

# Just for Parents...

Today your children learned two different prayer styles; the breath prayer and praying with music.

One thing that helps us pray is silence. How does silence help us pray (Helps us listen, pay attention, think, feel not be distracted.) Distractions can keep us from hearing. We can get distracted when we pray. God speaks to us in many different ways, but sometimes we aren't quiet enough to hear. We have so many distractions.

## BREATH PRAYER

There are 3 steps in developing a breath prayer:

1. You imagine Jesus asking you, "What do you want me to do for you?" In your heart you answer that question in a word or phrase.
2. You choose a name you want to use for God or Jesus (Point to the list of names for God and Jesus on the board.)
3. You combine your name for God with what you are asking God to do. Your name for God or Jesus can come at the beginning or the end of your prayer. Here are some examples: "Loving God, help me love Josie" or "Protect and guide me, Good Shepherd" or Jesus, forgive me."

## Prayer Through Music

Music is a great way to guide people into prayer whether it is a sacred personal or communal experience. The language of music is universal and timeless. Through music, one's heart connects with the heart of God. When we become connected to our own inner core, we are then also connected more deeply to others.

### Steps to Pray through Music

- **Select a theme.** Select one traditional and one contemporary piece to focus your music and Scripture selections.
- **Settle down.** Take a few minutes to help everyone settle down in the place of prayer. Encourage them to sit with their spine straight, feet on the floor, knees slightly apart, hands on their laps, eyes closed. Ask them to breathe deeply and slowly; to be aware of the sounds around them; to quiet themselves and be still.
- **Pray to the Holy Spirit.** Remind the group that they are in God's presence. Ask them to feel the warmth and the love. As they slowly inhale and exhale, ask the Holy Spirit to help them pray and to hear what the Lord is saying to them.
- **Play one or two songs on your theme.** Ask everyone to listen to the words and to pay attention to the feelings and images the songs stir up in them. After each song, ask the participants to reflect on the song. Ask: How does this song make you feel? What is this song saying to you? What message might God be saying to you through this song? How can you apply this message at home, work or school?
- **Share the Scripture reading.** Share the Scripture reading which accompanies your music selections. Invite everyone to reflect on the Scripture passage and its connection to the music. Ask: What is this passage saying to you? How does this passage connect to the song that you heard? What is God (or Jesus) saying to you through this passage? How can you apply this message at home, work or school?
- **Make a resolution.** Invite each person to resolve to do something about the insights they have gained from praying with music. Whatever the resolution, ask them to thank the Lord for the moments he spent with them and for any insights they received.