

- **Know Your Children and be Familiar with the Prayer Cards**  
Being aware of your children and sensitive to their circumstances is important when using the Prayer Cards. Familiarity with the content of the Prayer Cards will enable you to be alert to, and anticipate, individual or group responses that may arise from the Prayer Cards. Some children or individuals may need to chat about their Prayer Card, or about the issues or feelings that arise from it.
- **Respecting the Individual's Privacy and Prayer Space**  
While supervision of the group or individual may be needed in using the Prayer Cards, it is important that the children have a sense of privacy and space. An unobtrusive, gentle presence would best support the facilitation of these Prayer Cards with children. Avoid asking the children or individual to share with you or others their Prayer Card or their response to it in any specific way. However, in some cases, inviting them to do so, if they wish to, may be helpful to all involved.

**Please note:**

**Place these introductory notes in a file separate from the Prayer Cards, where it can be readily accessed if needed.**

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## Introductory Notes

***"I Am With You Always"*** (Mt 28:21)

### **Word Of God Affirmation Prayer Cards**

#### **For Primary Level**

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**Content:**

**The *"I Am With You Always"*, Word of God Affirmation Prayer Cards, are an ideal prayer resource for children from ages 8 -12. Each of the 52 cards contains a simple scripture quotation with a brief reflection and a personal ritual, which concludes with an affirmation mantra.**

**The purpose of the Prayer Cards:**

- To foster and promote in children a more intimate, personal and relevant sense of God and prayer.
- To immerse children in the wisdom, beauty and tenderness of God's Word.
- To help children become more familiar with the Word of God as a living and meaningful Word.
- To integrate an awareness of God into the daily reality and life experience of children.
- To enable children to experience the value of meditation, quiet time and stillness in developing their relationship with God, and in dealing with their feelings and issues.
- To support teachers, catechists and parents in moments of prayer and ritual with children.

## How to use the Prayer Cards –

### In a classroom or catechetical setting:

- **For daily prayer...**  
Sit the children in a circle around the Prayer Candle with the Word of God opened beside it. Shuffle the Prayer Cards and then place them on the open Word. When the children are settled have one child come and choose a Prayer Card for the whole group. Read the card to the group and lead them in the simple ritual. Follow up, if desired, with a song, or journal writing, or reflection discussion.
- **For individual prayer and reflection...**  
Have the children sit in a circle around the Prayer Candle and Word of God. The Prayer Cards are passed round the circle and each child takes a card for themselves and reads it privately. (See below). Allow time for their responses.
- **For meditation and journal writing...**  
Prepare the children for meditation. (Helpful notes on meditation with children are available on [www.liturgyplanning.com](http://www.liturgyplanning.com) – Children's Meditation Page) Choose a card for the whole group and read it to them. Let the Prayer Card Ritual lead into a meditation. When the meditation has ended, direct the children to go to their journals and write or draw in response to this experience.
- **For special occasions or experiences such as...**
  - Class member's birthdays
  - Beginning and end of term
  - Class and individual achievements and celebrations
  - Class and individual issues, tensions or concerns
  - Time out for individuals who need special attention or care

### In a family setting:

- **Night time prayer...**  
Take a few minutes each night, or one or two nights a week, to light a candle with the child(ren) at bed time and choose a Prayer Card. Sit with the child(ren) as s/he uses the card and allow follow up time with them.

- **For Special occasions or experiences such as...**
  - Birthdays
  - Special achievements and celebrations
  - Sacramental preparation and ongoing spiritual nourishment
  - Times of stress and anxiety, tension and sadness
  - Time out

### Points to be aware of when using the Prayer Cards

- **Shuffle the Prayer Cards**  
Always shuffle the Prayer Cards before using them with the children. As you are doing so, direct the children to be aware of whatever their prayer intention is, and to pray that they will open their hearts to God's Word. Alternatively, have the child who is preparing to use the Prayer Cards take time to shuffle them and pray for God's Word to speak to them.
- **Reading the Prayer Cards to a Group or Individual**  
Read the scripture quotation twice, slowly and reflectively. Pause a brief moment before going on to read the reflection. Direct the group or child in the ritual, reading it reflectively and doing what it says. Allow time for the ritual to be done, pausing when indicated by the series of dots.
- **When Children Read the Prayer Cards**  
When children are using the Prayer Cards individually, direct them to read the scripture quotation and reflection as outlined above. When they approach the ritual section, have them read the ritual first, then come back to it and actually do the ritual.
- **Follow Up**  
Using the Prayer Cards will only take five or so minutes. However, allow time for the group or the individual to respond in some way if they desire or need to. This might be in the form of a simple comment to measure how the group or individual feel. (See below - respecting their privacy and prayer space). Suggesting to them a few minutes of journal writing or meditation, or the singing of an appropriate song, may be all that is needed to round off the experience.