**Virtue: PRAYERFULNESS**

**Lesson Plan for Children 0 – 3**

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| **This lesson plan is designed to be used multiple times over an entire month. If all the songs in the lesson plan were used in one lesson, the class would be too long! Select songs from the lesson plan that you will use at the first lesson, then in subsequent lessons you can drop a song or two and introduce another you have not yet practiced with the children. Remember, children of this age benefit from repetition.** |

**Open Play (20 minutes) and Parent Discussion:**

Invite children to play with toys- gently guiding and reminding them of the virtues of kindness, love and sharing. While keeping an eye on their children, parents talk about how to support the development of prayerfulness in their families.

* How can prayer and meditation be helpful to individuals and to family unity?
* How can we encourage the development of the virtue of prayerfulness in our children?
* How can be develop the habit of prayer in our families?
* (in the second and subsequent weeks, ask “What have you done this past week to encourage the virtue of prayerfulness for your child?”)

After about twenty minutes, a song with a verse about helpfulness is played, indicating that it is almost time to start the formal part of our playgroup.

**Verse / Song 01 played is “You live to do good and to bring happiness to others.”** (From the Virtues In Us, Quotations CD)

Once the song is over, children and parents clean up toys while singing a clean-up song:

There are several cute and easy songs to choose from: Select one and have that be your 'clean up theme song' for the class.

**Song 2**: Clean up, clean up, everybody everywhere

Clean up, clean up, everybody do their share

**Song 2**: Variation

*(spoken)* Time to clean up, everyone. Let's pick up our things!

*(Chorus)*

Clean up, everybody clean up (x3)

Time to clean up!

Pick up, everybody pick up (x3)

Time to pick up!

Pick up the toys, put them away

Pick up the blocks, put them away

Pick up the books, put them away

Put your things away

Then the welcome song is played as caregivers and little ones form a circle on the floor to get ready for class.

**Song 03: Welcome Song** (Favorite Children’s Songs from the Family Learning House CD)

Good morning, good morning! It’s lovely to see you! Please come in and join us, we’d love to be with you. Today is going to be wonderful. Today is going to be joyful. Good morning, good morning! It’s lovely to see you! Please come in and join us, we’d love to be with you. Today is going to be beautiful. Today is going to be peaceful. Good morning, good morning! It’s lovely to see you! Please come in and join us, we’d love to be with you. Today is going to be…How is your day going to be? Get ready to sing! Today is going to be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_(full of prayer). Today I’m going to be happy. Today I’m going to be helpful. Good morning, good morning! It’s lovely to see you! Good morning, good morning! It’s lovely to see you!

**Song 04: Hello Song** (Music Together, Bongos CD)

Hello everybody! So glad to see you! Hello everybody, so glad to see you too!

Hello to \_\_\_\_, so glad to see you! Hello to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, so glad to see you too!

Hello everybody! So glad to see you! Hello everybody, so glad to see you!

(sing each child’s name and parent’s name, or if many children, ‘Hello to all the Mommies’)

**Opening Prayer:** Invite children to practice reverence by asking them to sit in their parent’s lap while a very short prayer is said or sung. Explain: "We always start with a prayer, because God is the source of all spiritual qualities, and we want to call on Him to aid us in our spiritual development."

**Song 05 / Prayer:** **Entire Being** (CD: Angels in the World, Tim Urbonya)

**I have committed, O my Lord, my spirit and my entire being**

**into the right hand of Thy might and Thy protection,**

**and I lay my head on my pillow through Thy power,**

**and lift it up according to Thy will and Thy good pleasure.**

**Thou art, in truth, the Preserver, the Keeper,**

**the Almighty, the Most Powerful.** ~ 'Abdu’l-Bahá

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| **WORDS** | ACTIONS |
| **I** | put both hands over your heart |
| **have committed,** | put palms facing up with right hand underneath left hand |
| **O my Lord** | move arms up towards the heavens, and look up, keeping right hand underneath left hand with palms up, as if offering yourself to God |
| **my spirit** | hug yourself |
| **and my entire being** | move arms in a circle from above your head down to your waist with your fingers outstretched and wiggling |
| **into the right hand** | put your left hand underneath your right elbow and put your right arm straight out with your palm facing up |
| **of Thy might** | bend your right arm as if making a muscle, and turn your head toward it |
| **and Thy protection** | put both hands palms down on top of your head, as if you are crouching down and protecting you head, while bending your head down to your chest |
| **and I lay my head on my pillow** | put both hands out to your left side, by your shoulder, with palms touching and rest your right cheek on them, as if lying on a pillow |
| **through Thy power** | with head still on hands, look up to sky and smile |
| **and lift it up** | left your head up while keeping your hands in the same position |
| **according to Thy will** | move arms into a big V above your head, while looking up |
| **and Thy good pleasure** | lift both elbows up to the side and put both index fingers underneath your mouth, then trace a smile as you smile and then fling both arms out so that you are making a big V again while looking up to God |
| **Thou art in truth** | lift both hands straight up to the sky and look up |
| **the Preserver** | cup hands in front of you and look at them |
| **the Keeper** | hug yourself and move your body from side to side |
| **the Almighty** | move arms in a circle from above your head down to your waist with your fingers outstretched and wiggling |
| **the Most Powerful** | put both arms out to the side into "muscles" with your hands in fists, and move your head from left to right looking at them |

**Introduction to the Virtue of Prayerfulness:**

Prayerfulness is remembering God and communing with him in all that we say and do. Prayer creates spirituality. We can sit down and say prayers, but we are also praying when we are of service to other people. We should strive that our actions day by day may be beautiful prayers.

**Read a book about prayerfulness:**

1. **Blessed is the Spot** (available through USA Bahai Distribution Service)
2. **O God! Educate These Children** (available through the Australian Baha’i Bookstore, or can be ordered from Donya.com)
3. **Faith** by Maya Ajmera
4. **When I Pray** by Bambi Betts (Basic Truth Series, available through Special Ideas)

**Song 06: Blessed is the Spot Song** (E.Hohn-Morin: CD: Children Sing Songs from the Peace Pack)

**Blessed is the spot, and the house, and the place**

**and the city, and the heart, and the mountain,**

**and the refuge, and the cave, and the valley, and the land,**

**and the sea, and the island, and the meadow**

**where mention of God hath been made**

**and His praise glorified.** ~ Bahá'u'lláh

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| **WORDS** | ACTIONS |
| **Blessed** | put hands in front of you as if you are in prayer; |
| **is the spot** | put left hand out in front of you with palm facing up and with your index finger of your right hand, make a dot in the middle of your left palm; |
| **and the house** | make a triangle with your index fingers and thumbs; |
| **and the place** | turn your hands so your palms are facing up and move the left hand towards the left and the right hand towards the right; |
| **and the city** | put your hands vertically, like you are chopping something, and make chopping motions from left to right with both hands; |
| **and the heart** | touch your heart; |
| **and the mountain** | make a big triangle by touching your finger tips of both hands together and moving your elbows out to either side; |
| **and the refuge** | move that big triangle up over your head; |
| **and the cave** | curve that big triangle so it looks more like you are in a cave; |
| **and the valley** | move your hands, while still keeping them together, so that your elbows are still out to either side, but your fingertips are touching in a V; |
| **and the land** | straighten both arms, while keeping fingertips touching, so that your hands and arms make a straight line; |
| **and the sea** | keep your fingers touching, but move your arms and hands in a wavy motion; |
| **and the island** | form a circle with your arms and hands, while keeping your fingertips touching; |
| **and the meadow** | have the palms of both hands facing out and move your hands back towards your chest in alternate pulling and pushing motions; |
| **where mention** | put both hands, palms up, towards your mouth, with your right hands touching your chin and your left hand behind your right hand and then move both hands, while they are still touching, up and away from your mouth; |
| **of God** | raise both arms up with palms facing up, over your head |
| **hath been made** | keep both hands up and sway |
| **and His praise** | while you say each of these words, move your hands and arms back and forth, while keeping them above your head |
| **glorified** | open up your hands so your palms are facing out and your fingers are open and wiggle your fingers while moving your hands in a circle, down to either side |

**Song 07: Prayer 2: O God, Guide Me** (CD: Tender Years - 2: Julie Iraninejad and Shabnam Cyrus)

**O God, guide me, protect me,**

**make of me a shining lamp and a brilliant star.**

**Thou art the Mighty and the Powerful.** ~ 'Abdu’l-Bahá

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| **WORDS** | ACTIONS |
| **O God** | Raise both hands up to sky, while looking upward, as if entreating God |
| **guide me** | Hold left arm in front of you with palm open, facing up. Move your right hand forward over your left from, from elbow to hand |
| **protect me** | put both hands on top of head and slightly bow your head |
| **make of** | grip hands tightly, twice, as if forming clay |
| **me** | put both hands on heart |
| **a shining lamp** | Smile and look up as you put both hands out to your side and bring them up above your head, and have the tips of your fingers touch each other, like are forming the shape of a lamp |
| **And a brilliant star** | Then move both hands down along the side of your body, wiggling your fingers until they are at your side |
| **Thou art** | point with both fingers up to the sky |
| **the Mighty** | both arms out and show your muscles |
| **and the** | open both hands up to the sky |
| **Powerful** | Bow head slightly while lowering open hands in front of you |

Pass out jingle bells to be played during the following song:

**Song 08: Prayer/Song: He is God** (Tim Urbonya, Love All the World CD)

**He is God! O God, my God!**

**Bestow upon me a pure heart, like unto a pearl.** ~ 'Abdu’l-Bahá

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| **WORDS** | ACTIONS |
| **He** | Point up to sky with both index fingers |
| **is God** | Raise both arms up above head and look up |
| **O God** | Move both arms forward and back a bit in the air |
| **my** | Put both hands to your heart |
| **God** | Raise both arms up above head and look up |
| **Bestow upon** | Move fingers down from above your head, and wiggle them like rain falling |
| **me** | Cross arms in an “X” in front of your chest |
| **a pure heart** | Make a heart with both hands in front of your chest, index fingers touching and thumbs touching |
| **like unto** | Put left hand, palm up, in front of you |
| **a pearl** | With your right index finger and thumb, draw a pearl (a circle) on the palm of your left hand |

**Collect jingle bells and pass out scarves to use in dancing to the following song, invite parents to hold their child and dance with them:**

**Song 09: Strive** (Joe Crone, Immerse Yourselves CD)

“Strive that your actions day by day may be beautiful prayers. Turn towards God, and seek always to do that which is right and noble. Enrich the poor, raise the fallen, comfort the sorrowful, bring healing to the sick, reassure the fearful, rescue the oppressed, bring hope to the hopeless, shelter the destitute!” ~ 'Abdu’l-Bahá

**Collect scarves and hand out instruments to be played during the following song:**

**Song 10: Remover of Difficulties** (Tim Urbonya, Angels in the World CD)

Is there any Remover of difficulties save God? Say: Praised be God! He is God!

All are His servants, and all abide by His bidding! ~ The Báb

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| **WORDS** | ACTIONS |
| **Is there any** | hold your hands in front of you with palms together in a prayer position |
| **Remover** | clasp your hands |
| **of difficulties** | move both hands out to either side while opening both hands out with fingers open, as if the difficulty is being dispelled |
| **save God** | raise both hand up to the sky, with elbows bend |
| **Say: praised** | wiggle your finers while your hands are in the air above your head |
| **be God** | stop moving your fingers, keep your hands outstretched to the sky and look up |
| **He** | pointing with both index fingers straight up to the sky |
| **is God** | open up both hands above your head, with elbows bend, while looking up towards the sky |
| **All are** | make a wide circle in front of you with both hands/arms |
| **His servants** | put both hands, palms up, in front of you and bow your head |
| **and all** | made a wide circle in front of you with both hands |
| **abide** | cross your hands/arms in front of you |
| **by His bidding** | bend your head down and tuck your chin to your chest. |

**Song 11: Tiny Seed** (Words by Baha’u’llah)

(Can talk about that just how you care for the outer environment, we have to care for our inner environment too- our soul- through prayer, service, etc.)

(-xxx- = clap three times)

I am -xxx-

O my God -xxx-

but a tiny seed -xxx-

which Thou -xxx-

hast sown -xxx-

in the soil of Thy love -xxx-

and caused -xxx-

to spring forth by the hand of Thy bounty.

I am -xxx-

O my God -xxx-

nut a tiny seed -xxx-

First do this with clapping, then can bring out egg shakers to shake during the times you were previously clapping

**Put away egg shakers and bring out drums for the following song (please remind the parents that the children should only use their hands on the drums, and not the rest of their bodies!):**

**Song 12: Utmost Love** (Tim Urbonya, Angels in the World CD)

Treat all thy friends and relatives, even strangers,

with a spirit of utmost love and kindliness.

**Put away drums and bring out ribbon wands to dance with for the following song:**

**Song 13: Waves of One Sea** (Tim Urbonya, Love all the World CD)

May you become as the waves of one sea, stars of the same heaven,

fruits adorning the same tree, roses of one garden

in order that through you,

the oneness of humanity may establish its temple in the world of mankind…

the oneness of humanity may establish its temple in the world of mankind

Waves of one sea, stars of the same heaven,

fruits adorning the same tree, roses of one garden,

may you become the waves of one sea, may you become the waves of one sea

**Closing Verse:** Invite children to practice reverence by asking them to sit in their parent’s lap while a very short Verse is said.

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| **“Prayer is conversation with God.” ~ 'Abdu’l-Bahá** |

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| **WORDS** | ACTIONS |
| **Prayer** | Put hands together in front of you like you are praying |
| **is conversation** | touch your mouth with both of your hands |
| **with God** | raise both hands up and look to the sky |

**Children repeat the Verse with movements to help them learn it by memory.**

**Closing Song:**

(sung to the tune of "Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear....)

There are several different tunes for the Teddy Bear rhyme you can find on YouTube. Here is one version

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sSLlm5bwzjs

Prayerful child, prayerful child turn around. (turn around)

Prayerful child, prayerful child, touch the ground. (touch the ground)

Prayerful child, prayerful child, show your shoe (hold foot up and point to shoe)

Prayerful child, prayerful child, I love you! (hugs all around!)

Prayerful child, prayerful child, reach for the sky. (reach up!)

Children’s class is over. It’s time to say goodbye! (wave and say, “goodbye!”)