

# Praying with Children @ Home

Prayer, has been described as the raising of the mind and heart to [God](#). It marks the times we affirm the presence of God and the sacredness of everyday life and it is the key to a living faith.



Nowadays most families are running to very busy schedules with school, day-care, kinder, work and extra-curricular activities to be factored in let alone the shopping, meals, meetings, homework, forms to sign, dishes to do, laundry to fold. The days merge into weeks and weeks into months; so where do we find the time to pray? Here are a few tips to get you started.

*“Each day some prayer, any prayer, is better than no prayer”*

If we leave the praying for big occasions like feast days or if something goes wrong we may find ourselves at a loss on what to say or how to act. Prayer is about relationship, our relationship with God, so it’s better to check in frequently and come as you are! No need to put on pretences.

## #1 Develop a Routine and Rhythm.

Find a regular time in the day, whether it be over dinner time or before bed where you can gather together or choose a time that suits you. Gather yourselves for a few moments and reflect over the day...and stick to it, so it becomes a part of your family life.

## #2 Create a Ritual.

Use a signal that you are entering into prayer, that things are different, it doesn’t have to be big, a simple sign such as lighting a candle, ringing a bell or chime or placing a cross or holy object on a table. Announce you are beginning the prayer and ask for quiet. Change your own behaviour by slowing down, pause and make the sign of the cross. All of these signs especially if done repetitively will indicate you are creating a space for your family to enter into prayer.

## #3 Show Reverence

Whatever part of the day you adjust to include prayer, it is important that the time allocated for the prayer is different to the rest of the routine and it is reverential. Have a beginning and an ending. Encourage a reflective, respectful listening environment; we are in conversation with God who loves us more than we can imagine. Remember to relax and be yourself!

## #4 Be a Role Model

Remember to pray **with** your children and let your children see you praying. Show them your faith talk about spiritual things with them and don’t feel you have to have all the answers! Be real.

## #5 Be Relevant

Encourage relevant and real conversations and reflections, bring the family's life to the prayer space, don't sugar coat the prayers. Bring your life experiences of your relationships with people and creation into your prayers. Be real.

## #6 Use Religious Tradition

Ground your prayers in the religious tradition by using resources from credible sources. (See resources) Follow scripture and pray with the liturgical seasons (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Ordinary Time) as well as the four ecological seasons. Get to know the Saints particularly those that may have relevance to your family and pray their prayers. Learn about the prayers of the church and try them out you might like them!

### The Prayer Space:



You may like to create a physical prayer space to help you and your family enter into prayer within the home. This could be especially set up for the prayer time or left set up in an area of your home. Some things that can help to create this space are a cloth or fabric (it is good to link the colour of the cloth with the liturgical seasons, but not essential), a cross or crucifix, a candle, a bible, and perhaps a special object (a photo of someone you are praying for, an object of sentimental value relevant to the prayer) some flowers or something from the garden. The idea is to keep it simple and it is to help you to open up your heart, not stress you out!! It is an outward sign of an inward movement; a move away from the ordinary. Or perhaps you have your own ways to incorporate the Divine into your family setting.



#### **Resources:**

[www.LiturgyHelp.com](http://www.LiturgyHelp.com)

During the time of isolation this website is available to families to share the Word of God together in their homes: high quality reflections, activities and access to liturgical calendar, daily scripture, and prayers of the church

[www.Universalis.com](http://www.Universalis.com)

Readings for the Mass all year round, website with downloadable apps for phones

<https://resourcecem.com/>

CEM Daily Online Daily Prayer: a PowerPoint presentation created using the GLRG format following the liturgical year based on the Sunday gospels

<http://www.cominghome.org.au/introduction/dsp-default-c.cfm@loadref=61.html>

An Australian website focusing on Christian meditation for children

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