

The Praying



Family

THE PRAYING FAMILY

Creating a space to intentionally pray together

The Christian family is the first place of education in prayer. Based on the sacrament of marriage, the family is the "domestic church" where God's children learn to pray "as the Church" and to persevere in prayer. For young children, in particular, daily family prayer is the first witness of the Church's living memory as awakened patiently by the Holy Spirit.

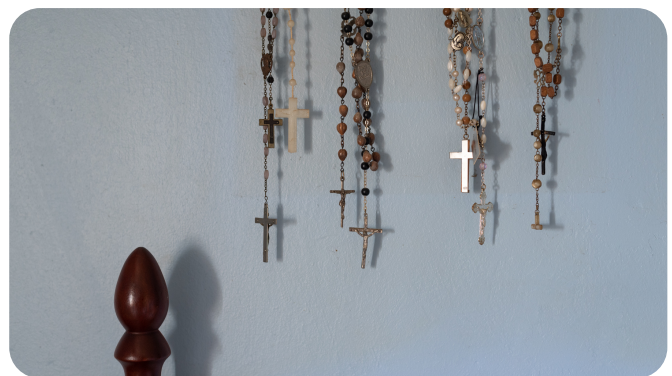
-The Catechism of the Catholic Church (2685)

The "little oratory", according to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (2691) is a place where the Christian family can go to foster "prayer in common." This prayer space or "prayer corner" is considered a favorable place for prayer. This space might include a bible, icons, rosaries, candles, or any other religious objects that help us better create a relationship with our father.

A Catholic home is a place where prayer and faith are fostered. Having a space where family members can go alone or as an entire family can be an incredibly fruitful and useful tool in teaching the foundations of our faith, how to pray, and creating a life-long relationship with God.

This box was created to help families create this intentional space. We've included the basic items that we think will help foster faith and prayer in your family home. Because we created these boxes near the beginning of the Lenten season of the Church year, we've also included a few items that will aid you in your Lenten journey as a family.

Once you get your prayer space setup and find a rhythm of prayer there with your family, we've included a few more resources to help you continue growing in faith and prayer together.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Books

- *The Little Oratory: A Beginner's Guide to Praying in the Home* By David Clayton
- *Theology of Home: Finding the Eternal in the Everyday* by Carrie Gress, Noelle Mering and Megan Schrieber
- *Theology of Home II: The Spiritual Art of Homemaking* by Carrie Gress and Noelle Mering
- *Frame "A Family Prayer" and/or "Prayer Before a Crucifix."*

Add to Your Prayer Space

- *Lovely Lady Linens* - Linens inspired by the Catholic Faith (www.lovelyladylinens.com)
- Holy water from your local parish. You can use this to begin your prayer together and bless your home.

Like this Prayer Box? Get more!

- Catholic All Year provides Liturgical Season boxes, family prayer materials, and more: <https://catholicallyear.com/shop/>
- Subscribe for Faith in a Year box memberships through Catholic Family Crate: <https://catholicfamilycrate.com/>



What's in your BOX

STANDING CRUCIFIX

A crucifix helps center your family's prayer on Jesus. The standing crucifix we have provided contains a Benedictine medal, which contains many special blessings calling down God's protection. For more information on the Benedictine medal and all of its symbolism, visit www.osb.org/the-medal-of-saint-benedict/.

A "Prayer Before a Crucifix" card has also been included in your box to add to your list of prayers that can be said during your time of prayer.

ROSARY & ROSARY BOOKLET

The rosary is a sacramental (a prayer, object, or event that points to sanctifying grace, holiness, and sainthood), and it can be prayed with in its entirety or one decade at a time with your family.

PRAYER CANDLE

The word "candle" comes from the Latin verb *candeo* meaning "to shine, glow, or burn." As early as the eighth century, the word "candle" was introduced into the English language specifically in relation to liturgical practices. Throughout Church history, the candle has represented Christ: the perfect candle.

SACRIFICE JAR WITH BEANS

During Lent, place the "Pray. Give Fast." sticker on your mason jar. When someone in your family makes a sacrifice, they get to put a bean in the jar. On Easter, replace the Lenten sticker with the "Alleluia!" sticker and replace the beans with a treat of your family's choice.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS COLORING PAGES

The Stations of the Cross is a prayer that commemorates stops along the Via Dolorosa (Latin for Way of Sorrow), which was Jesus' journey from Pilate's Court and through his burial in the tomb. Fridays (Especially Good Friday) during Lent are traditional days to pray this particular prayer.

We recommend taking some of your prayer time to color the stations. Take the twine and clothes pins and hang them up by your family prayer space. Use the stations you created to pray the Stations together as a family on Fridays (or a more convenient day for your family).

A FAMILY PRAYER PRINT

Included is a print we designed exclusively for this box that can be added to your prayer space. This prayer was written by Pope Francis for the Feast of the Holy Family in 2013.



How to PRAY

PLANNING YOUR PRAYER TIME

So what now? We recommend you pick a day and time that work best for your family to pray at least once a week together. Once you have established a day and time, try your best to guard this time, keeping it sacred and set aside for family prayer. If you have a conflict one week with your prayer day, plan a different day and time to pray as a family for that week, and keep it protected from other plans steering your prayer time off course.

HOW LONG SHOULD WE PRAY?

Each family will require different needs, and certain prayers take more time than others. Commit as a family to a length of your prayer time and try your best to keep it consistent each week. The "sweet spot" is about 10-20 minutes of prayer together. If you have small children, 10 minutes may be the maximum time to hold their attention. You know your family best! Below is a suggested format for organizing family prayer that you may adapt to best fit your family's needs.

PROPOSED PRAYER SCHEDULE

Begin with the sign of the cross, asking your family members to remember they are in the Holy Presence of God.

Utilize an opening prayer, such as the "Prayer Before A Crucifix" that is included in your box, to center yourselves in prayer.

Bring the Lenten Sacrifice jar to your prayer space and talk as a family about ways you have made sacrifices for each other in the past week. Take time affirming each other in how their sacrifices have blessed you and your family.

Take time to color and pray the first two stations of the cross together as a family. Each time you pray together, pray the next two stations. By the last Friday of Lent, you should have prayed all the stations together.

To close your prayer time, ask your family if they have intentions they would like the whole family to pray for. Invite them to share those out loud, and close with "A Family Prayer" (found in the box).

*If you have older children, invite them to take turns leading your prayer time.

**You can also add a decade of the rosary to your prayer time or pick another day of the week to pray the rosary (the whole thing or a decade) as a family.

