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## **Orthodox Religious Education: Prayer and Meditation**

### **Competences/Learning Outcomes**

- The students know central prayers and meditations and are familiar with their practice.
- They can interpret different physical forms of expression and put into words the attitudes associated with them in the praying/meditating person.
- They can assign appropriate spaces to different forms of prayer/meditation and can deal appropriately with the respective (liturgical) situation.
- They can distinguish between different occasions and times of prayer.
- They can interpret ritualized elements of prayer/meditation and understand them as aids to engaging in the life-enhancing character of prayer/meditation.

### **Grade level / Age**

8-9 /14-15y

### **Duration**

120 min



## Preparation

- Prepare three tables in different corners of the classroom ("stations"). Name them as follows:
  - Station 1 – When to pray
  - Station 2 – How to pray
  - Station 3 – Where to pray
- Provide the tables with the corresponding material.
- Bring a bell.
- Bring as many objects shown in **M8** as you can.

## Step-by-step description

- Arrange students to sit in a circle.
- Read the text of the selected prayer/meditation (from **M1**) and ask students to share their personal experiences on this prayer/meditation.
- Explain that with this lesson they will explore different aspects of prayer/meditation and write down the categories form (*how to pray*), *location (where to pray)* and *time (when to pray)* on the blackboard.
- Explain that results will be collected and presented at the Encounter Day. Aim is to introduce a prayer/meditation to others.
- Divide the participants into 3 groups to work together for the whole unit.
- Ask each group to start with a different station.
- Let them work on the station for about 15-20 min. Then ring a bell to make them change to the next station.
- Repeat the last step until every group has visited every station (3 times).
- Let all students take their seats.
- Hang an empty poster on the blackboard. It has only the text of the selected prayer in the middle (take from **M1**).
- Ask students to complete the poster with information they collected in the stations. Provide materials from the stations and stick it to the poster when mentioned by a student.
- Use the poster to present your prayer at the Encounter Day.
- As a final action at the end of the lesson read out loud the prayer text together.



## Materials

### Station 1

#### [M1] Information Text

#### Prayer in Christianity

#### The Lord's Prayer

The Lord's Prayer (lat. *pater noster*, gr. *Kyriaki prosefhi/Pater Imon*) is the best-known prayer in Christianity. Together with the Creed and the 10 Commandments, it is one of the foundations of Christian faith. Due to its wide distribution and translation into many different languages, it connects Christians worldwide. The Lord's Prayer is highly valued, not least because it can be traced back to Jesus, who, according to the evangelists Luke and Matthew, uses it to teach his disciples how to pray (cf. Luke 11:2; where Jesus introduces prayer with the words: "When you pray, say"; cf. also Matthew 6:9). The prayer is called "*Kyriaki prosefhi*" because it was taught by the Lord (Kyrios) Jesus Christ himself. In Matthew's Gospel, the prayer is in the middle of the Sermon on the Mount - a text that has also had a great impact on Christianity. According to Matthew, the Lord's Prayer in its long form consists of seven petitions and a praise of God added later at the end (doxology). The Jewish Qaddish contains some similarities to the Lord's Prayer.

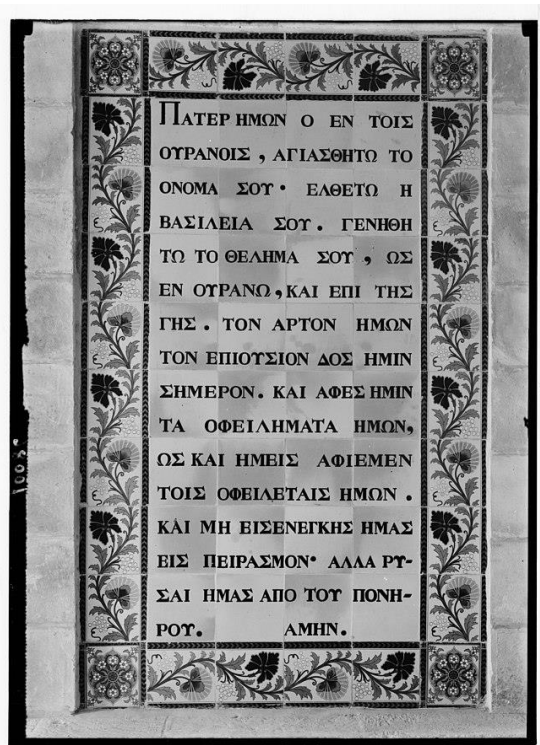


Fig.1

#### The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;



thy kingdom come;  
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us,  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.

*Gospel of Matthew 6:9-13*

### **How to pray?**

There is not a standardized form for praying. The Lord's Prayer can be prayed by a christian either alone or together, standing or sitting or kneeling with folded hands or joined and open or closed eyes.

### **When do we pray?**

As the Lord's Prayer is part of almost every church service. At the Liturgy on every Sunday morning, it is usually prayed just before Holy Communion, so holds a very central place in it. Sometimes all the congregation recites the prayer together. The Lord's Prayer also appears in the Liturgy of the Hours and is part of Lauds (morning prayer) and Vespers (evening prayer) – so it is prayed twice a day, in the morning and evening. Christians often recite this prayer also often in private devotions.

### **Where do people pray?**

Almost all Christian denominations give the Lord's Prayer a central place in the Liturgy and the other services which take place in the Church. The Lord's Prayer can also be prayed individually and in private. The first phrase "Our Father" means that we pray as a community of brothers and sisters; there is God and us. This prevents a selfish relation with God. Because God is our Father, we love all our fellow brothers and sisters, our "neighbours", like ourselves. The person praying delivers his/her heart in the love of God.



## [M2] When to pray – Tasks

1. Read the information text [M1] and underline all the information about the prayer times of the Lord's Prayer. Write them on the lines. When do you pray yourself? Fill in the times on worksheets [M2] and [M3].

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2. Some people pray more often than others. Think about the possible reasons for this. Discuss them in your small group.

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3. Can you remember a situation in which you experienced prayer as something special? When was that? Describe the situation and write it in the lines below. If you like, tell your small group about it.

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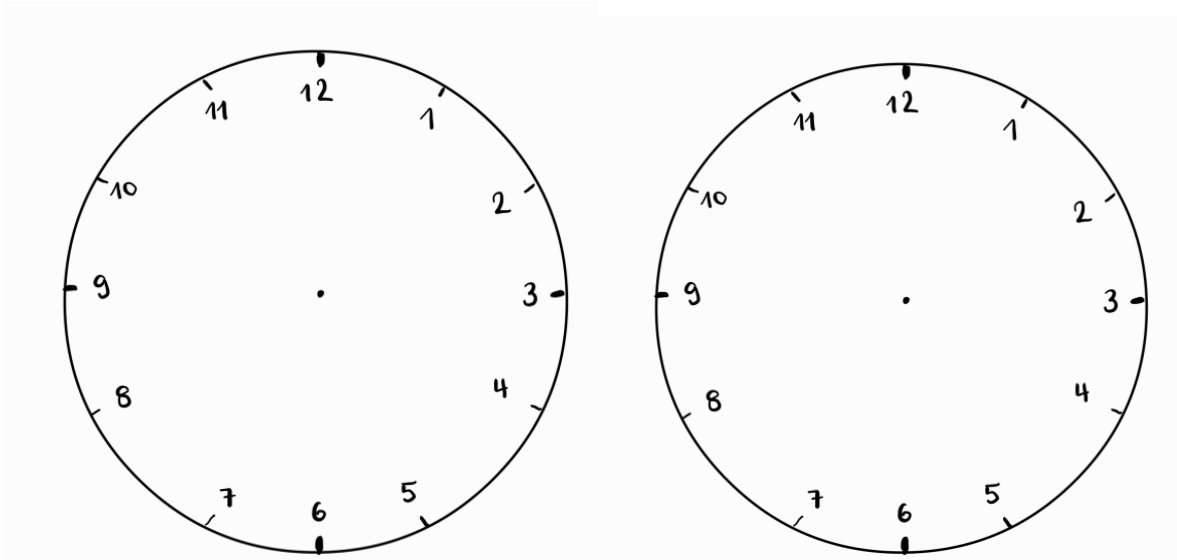
## [M3] When to pray – Prayer Times

Draw in to which times you pray.

Time of day

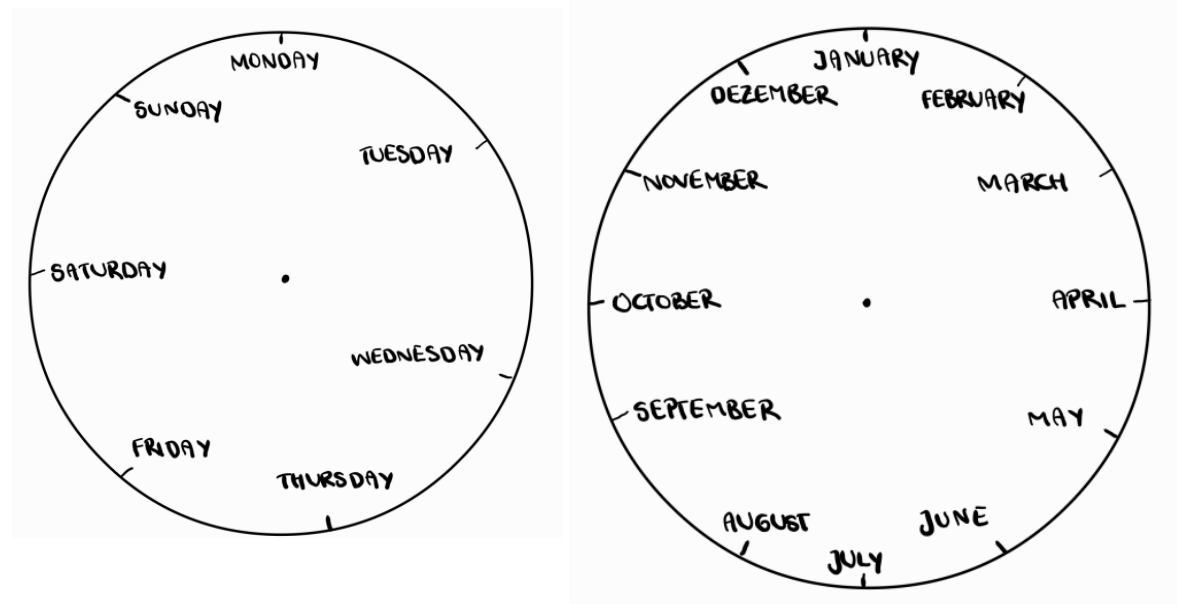
Day

Night



Days of the week

Months of the year





## Station 2

### [M4] How to pray – Tasks

1. Match the different postures [M7] with the word cards [M5] and the sentence cards [M6].
2. Try the different postures [M7]. Which one did you prefer? In which posture could you concentrate best? Why?

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3. In some religions the people use different objects while praying. Look at the objects [M8]. You will find things from your own religion among them. Some you may know, some you may not know. Read the explanations. Can you understand why other people use these objects?

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4. What can you write/stick to the poster at the end? What is important while praying? What can help?

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**Standing**

**Kneeling**

**Sitting**

**Prostrating**



## [M6] How to pray – Sentence cards and drawings

These text cards describe the postures during prayer. Place them with the matching word cards (M5).

I calm down.  
I am alert and can concentrate well.  
I hear and absorb the words.  
In this posture I can pray for a long time very well.

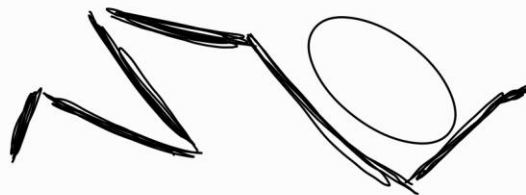
I show my respect to God.  
I'm here with my full size.  
I'm ready.

I acknowledge God's greatness and make myself small.  
I show my reverence to God.  
I worship him.

I express my willingness to serve God.  
I acknowledge His dominion over me.  
I surrender myself to him.



[M7] How to pray – Praying postures





[M8] How to pray – Ritual objects



Fig. 2: Some people light candles while praying.



Prayer chains are used by members of different religions to count the repetitions of the same or similar prayers, chants or devotions.

Fig. 3: catholic christian prayer chain

Fig. 4: orthodox christian prayer rope

Fig. 5: muslim prayer chain





Some believers consider images of Saints while praying.

Fig.6: Iconostasis in an orthodox church



These leather straps are tied around the arm of a Jewish praying person.

Fig. 7: Tefillin worn by a man at the Western Wall in Jerusalem





Some people cover their heads and wear certain clothes during prayer.

Fig. 8: Jewish prayer shawl (tallit)

Fig. 9: Jewish head covering (kippah)



The prayer mat protects the praying person from impurity and indicates the direction of prayer.

Fig.10: Muslim prayer mat







## [M10] Where do you pray? – Sketch your favorite place

The place where I like to pray the most is:



[M11] Where do you pray? – Pictures of places to pray



Fig.11



Fig.12



Fig.13



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