

LESSON ONE



The student will be able to name and define the first two meditation themes for *Sacred Story*, CREATION, and PRESENCE, by giving examples from their own lives.

The students will write their reflections on CREATION and PRESENCE and an original prayer of gratitude.

LESSON ONE



Gather class together in prayer corner. Ask three students to read one of the Psalms below. (Master sheet to copy for these Psalms follow this lesson)

Prayer:

*Give to the LORD the glory due his name.
Bow down before the LORD's holy splendor!
Psalm 29: 2*

*Sing to the LORD, bless his name.
proclaim his salvation day after day.
Psalm 96: 2*

*Hallelujah! Praise, you servants of the LORD,
praise the name of the LORD.
Blessed be the name of the LORD.
both now and forever.
Psalm 113:1-2*

Close with the: "Our Father"

Introduction: Over the next school year we will be experiencing a meditation practice called *Sacred Story Youth*. *Sacred Story Youth* is inspired by St. Ignatius Loyola's "Examen". Ignatius' spirituality and discernment techniques rely on affective information to help people understand the difference between right and wrong. We are focusing on ***The Name of God and my Relationship to God's Holy Name.***

Access PowerPoint to tell St. Ignatius Loyola's story to the students.

As part of the meditation Ignatius inspires five themes in *Sacred Story*. Today we will become acquainted with two of the themes: CREATION and PRESENCE.

Guided Practice

Have a student read:

*I believe God created everything in love and for love. I ask for **heart-felt** knowledge of God's love **for me**, and for **gratitude** for the **general** and the **particular graces** of **this day**.*

Have another student read:

God created the universe – all person and all things – in love and for love. *Everything*, and every person in creation is linked in Love, through Christ, in whom and for whom everything was made. We are made to reverence God and each other, and to delight in creation as both Divine gift and support for our lives. The God of All knows me personally and loves me, even before I was knit in my mother's womb. So fearfully and wonderfully made am I! (PS139:13-14)

In small groups have students name examples of their relationship with God for Creation.

Have a student read:

*I believe God is **present** in **moment** and **event** of my life, and I ask for grace to **awaken, see, and feel** where and how God is present.*

Have a student read:

The eternal God can only be experienced in the here and now, for everything in the universe is sustained by God's love in the present moment. When I worry about the past, or fret about the future, my consciousness of God, of creation, and of my deepest desires, is blocked. My challenge is to anchor both heart and mind **firmly** in the present: in each thought, word, and deed, as the story of my life evolves, in each moment, in God's presence.

In small groups have students name examples of their relationship with God for Creation.

Independent Practice: On their own students are to use the Top Hat template.

1. For three minutes students are to write or draw what comes to mind in each category in your relationship with God for Creation and Presence.
2. Then write prayer of praise and gratitude for the God who created the universe – the God who created it so God could be close to your heart and share God's love with you and all people.

Have students share with a partner or the whole class the prayer of praise that was written.

Closure: *During our daily meditations we will reflect on:*

Father, I believe You created everything out of love as a gift for me.

Jesus, I ask You to help me remember the gift in Your creation that brought me the most faith, hope and love today.

When You help me remember, I will thank You for that gift.

And

Jesus, I believe You are present in every moment and event of my life.

I ask for a heart-felt knowledge of Your love for me.

Jesus, I ask You Jesus to help me know what my heart is feeling now.

If I am peaceful, I will tell You why. If I am sad, I will tell You why.

Give to the LORD the glory due his name.
Bow down before the LORD's holy splendor!

Ps 29: 2

Sing to the LORD, bless His name;
Proclaim His salvation day after day.

Ps 96: 2

Hallelujah!

Praise, you servants of the LORD,
Praise the name of the LORD.
Blessed be the name of the LORD
Both now and forever.

Ps 113: 1-2

CREATION

I believe God created everything in love and for love; I ask for **heart-felt** knowledge of God's love **for me**, and for **gratitude** for the **general** and **specific graces** of **this day**.

Prelude

God created the universe – all person and all things – in love and for love. Everything, and every person in creation is linked in Love, through Christ, in whom and for whom everything was made. We are made to reverence God and each other, and to delight in creation as both Divine gift and support for our lives. The God of All knows me personally and loves me, even before I was knit in my mother's womb.
So fearfully and wonderfully made am I!

(Ps139:13-14)

Illuminative Grace

Here I ask for what I desire: to know and feel God's tender and passionate love and to know myself as beloved – a treasure of God's heart in the grand symphony of creation. I pray for the grace of gratitude. I pray to know by whom I am created and why I am loved. I pray to know and believe that I am fearfully and wonderfully made.



*When I see Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,
The moon and stars that you set in place –
What is man that you are mindful of him, and a son of man that You care for him?
Yet You have made him little less than a god, crowned him with glory and honor.
You have given him rule over the works of Your hands, put all things at his feet:
O LORD, our Lord, how awesome is Your name through all the earth!*

(Ps 8:4-6)

PRESENCE

*I believe God is **present** in **moment** and **event** of my life, and I ask for grace to **awaken, see and feel** where and how God is present.*

Prelude

The eternal God can only be experienced in the here and now, for everything in the universe is sustained by God's love in the present moment. When I worry about the past, or fret about the future, my consciousness of God, of creation, and of my deepest desires, is blocked. My challenge is to anchor both heart and mind **firmly** in the present: in each thought, word, and deed, as the story of my life evolves, in each moment, in God's presence.

Illuminative Grace

Here I ask for what I desire: to be present and awake to every feeling, thought, word and deed—in the present moment. I beg for the grace to wake up to God's presence in every person, experience, event—good or ill—that I encounter in my day.



*How lovely your dwelling, O Lord of hosts!
My Soul yearns and pines for the courts of the Lord.
My heart and flesh cry out for the living God.
As the sparrow finds a home and the swallow a nest to settle her young,
My home is by your altars Lord of hosts, my King, and my God!
Blessed are those who dwell in Your house!
They never cease to praise You.
(Ps. 84:2-5)*

CREATION

What comes to mind in your relationship with God for Creation?

PRESENCE

What comes to mind in your relationship with God for Presence?

Write prayer of praise and gratitude for the God who created the universe – the God who created it so God could be close to your heart and share God’s love with you and all people.