

WEEKLY PRAYER GROUPS - This ministry is for children of all ages and lasts for 1 to 2 hours. (The time depends on the ages of the children and the judgement of the guides.)

Gathering place: The room should have enough space to accommodate the children and the guides. There should be a table with chairs for activities, another table to hold educational materials for the weekly lesson, and a small altar to hold the following:

A Christ,
A Bible,
A Pilgrim Virgen
Flowers,
A candle,
Rosaries, one per child.
Basket for petitions



Weekly Plan: *The following schedule is a guideonly, but prayer should never be neglected to cover all items. Choose the activities and themes according to the children's ages and the time allotted.*

- ✓ Open with a song.
- ✓ Start with a prayer to the Holy Spirit (to the Virgen Mary and to the Guardian Angel)
- ✓ Read the Sunday Gospel, or a parable, miracle of **JESUS**, the life of the Virgen Mary, the life of a Saint, or another bible story.
- ✓ Pray the Holy Rosary meditating on the mysteries, or just a decade for younger children.
- ✓ Develop lesson and delve into a mystery of the Rosary.
- ✓ Make a weekly commitment.
- ✓ Do a craft or play a game that corresponds to the lesson and ages of the children.
- ✓ Finish with a prayer and songs of praise.
- ✓ Give the Pilgrim Virgen to a family.

Suggested Themes: *The following is a list of suggested themes. We suggest reading the Sunday Gospel and teaching the children to pray first. Other topics can be introduced as the group matures.*

- The importance and power of prayer with examples.
- Prepare for seasons of the Liturgical Year (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost)
- Visit **JESUS IN THE BLESSED SACRAMENT**, if possible, once a month.
- Talk about the life of the Saints, especially the Virgen Mary and St. Joseph, adoptive father of Jesus, husband of **the Virgen Mary** and protector of families, and the life of St. Henry of Osso, patron saint of the **Ministry Friends of Jesus and Mary**.
- The teachings of the Church: the Sacraments, the 10 Commandments...

On our web page: www.fcpeace.com, under Friends of Jesus and Mary, the monthly package includes meditations and activities for suggested themes.

Further Recommendations for Weekly Prayer Groups:

- a) Create a pleasant and loving environment. **Discipline**, and punctuality are essential. Begin on time regardless of the number of children present.
- b) Receive the children affectionately showing your pleasure at their presence.
- c) If necessary, give them something to eat/drink.
- d) Open with a Song and Prayer. Song recommendations:
 - * Ave Maria of Lourdes
 - * Angels Watching Over Me
 - * A Gift to You
 - * I've Got Joy Joy Joy...
 - * Jesus is my Best Friend
 - * This is the Day
 - * Holy Spirit for Children

e) In the first half hour, explore the theme of the week: Gospel, Saint story, preparation for Seasons of the Liturgical Year... A video can be used to present a theme.

f) Pray the Rosary *(Pray the complete Rosary, if time and age permits, teaching them little by little. When groups are new or children very young, one decade is appropriate and can be increased slowly.)*

- Emphasize the importance of prayer time. Light a candle so there is silence and invite Jesus to be present.
- Start with the Sign of the Cross and invoke the Holy Spirit.
- Ask for personal petitions.
- Explain verbally or visually the Mystery. (Verbally: can read from the bible, tell a story, listen to Rosary CD for children; visually: can use posters, a video, or act it out.)
- Read the fruit of the Mystery from the pamphlet: The Holy Rosary for Children.
- Each child prays an Our Father, Hail Mary, or Glory Be. (The younger children can pray with hand movements to help them understand and learn the prayers.)

g) Do a craft that supports the theme, appropriate to their ages. The younger children should only color and paste. The older children like to talk and share. Games are great for all ages.

h) Say final prayer and play praise music.

i) Assign the Pilgrim Virgen



Assign the Pilgrim Virgen to someone to take home for the week to encourage family prayer. It should be a prize explaining that they are the guardians for the week and should return her the next week. The Pilgrim Virgen bag should include:

- † The Pilgrim Virgen
- † A notebook and pencil to write a summary of their experience.
- † Pamphlet: the Holy Rosary
- † A Rosary
- † A CD of the Holy Rosary for Children
- † A vase with flowers
- † A letter with instructions for the parents