



## SPR5002– Award in Creating and Animating Prayer Spaces

EQF/MQF Level: 5

ECTS Value: 2 ECTS

Duration: 6 Weeks  
Self-Study Hours: 15

Contact Hours: 15  
Assessment Hours: 20

Accreditation Category: Higher Education Programme

### Programme Description

The Award in Creating and Animating Prayer Spaces is designed to:

- equip the participants with the necessary knowledge and skills required to create and run a prayer space in a given setting.
- offer participants the opportunity to grow in their connectedness with their own self, with others, with the world, and with God through the prayer spaces experience.
- enable the participants to accompany others and explore their faith, spirituality, and life's big questions in a safe, creative, and interactive way.
- lead the participants to understand better that life is much more than simply living to function, fulfil demands and expectations. As human, we are also made to live a meaningful life.
- invite the participants to become aware that relationships are strengthened when one takes the time to appreciate and reflect upon them.

A prayer space can be set in various places. The setting can be a school, a youth centre, a parish hall, at the workplace, in an open-plan area or an outdoor place.

### Entry Requirements

There are no qualifications required for this course. The only requisites are:

- Language competence - the student must have an end of secondary school understanding of Maltese and/or English.
- Basic digital skills – know how to access the internet and use a word processor.

### Overall Objectives





### **Knowledge obtained at the end of the programme**

By the end of this course, the learner will be able to:

- a) define what a prayer space is;
- b) identify different age groups of children and young people attending the prayer space;
- c) communicate in different ways with children, young people or adults according to their age, culture, and language during a prayer space;
- d) identify suitable interested members of the staff/personnel who are willing to form a team to prepare and animate prayer spaces in their respective schools;
- e) draw up a plan in planning, preparing, setting up and running prayer spaces;
- f) report what educators and students said after they have experienced prayer spaces for themselves;
- g) evaluate what went well, identify difficulties and challenges in setting a prayer space;
- h) understand that at the most basic level, prayer spaces give students a way to reflect and develop reflective thinking skills in terms of the four key relationships: the self, others, the world and God;
- i) make a connection between prayer spaces and other subjects like maths, geography, biology, PSCD etc which can also lead us to reflect.

### **Skills obtained at the end of the programme**

The learner will be able to:

- a) Reflect personally on a prayer space;
- b) Plan a prayer space;
- c) Prepare for the setting of prayer spaces;
- d) Create simple and clear instruction cards, and prepare the resources related to the prayer space;
- e) Set up the physical prayer space in any given space and/or venue.
- f) Demonstrate a welcoming attitude to all children and young people of all faith and none who will be experiencing a prayer space;
- g) Lead the children and young people to the safe, hands-on, creative prayer space and, when necessary, animate the prayer spaces;
- h) Show a sense of accompaniment and being there for the person;

- i) Operate with other members of staff who wish to give a helping hand before, during and after the setting of a prayer space activity;
- j) Recruit and train a prayer space team;
- k) Run a Prayer Space;
- l) Do a follow-up of a prayer spaces lecture.

### **General Pedagogical Guidelines and Procedures for this course**

This programme includes various methods of learning.

Before the lecture, the lecturer is provided with a list of workplaces where the students are coming from, for example, whether they work with children or young people etc., to create a better dynamic for the lecturer to understand the students.

The pedagogical methods used in this course are as follows:

The general concepts are delivered in Lecture 1 through a visual power point **presentation** to achieve knowledge and understanding regarding what is prayer. Yet, this part is not simply the transmission of information. The student's experience is also taken into consideration, so much so that the lecturer starts by **asking questions** to the students and builds upon those answers through **group discussion**:

As from lecture 2 onwards, as remote preparation, the lecturing room will be set up with hands-on, creative prayer spaces stations for participants to experience a prayer space for themselves.

In lecture 2, to achieve the skills learning outcomes and to reflect personally on a prayer space, participants will be invited to roam around the room to **explore** the various prayer stations, and reflect and pray by reading the instruction cards provided on each prayer space. Afterwards, **small group discussions** and **reporting** to the big group are used. The lecturer will make use of a **presentation** to achieve knowledge and understanding regarding the values of prayer spaces such as inclusivity and creativity.

In lecture 3, to achieve the skills learning outcome - to understand that at the most basic level, prayer spaces give students a way to reflect, pray and to develop reflective thinking skills in terms of the four

key relationships of the self, others, the World and the sacred and divine, **peer learning** is used through an international guest speaker who leads the Core Team of Prayer Spaces in Great Britain and who will be joining us through video conferencing.

To achieve the skills learning outcomes of making a connection between Prayer Spaces and other subjects like Religious Education and others, an interview with the contributor will be used.

In lecture 4, to achieve the skills learning outcomes of preparing for the setting of prayer spaces modelling and sharing by the lecturer will be used.

Following the contribution in lecture 3 where we saw how various prayer spaces could be done through different examples and settings in schools in other nations around the World, in **lecture 5** we shall see how this can be applied to our local contest.

Thus to achieve the skills of creating simple and clear instruction cards, modelling is used, and several instruction cards examples will be shared. To prepare the prayer spaces resources and to learn that the prayer spaces are hands-on prayer activities, **group work** is used.

Furthermore, to achieve the skill of preparing resources to be used virtually, sharing examples of Powerpoint Presentations used with children during Skolasajf and in primary state schools will be used. The presentation demonstrates how one has to choose an age-appropriate high definition introductory action song or video clip, three prayer spaces activities, a list of resources needed, three questions for feedback and a closing action song that could be the same one used at the beginning of a different one.

In lecture 6, to achieve the skills in recruiting a team that will run and lead a prayer space, peer learning will be used. The Director of Prayer Spaces in Schools will be invited as a guest to show how this can be done through different examples in schools in various nations around the World and how this can also be applied to our local contest.

## Learning Outcomes

### Competences



At the end of the module, the learner will have acquired the responsibility and autonomy to:

**Collaborate** with educators/prayer spaces in schools' teams to set up prayer spaces in various ways.

For example:

- Supporting learning throughout the year.
- Pre-exam chill-out prayer spaces
- Creative year & transition prayer spaces activities
- Advent/Christmas and Lent/Easter prayer spaces
- Remembrance prayer spaces
- All Hallows and All Saints prayer space

**Carry out tasks such as**

- Setting a preliminary meeting with Heads of Departments, Senior Leadership Teams and educators to see where the prayer space will be held, such as in a foyer, hall, class, corridor, yard etc.
- Discuss with them what themes they would like to tackle most that would further help their students in spiritual growth and behaviour management.
- Plan dates for preparing and setting up the prayer spaces in the actual school/venue
- Advise on how to set a timetable for children/groups to visit the prayer space

**Build** a long-term relationship with the school/community that ran prayer spaces.

**Ensure** that the prayer spaces are set up in a safe environment (Safeguarding, Risk assessment, PAT testing).

**Guide** children, young people, and adults to the prayer spaces.

**Provide** a calming and secure atmosphere where one feels safe to express himself/herself anonymously.

**Monitor** the children and young people during the prayer space

Understand, interact, learn and develop spirituality.

In turn, **experiencing self-enrichment will lead them to pass on** these fruitful experiences to others.



**Become aware** that even though the prayer spaces experience may be offered as a one-off spiritual activity or spread over several days or weeks, they aim at encouraging those who have experienced them **to continue living** this experience.

**Put into practice subject interlinking.** This is because any space in life can be a prayer space, and these activities are based on day to day life experiences such as jumping and making use of everyday common things such as a small pocket size mirror.

They are encouraged **to work in teams** to be able to set up and offer experience in the best possible ways. **Sharing of** work, planning, creative ideas, time, experiences, and challenges will be encouraged.

**Create spaces** of personal and corporate growth which are clear and simple, easy to access and relevant, interactive, age-appropriate and inclusive.

**Encourage** and **facilitate** discovering what sometimes seems to be hidden in an individual and needs bringing out. Consequently, educators **become more sensitive** to the real needs of the participants. When they deem it necessary, they **can refer students** to seek further psychological, moral and spiritual help from other professionals.

## Knowledge


At the end of the module, the learner will have been exposed to the following:

- a) Know how many prayer spaces to set up according to the number of available rooms available in a given school/place, in relation to the number of participants attending the prayer space on a given number of days;
- b) Write down a list of resources needed to set up the prayer space room;
- c) Gathering resources;
- d) Label resources, instruction cards, etc;
- e) Define what clear and simple instructions mean;
- f) Identify tasks to be carried out by individuals while preparing, setting up and leading the prayer space.

**Understand** that the prayer activities are rooted in the life, the ministry and the words of Jesus even if they aren't labelled as such and are offered inclusively.

## Skills

At the end of the module, the learner will have acquired the following skills:





- a) Apply to others what one has experienced for themselves during the hands-on creative prayer spaces to children and young people.
- b) Demonstrate how to set a good prayer space.
- c) Assemble specific prayer spaces, for example:
  - The 'Friendship Paper Chain Prayer Space' by using a stapler and strips of coloured paper to create a paper chain.
  - 'The Homeless Cardboard Prayer Space' by putting together large cartoon boxes as homes for homeless people
- d) Prepare different prayer spaces by setting up props, resources, materials, pens, sticky notes, battery-operated candles, pegs, stones, mirrors, tent jars of water, sand trays, whiteboards, prayer wall, map of the World, paint, soap bubble tubs, etc.
- e) Arrange the prayer activities according to age.
- f) Design visuals related to the chosen prayer spaces that capture and appeal to children and young people.

### **Module-Specific Learner Skills**

At the end of the module, the learner will be able to

- a) explore the prayer spaces resources on the Spiritual Development in Schools website <https://sds.mt/prayer-spaces/>
- b) start with the most popular ten prayer spaces.
- c) Use a range of activities related to the self, other people, the World, the Sacred and the Divine.
- d) make use of reflecting thinking skills on the living story of prayer spaces from when it started up to date.
- e) pray in a school setting.
- f) the experience of prayer spaces is in itself a means of reflection and encourages reflective thinking skills; thus, those present will acquire the skill to channel one's thoughts in terms of the four key relationships:
  - i. The Self: inner thoughts, feelings, emotions and experiences.
  - ii. Other People: friends, family, neighbours and others.
  - iii. The World: this can include justice issues, society and the environment.
  - iv. The Sacred and Divine: Reflecting on the non-material aspects of life, including goodness, truth, beauty and religious beliefs.

In the process, during the course, one can acquire the skills to:





- a. Read and reflect upon an instruction card.
- b. Explore one's identity, process difficult emotions, forgive, say sorry, and express hopes and fear while discovering the joy of prayer.
- c. Reflect and learn from each other.
- d. Build upon the experience already reached and thus participate in an evolving programme aimed at connectedness.
- e. Looking for new material and making good use of the provided material and resources, which can be downloadable from the website.

The module will build upon lower-order skills such as **remembering** how it all began, **understanding** the purpose behind these learning experiences and **applying** this new concept of praying to be able to reach higher-order skills. These include **evaluating** the pros and cons of these lived experiences, **analysing** ways and means to be more meaningful to today's realities and **creating** more innovative ways to make these prayer stations more fruitful.

**Judgment Skills and Critical Abilities** - the participants will be able to:

- Use a range of activities that represent all four areas of connectedness.
- Differentiate between running prayer spaces for early years, primary and secondary students.
- Prepare instruction cards and resources age-appropriate.
- Criticise and analyse feedback received after hosting prayer spaces;
- make recommendations on how could the prayer space experience be improved next time.

Judge which is the best way to recruit people to host prayer spaces.

**Communication Skills – the participants will be able to:**

- Talk about one's faith journey with friends, colleagues and students without anyone feeling forced to adopt beliefs that are not their own.
- Express their acquired knowledge by communicating and sharing what they have learnt and experienced with other educators in their respective school communities.

**Module-Specific Digital Skills and Competences**

At the end of the module/unit, the learner will be able to





- a) Prepare a Powerpoint presentation to be used whenever health restriction measures take place and so one has to stay in class and follow from their desk. The Powerpoint Presentation will include an original prayer space story penned by SDS, action songs or short video clips, prayer spaces activities, list of resources and templates needed.
- b) search on the sds.mt website for prayer spaces, prayer corners,
- c) Be part of Route 2820, a group page on Facebook for educators
- d) Know how to search for posts, photos, stories, and experiences on the Prayer Spaces in Schools-UK and Malta websites.

## Programme Structure and Mode of Delivery

This course is delivered over 6 weekly lectures of 2.5 hours (15 hours)

### Assessment

The assessment methods for this award are as follows:

1. A multiple-choice online exam through our online platform Moodle will be held to test the knowledge outcomes.
2. Setting up of a prayer space which will be assessed through an assignment of 500 – 800 words which should include photos or a short video clip of the prayer space to assess whether the student can actually apply the knowledge s/he has learnt and is skillful enough to plan, lead and run a prayer space.

## Certification

Upon successful completion of this course, participants will be conferred an accredited certification.

## Reading List

### Core Reading List

1. Green Thomas H., Weeds Among the Wheat. Discernment: Where Prayer and Action Meet, Notre Dame IN, Ave Maria Press, 1984.
2. Greig Pete, How to Pray: A Simple Guide for Normal People, Hodder & Stoughton, 2019



### Supplementary Reading List

1. **Professor Julian Stern**, Evaluation of Prayer Spaces in Schools – The contribution of Prayer Spaces to Spiritual Development, St John University York, 2017:  
<https://prayerspacesinschools.com/prayer-spaces/research/>
2. Stories of prayer spaces in other places will inspire you and help you to imagine your own:  
<https://prayerspacesinschools.com/stories/>

For further information and assistance

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