

*St. Michael the Archangel
Family Faith Formation*

Home Kit



Session #1: Family Prayer
October 9, 2016

Home Kit Instructions



1. Personal Prayer

First Week - October 10-16

Select a prayer type ("Prayers of Praise" or "Prayers of Contrition") for your personal prayer time and pray it for 5 minutes, at the time and location specified in your plan, everyday for the first week.

Second Week - October 17-23

Add the second prayer type and pray it together with the first prayer type you started the previous week - at the same time and location.

Third Week - October 24-30

Increase the time you spend praying from 5 minutes to 10 minutes.

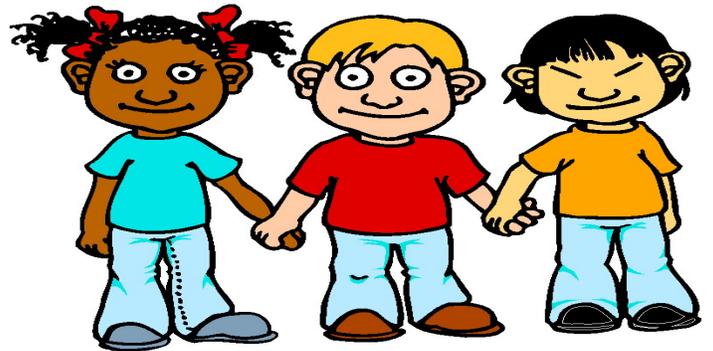
Fourth Week - October 31-November 6

Increase your prayer time to at least 10-15 minutes per day.



2. Family Prayer

Select a prayer type ("Prayers of Praise" or "Prayers of Contrition") from the following pages and perform the activities, one per week, for the month of October. As time allows, try the other prayer types (see pages 2-5) over the following months until you include all prayer types in your prayer time.



3. Bless your Child(ren)

Bless your child(ren) every time they leave the house. Say something like "Lord, bless and protect <child's name> and bring him/her back home safely." Or when you leave the house say "Lord, bless and protect my children while I'm away."

Prayers of Praise @ Home



Many of us pray when we want to ask God for something either for ourselves or someone else. Sometimes it is difficult to just give compliments to God. Prayers of praise give praise to God for being good, for the mystery and majesty of God. Prayers of praise can be a challenge for us to think about God in terms of someone who deserves our praise. It forces us to not take God for granted. Prayers of praise reflect our own attitude and ability to recognize others for their goodness, especially our ability to just praise God for being God.

Activity 1

Try for a week to offer only prayers of praise when you gather for meals or other events. Use phrases such as: "God, you are good and wonderful. We praise you." "God, we praise you for the mystery that is you." "God, we believe that you are holy and awesome." "We praise you for your majesty, O God." Be creative and make up some of your own.

Activity 2

As you practice giving praise to God also practice giving praise to each other. Look for opportunities to compliment one another for qualities that are unique to each person as well as for what they do. Be sincere. When you receive a compliment, thank the person giving it.

Activity 3

After trying a time for giving praise to God and each other, take time to talk about how it felt. Was it hard to not ask God for something when you prayed? How did it feel to receive compliments from others? Were you embarrassed? Were you able to receive a compliment graciously? Were you able to offer compliments to others with sincere affection? If not, why was it hard?

Activity 4

As a family or household, write a prayer of praise that you could use from time to time when you are gathered for a meal or other event. It could be in the form of a litany with a response such as those suggested in Activity One above. It could be in the form of a poem, a song, or just a brief paragraph. Be creative. If you have lots of ideas, write more than one and alternate the use of them.

Prayers of Contrition @ Home



One of the well established kinds of prayer is offering words of sorrow for our wrongdoing. In prayers of contrition we acknowledge that we are imperfect, that we make mistakes, that sometimes we choose wrong behavior that affects us and our relationship to God and others. As a family or household it can be very important to take time out to say we are sorry, to ask forgiveness of one another and of God. It is also important for us to let those we live with know that we forgive them for the hurts we have endured. God's love is greater than we can ever dare to imagine. God forgives us before we even ask. However, we need to acknowledge that we are sorry, that we intend to do better, and that we need God in our life to help us choose the right behavior.

Activity 1

When the family or household gathers for a meal, read Matthew 5:23-24 where Jesus tells us that if we have anything against our brother or sister we are to make peace with him or her before we bring our gift to the altar. Invite them to share a sign of peace with each other before the meal.

Activity 2

Gather some pieces of paper, about 5 x 7, some pencils, pens, crayons or markers, a metal or glass bowl, a hot pad, a candle and matches. When the family or household assembles, give an introduction using similar words to the introduction above. Explain that as a unit you are going to pause to reflect on relationships with each other and with God. Light the candle. Invite each member to take a piece of

paper and write or draw symbols of behaviors they are sorry about -- things they have done that have separated them from others and from God. When everyone is ready, take turns burning the pieces of paper in the bowl. As each family member burns the paper he or she could say something like, "I am sorry for my wrongdoing." The rest of the family responds with something like, "We love you and forgive you." When all are finished, take turns blessing each other with ashes.

Activity 3

When household members are gathered for a meal, event or car ride, begin a discussion about the suffering in our world that is caused by people choosing wrong behavior. Consider your own experiences of suffering, what you see and know in your local community, what you see and know about our state, our nation, the world. Offer prayers of contrition for humanity's inhumanity.

Prayers of Thanksgiving @ Home



Thanksgiving is not the only time of the year that we can take time to be grateful to God for the many gifts God shares with us. Prayers of thanksgiving are one of the four types of prayers. Sometimes it is good for us to reflect on the many good things that are ours, that we enjoy and sometimes take for granted and give thanks to God for all that we have and are. It can be a challenge to thank God for what we need even before we have it, trusting that God will provide for our needs in ways that are best.

Activity 1

Gather some pencils, pens, crayons or markers; some pieces of paper about 3 ½ X 5; and a basket or bowl, and invite the family or household to come together. After a brief introduction (you can use the one above) invite them to think about the gifts they have for which they could give thanks to God. They can then use the paper to write or draw a symbol, one per paper, of the things that come to mind. The papers can be collected in the basket or bowl so that there is a visible sign that our "cup runs over" because of the goodness of God. The basket or bowl could be placed in a prominent place.

Activity 2

When the family or household gathers for a meal, one or more of the papers could be drawn and shared as part of the thanksgiving prayer before or after the meal.

Activity 3

The family or household could gather for a special prayer of thanksgiving. The papers created in Activity One could be the source for a litany of thanksgiving. To each item, the rest of the family could respond with an appropriate phrase such as, "we thank you, God" or "we are grateful for your goodness."

Activity 4

When the family or household is in the car together, offer thanks to God for the things that you see as you drive. You could express gratitude for nature, things, or other people. For example, when you pass a hospital, you could be grateful for access to such a facility, for the doctors, nurses, and others who care for the sick, etc.

Intercessory Prayer @ Home

PRAYER *requests*

What can we pray for together?

One of the time honored kinds of prayer is that of petition or asking God for what we and others need. Prayers of petition challenge us to recall our dependence on God. We cannot get along without God. We believe that God knows our needs even before we ask. Yet, we offer prayers of petition because it helps us remember that we need God above all. When we offer prayers of petition we do so with a spirit of openness, trusting that God will hear and answer our prayers in the way that is best. Sometimes it seems like the answer never comes or in ways that we do not anticipate. However, we trust in the promise of Jesus, "ask and it will be done for you."

Activity 1

When you are gathered for a meal or in the car, talk about the times when you pray prayers of petition. What are some of the needs and concerns you have brought to God's attention? Have your prayers been answered? Were they answered in the way you expected them to be? If they were not answered, did you give up asking? How has your faith been challenged or strengthened by this kind of prayer?

Activity 2

On a large sheet of paper draw four concentric circles. In the innermost circle write some of the needs and concerns of the family/household members that you want to remember in prayer. In the next circle write some of the needs and concerns of your local parish, neighborhood or community that you

want to remember in prayer. In the next circle write some of the needs and concerns of our nation, and in the most outer circle write some of the needs and concerns of our world. Post the paper some place where you can be reminded of the things you are asking of God.

Activity 3

When you gather for a meal or other event, pause to pray for one of the needs and concerns you have identified in each of the four categories of Activity 2 above. You might have each member identify one and other members respond, "Lord, hear us" to each petition. Or, set aside a different day to pray for the needs and concerns listed in each of the circles so that one day is dedicated to the concerns of the family/household; another day for parish, neighborhood, community; another for nation; another for world.