



Leading Prayer

How to Lead Prayer

During the celebration you are the leader of prayer. The way you preside is important.

Here are some tips:

- Learn the script ahead of time. Be familiar with it so that you are able to lead and be present with the children without being distracted or fumbling for “what comes next.”
- Use your body to communicate. Stand tall. Use broad and expansive gestures. Be aware of your facial expressions and tone of voice.
- Watch your timing. Let there be silence between parts of the prayer. Take time with each child during the ritual actions. Do not be afraid of pauses or silence; they often lead children to deeper prayer and reflection.
- Take care to prepare the prayer space ahead of time and to lead the celebration in a way that will call children to prayer, participation in the ritual action, and reflection after the celebration.

The Prayer Space

The prayer space needs to be a place where the movement of processions and rituals are easily and reverently participated in. Prepare it ahead of time. You may choose to set aside a space in your meeting place or you may find the church or another room to be more suitable. When you have chosen a space, arrange it in such a way that children can move around easily and can see and hear everything that is happening. Decorate the space with plants or flowers. Always have available a large clear bowl with holy water, a Bible and stand, and a candle. Check your planning page each week to be sure you have everything you need for the celebration.

The Celebration

Each of the celebrations is built around a procession, song, a Scripture reading, and a ritual action. Take time to do the procession reverently and slowly. Involve children in song, either by leading it yourself or inviting a song leader into your group. You may choose to proclaim the Scripture from the adapted version in the *Child's Book* or from the Bible. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the ritual action ahead of time so that you are able to be fully engaged in it with the children during the celebration. The celebration is in the *Child's Book*. If you find that having children use the book during the celebration is distracting, you may wish to do the celebration without the books and guide the children's responses.