

Lesson Plan: Creating Our Beautiful Prayer Corner

Materials Needed:

- A small, sturdy piece of cardboard or thick cardstock (approx. 5x7 inches)
 - Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
 - Child-safe scissors and glue stick
 - Optional decorative items: aluminum foil, glitter glue, stickers, or small pieces of colored paper
 - A small, clean cloth or a pretty scarf
 - A battery-operated tealight or candle
 - A small vase or cup for a flower (real or artificial) or a special, pretty rock
 - A designated small shelf, a sturdy box, or a corner of a dresser to be the prayer corner
 - (Optional) A children's picture book about prayer or icons, or printed pictures of different prayer corners/icons.
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Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- Identify that a prayer corner is a special place to talk to God.
- Create their own simple "icon" to place in the prayer corner.
- Participate in arranging the items in their new prayer corner.
- Say a simple, short prayer in the space they helped create.

Lesson Activities & Procedure

Part 1: The Wonder of a Special Place (5 minutes)

- **Introduction & Connection:** Sit with your child and ask, "Where do we cook our food?" (The kitchen!) "Where do we sleep?" (Our bedroom!) "Every place in our house has a special job."
- **Introduce the Concept:** "Today, we are going to make a very special place with a very special job. It's a place just for being quiet and talking with God. It's called a prayer corner. We make it beautiful to show God how much we love Him."
- **Explore:** If you have any icons or a family prayer corner already, look at them together. Talk about the colors and who is in the picture. If not, look at a few pictures online or in a book. Use simple language: "Icons are like windows to Heaven. They help us remember Jesus and His friends, the Saints."

Part 2: Creative Hands - Making Our Icon (15-20 minutes)

- **Goal:** Explain, "Every prayer corner needs an icon. We are going to make our very own special one right now!"
 - **Step 1 - The Person:** Give the child the piece of cardboard. Ask them, "Who do you want to draw for God's special corner? We could draw Jesus, who loves us so much, or his mother Mary." Let the child choose and draw their person. Focus on effort and love, not artistic perfection. (*Modification for younger children: Have a simple outline of Jesus or Mary pre-drawn for them to color in.*)
 - **Step 2 - The Holy Light (Halo):** Say, "Saints are so full of God's light that they look like they are glowing! Let's make a shiny circle around their head to show God's light." Use glitter glue, a circle of yellow paper, or a piece of foil to glue a "halo" around the head of the person in the drawing.
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- **Step 3 - The Beautiful Border:** Let the child decorate the edges of the cardboard with stickers, markers, or scraps of colored paper. The goal is to make it feel special and beautiful, like a frame.

Part 3: Building Our Prayer Corner (10 minutes)

- **Goal:** "Now that our icon is ready, let's build its home!"
- **Step 1 - Find the Spot:** Go to the pre-selected small shelf or dresser corner. Say, "This will be our quiet spot."
- **Step 2 - The Foundation:** "First, we lay down a beautiful cloth to make it clean and special." Let the child help you smooth out the scarf or cloth.
- **Step 3 - The Icon:** "Now for the most important part!" Let the child place their newly-made icon in the center, leaning it against the wall. Praise their beautiful work.
- **Step 4 - The Light:** "We add a candle to remember that Jesus is the 'Light of the World'." Place the battery-operated candle next to the icon. Let the child practice turning it on and off.
- **Step 5 - A Gift of Beauty:** "Let's add one more beautiful thing as a gift for God." Let the child place a flower, a pretty leaf from outside, or a special rock they've found in the prayer corner. Giving them this choice makes the space truly theirs.

Part 4: Closing and First Prayer (3-5 minutes)

- **Gather:** Stand or kneel together at the newly created prayer corner.
- **Action:** Let the child turn on the battery-operated candle.
- **First Prayer:** Guide the child in making the sign of the cross. Then, lead them in a very simple prayer. You can say it line-by-line for them to repeat:

"Dear God,"

"Thank you for our home."

"Thank you for this special corner."

"We love you."

"Amen."

- **Conclusion:** Give your child a hug and say, "This is your beautiful prayer corner. You can come here anytime you want to be quiet, to look at your icon, or to say 'hello' to God."

Assessment (Informal Observation)

- Did the child actively participate in making the icon and setting up the corner?
- Can the child point to the prayer corner when asked where it is?
- Does the child show understanding that it is a "special" or "quiet" place? (This can be seen through their reverence or tone when near it).
- Does the child attempt to repeat the simple prayer?

Differentiation & Extension

- **For Extra Support:** Provide pre-cut shapes for the icon (e.g., a person shape, a halo circle) and focus on the gluing and coloring aspect. Keep the prayer to a single, simple phrase like "Thank you, God. Amen."
- **For an Extra Challenge:** Encourage the child to tell you a "story" about the person in their icon. Over the next few days, you can add a small prayer rope or a children's prayer book to the corner and show them how to use it.