

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 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

It is very important for you 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. Ensure ease of movement in the prayer space and that children can see and hear everything that is happening. This will allow them to participate in processions and rituals with ease and reverence. Decorate the space with plants or flowers. Always have a bowl of holy water, a Bible and stand, and a candle available. Check your planning page each week to be sure that you have everything you need for the celebration.

The Celebration

Each of the celebrations is built around a procession, a song, a Scripture reading, and a ritual action. Take the time to carry out the celebration reverently and to involve the children as much as possible. The *Songs of Celebration* CD will be a helpful resource. If you find that having children use the *Child's Book* during the celebration is distracting, complete the celebration without books and guide the children's responses.

