

## Discovering prayer

Prayer is both simple and special, and is one of the things that everyone can do for the children in our lives. It might be lighting a candle or pausing for thought, or it could be something you discover together. Here are some ideas to help you pray with and for a child who is special to you.

Praying is a very simple but powerful thing you can do with or for a child.

It doesn't matter if you're not used to praying. There are no rules about what words you should say, how long your prayers should be, where, or how often you pray.

Prayer is quite simply a conversation with God. Having him to trust and help us in any moment of life is both comforting and amazing.

### When to pray

You can pray whenever you like, at ordinary times and on special days.

These are just a few examples of milestones in a child's life when prayer might be especially helpful:

- The christening day
- Birthdays
- Christening anniversaries
- First day at school
- Difficult times – being poorly, facing problems and sadness
- Moving on to secondary school
- Exam times
- New relationships

And, you can pray wherever you like – at home, in the car, on a walk, but some people like to find a quiet space somewhere.

The more you pray, the more familiar it will become. In fact, your own prayer journey can be just as amazing for you as it is for the child.

### Learning how to pray

These are some easy ways to begin to pray:

- Hold or look at a photo of the child you're praying for and ask God to bless them today.
- Light a candle, and as you watch it burn, ask God to bless your child and help them be a light for others as they grow up.
- Imagine Jesus at your side and talk to him as if talking to your closest friend. Tell him everything that's on your mind about your child, your family, worries, things you're thankful for, how you can support them. Ask for his help and guidance.

### **Helping children to pray**

These are a few simple ways to help a child to pray.

- Teaching them the Lord's Prayer and talking about what each line means. [Prayer cubes](#) can be a good way to help with this.
- Giving them a prayer book to suit their age. There are many available; [Eden](#).
- There are lots of types of prayer, including saying 'Thank you' to God for all the things we're glad about, saying 'Sorry' for wrong things we've done and regret, and saying 'Please' for things we'd like God to do, or things we need help with.

The first letter of each of those words spells 'TSP', the same as the abbreviation for 'teaspoon'. To help a child to remember those types of prayers, you could put three teaspoons in a jar, each with a different letter on (T, S or P) and then invite them to take one out and think of a prayer they'd like to say to God.

- If you can, go together to church and join in with the prayers. There might be words and ideas that you can also use at home. Your church might also have special activities for toddlers, older children and families. Discover what prayers are said there as well.

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