



Star and Moon Gazing

“When I look at your heavens, the work of your hands, the moon and the stars which you have established; what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?” –Psalm 8:45

Introduction

God gave us an incredible gift in the creation of the night sky. When visibility is high, we will explore the beauty and intricacy of the night sky through stars, constellations, seasonal changes. When the moon is bright, we will explore the relationship between the moon and the sun and what this relationship can teach us about our relationship with Christ.

Student Performance Objectives

Through participation in this activity students will:

- Locate the North Star
- Locate and identify constellations
- Explain why certain stars appear brighter and larger than others
- Explain why stars are not always found in the same part of the sky
- Retell stories and myths behind constellations
- Identify the current lunar phase
- Explain how, just as the moon reflects the sun, Mary’s radiance is a reflection of Christ’s light
- Inspire wonder and awe

Archdiocesan Standards

- 5th Grade Earth and Space Science; Earth’s Place in the Universe 1, 2
- MS-ESS1-1
- 4th Grade Religion 7
- 5th Grade Religion 2
- 6th Grade Religion 6

Activities

- Star Gazing
 - Students will learn about stars and popular constellations, locating each in the night sky. As we explore the various constellations, students will learn some of the ancient myths behind them.
- Psalm 8 Devotion
 - Meditating on Psalm 8 under the nighttime sky, students will have some time in quiet to marvel at the beauty of creation and ponder the significance of their role in creation.
- Moon Phase Identification
 - Using their journals, students will document their observations of the moon and will identify the current lunar phase.
- Mary and the Moon
 - Just as the moon reflects the light of the *sun*, so too are we called to reflect the light of the *Son*, Christ Jesus! And who reflects Christ’s light better than anyone else? Our Blessed Mother. To close out the evening, students will be guided through a reflection on Mary and how they can better reflect the light of Christ in their own lives.