise for PC Groups

Gather and Prepare:

Sit in your chairs with your feet on the ground, and all things out of your hands. Place your hands on your laps, or the table in front of you.

Become aware of your breathing: deliberately breathe in through your nose and blow out through your lips. Hear and feel your breath as it comes into your body to bring life and as it is expelled, taking out what is not of use. Slow your breathing down by counting it in, pausing and counting it out: 1-2-3-4-5-etc.



Listen and Respond:

In the next minute of silence, repeat a mantra you have chosen, or simply stay with your breathing, freeing your mind of all thoughts and worries.
(chime)

Go: (Three chimes)

As you come gently back to the present, take one large breath and expel it, open your eyes and bring that calmness into the day ahead of you.