

Daily Prayer With Children

Daily prayer and prayer time with our children is one of the main foundations of the Domestic Church. Without a family connection to prayer, it's members can seem disjointed and out of step. It's like getting up on the wrong side of the bed. As the saying goes, "The family that prays together stays together." This couldn't be more appropriate for Catholics and peoples of ALL faiths alike in our troubled and fallen world.

Establishing a tradition and rhythm of daily prayer with our children does not happen overnight, it is a gradual adding in of thoughtful and simple prayers that the children can begin learning from a very early age. If you can fold prayer time into your days like kneading dough into bread, it will become as natural as eating!

I would like to share what our family does for daily prayer and what has become a very nice tradition of sharing, praying and devotions at our house.

Because we are a Catholic home schooling family, we begin our gathering time or table time together after the breakfast dishes have been cleared away and morning chores have been completed. I really try to start no later than 9:00am with our prayer time, usually earlier in the late Autumn and Winter with the time change. We gather rosaries, a Saint's book, and the bible and light a candle.

The tradition that we have established for devotional prayers follow a "theme" for each day. I created some simple 9 x 12 inch poster board prayer cards to display each day with the **Theme and Prayer** written in large print. They are beautiful to look at as the children helped me to decorate them with a few Holy images and symbols, but they can be simple index cards as well. This has been very helpful for the dear children to remember what our specific focus is for the day and definitely helps ME stay centered, especially with a wiggly two year old on my lap.

After we make the sign of the cross we pray this very simple morning offering:

"Dear Jesus, we offer you this day, our works, our joys, our sorrows and our play, please help me to be good today Jesus, I love you, Amen."

Then we follow with the daily **Theme**:

Monday: The Angels

We Sing the Angel of God prayer, pray to St. Michael the Archangel, and ask for special protection and care for each other's Guardian Angels and all those of our extended family members collectively.

After we have a short bible reading, Saint of the day or a Saint that one child has chosen (rotate through each able child) and then pray a decade of the Rosary, also a mystery of one child's choosing.

We close by asking all the Holy Angels & Saints to pray for us! (Monday)

We blow out the candle, clear the table and begin our learning day!

(The example in bold is what we do each day following the Theme Prayer and changes only for inclusion of prayers for either Advent or Lent, Marian or Other High Feast)

Tuesday: The Apostles

"Dear Lord, help me to be like your Apostles and Saints, always doing your will and spreading the good news. Help me to practice the virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity, Amen."

Then we recite the Apostles names, and ask them to pray for us. Finish with... **a short bible reading, Saint of the day or one child's Saint choice and then pray a decade of the Rosary, also a mystery of one child's choosing....**

Wednesday: St. Joseph

"St. Joseph, model of every virtue, pray for us. Patron of Fathers, Patron of Families, Patron of the Church, Pray for us."
"Protector of the Holy Family, protect us in all dangers. Amen."

Finish with... **a short bible reading, Saint of the day or one child's Saint choice and then pray a decade of the Rosary, also a mystery of one child's choosing....**

Thursday: The Eucharist

We make a Spiritual Communion as follows: Pray 3 Our Fathers, Hail Mary's, and Glory Be's, then;

"I wish Lord, to receive you with the purity, humility, and devotion with which your most Holy Mother received you, with the spirit and fervor of the Saints." and "Lord, as I make this

spiritual communion today, I believe that you are truly present in the Eucharist, Amen."

Finish with... a short bible reading, Saint of the day or one child's Saint choice and then pray a decade of the Rosary, also a mystery of one child's choosing....

Friday: Jesus' Passion

"Lord, I offer my sacrifice to you today and ask for your mercy for all my offenses, Amen."

We talk about the ACTS of prayer, A-Adoration, C-Contrition, T-Thanksgiving, S-Supplication, and then we pray,

"Lord, by your cross and resurrection you have set us free, you are the Savior of the world, Amen."

Finish with... a short bible reading, Saint of the day or one child's Saint choice and then pray a decade of the Rosary, also a mystery of one child's choosing....and any personal intentions including the aforementioned sacrifice.

Saturday: Our Blessed Mother

Mass if possible and we try and say the Memorare at breakfast, finish with the Fatima prayer,

"Oh My Jesus, forgive us our sins, Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee."

Sunday: Our weekly Easter

Treated as an *extra special day with Mass*, and family Sunday activities, sometimes a hike or drive, and dinner which varies weekly with the liturgical calendar.