



FAMILY PRAYER SERIES

BEGINNERS GUIDE FOR PRAYING AS A FAMILY

If you are looking for a good way to begin praying with your family, try this format:



BEGIN

Begin your prayer intention with the Sign of the Cross.

INTENTION

One person says a single prayer intention:

Who you are praying for

Why you are praying for them

What you are asking God for

We recommend parents offer the first few intentions.

Parents leading by example will help their children learn to speak to God with increasing maturity.



HAIL MARY

The person who just prayed the intention begins the Hail Mary.

The entire family finishes the Hail Mary.



REPEAT

Repeat the intentions and Hail Marys until everyone has prayed for all of their intentions.



CLOSE

Conclude your prayer with the Sign of the Cross.

EXAMPLES:

Dear Jesus, please comfort my grandma as she moves to an assisted living facility.

As she mourns her loss of independence, give her your peace.

Hail Mary...

Dear Jesus, as my kids begin school, give them the wisdom they need to succeed this school year.

Hail Mary...

Dear Jesus, heal my aunt who has cancer.

Please give her the strength to endure her treatments.

Hail Mary...

Dear Jesus, my brother is in need of a job to help support his family.

Guide him in finding work that highlights his talents and helps to sustain his family's needs.

Hail Mary...

Dear Jesus, I am sorry for my sins.

Help me to not be afraid of confessing my sins, and embrace me with your Mercy.

Hail Mary...

Dear Jesus, thank you for the gift of life.

Please watch over and comfort the parents who grieve over their lost children.

Hail Mary...

Prayer is nothing else but being on terms of friendship with God, frequently conversing with him.

-St. Theresa of Avila



Praying As A Family
Praying From Your Own Heart

"I highly recommend that each family work towards praying twice together every day: once from the heart of the church and once from your own hearts." -Fr. Michael Thiel

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BEST PRAYERS TO MEMORIZE

The Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Our Father

Our Father,
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.
Give us this day
our daily bread,
and forgive us
our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, Full of Grace,
The Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit
of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners now,
and at the hour of our death.
Amen.

Glory Be

Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.
Amen.

Guardian Angel Prayer

Angel of God,
my guardian dear,
To whom God's love
commits me here,
Ever this day,
be at my side,
To light and guard,
To rule and guide.
Amen.

Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

St. Michael the Archangel,
defend us in battle.
Be our defense against
the wickedness and snares
of the Devil.
May God rebuke him,
we humbly pray,
and do thou,
O Prince of the heavenly hosts,
by the power of God,
thrust into hell Satan,
and all the evil spirits,
who prowl about the world
seeking the ruin of souls.
Amen.

The Meal Prayer

Bless us, O Lord,
and these, Thy gifts,
which we are about to receive
from Thy bounty.
Through Christ, our Lord.
Amen.



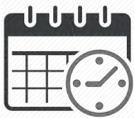
READING THE BIBLE WITH YOUR CHILDREN

Many children fondly remember their parents reading with them. Wouldn't it be great to give them similar memories of reading the Bible? From the youngest ages, these stories can capture children's imaginations and introduce them to some of the great figures of our faith. It's ok if it is awkward at first - trying anything new would be - but as you repeat it, it gets easier!



WHY

Give children a good reason to read the Bible. Answer the question of "Why are we doing this?" upfront. "We're reading the Bible together because we want to know, love, and serve God, and live our lives for his glory and the good of others."



ROUTINE

Establish a routine. Like everything else in life, reading the Bible with our kids is much more likely to happen if it becomes part of our routine. It takes about 6–8 weeks to build a habit by doing something at the same time in the same place with the same person. There will be ups and downs in that period, with times of forgetfulness and catch-up, but it will eventually become part of the fabric of life. Try to find a slot in your schedule that you can commit to, push through the first 6–8 weeks, and you and your children will have formed a holy habit.

TIP Use a dedicated prayer room or table to help focus.



BEGIN

Begin with the sign of the cross and a simple prayer:

Lord, as I read Your word,
please help me to know, love,
and understand You better.
Help me to recognize how You want for me
to apply Your Word to my life.
Holy Spirit, may You enlighten my mind
and enkindle in my heart
a greater love for You and for others
In my family and in the world
as I read Your Word.
Amen.

READ

A parent or child who is old enough reads one story.

Recommended Bible - The Catholic Children's Bible from St Mary's Press



Recommended Reading Plans-

- † From the Catholic Children's Bible - Featured stories index pages 7-11 Each story has a simple guide for parents to help their children understand and discuss the story.
- † From the Catholic Children's Bible - use the Reading Plan on page 2000 (with stickers!)
- † Read the gospel for the upcoming Sunday Mass - bible.usccb.org or in a missal with the reading.
- † If you want to read entire books or section of the bible, start with Gospels and the New Testament, because the stories of Jesus' life and the New Testament will be more familiar than much of the Old Testament.



Reading the Bible
With Your Children
Praying From the Heart of the Church

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SILENCE

After reading, if children are old enough, include 30-60 seconds of silence. Let's quietly think about what we just heard and ask Jesus what he wants to say to us.

REFLECT

Reflect with children by asking questions. You could ask different questions after reading different stories. Parent - "Let's talk a little bit about the story from the Bible.



- † Could you tell the story in your own words?"
- † Why do you think that happened?
- † Who were the good people in the story? Were there any bad people in the story?
- † What would Jesus (or a different person in the story) say to you?
- † Suppose you had been there: What would it have been like? What would you have done?
- † What does the story mean for your life?
- † What does this teach us about God?

TIP Use the Understand it, Live it, and Tell it, resources for each story in the Catholic Children's Bible from St. Mary Press.

INQUIRE



Invite questions from your children, although they will sometimes ask silly questions or perhaps even stump you from time to time. We mustn't do anything that will stifle their inquiries and even when they strike us out, simply say, "I don't know, but I'll find out." And make sure you do get back to them with an answer.

PRAY

Parents end with an simple ad lib prayer including some to the details you discussed:



Example: "Dear Jesus, thank you for healing those who were sick. Please heal (Names of sick family members or friends). Please be with all nurses and doctors. Keep (Names of children) healthy. Amen.

Example: "Dear Jesus, thank you for teaching us to love one another. Help our family to grow in love. Help (Child's name) to show love to (name of family member or classmate they fought with), even when it is hard. Amen.

Dear Jesus, thank you for calming the stormy seas. Help our family to remember you, especially when we are busy. Be with (child name) when they feel helpless or afraid. Amen.



END

Parents: end by tracing the sign of the cross on children's forehead.

GOING TO MASS AS A FAMILY

As parents, you are leaders of your own 'domestic church' and have the incredible responsibility for forming children in our Catholic faith. There is no more important experience to Catholics than the Mass, so it is crucial to help children understand and participate in liturgy as much as they are able. At times, it may seem as though the only thing accomplished at Mass was the exercise of standing and walking with a grumpy baby. But we also know that children do not remain little for long and they rise to our expectations. There will be plenty of opportunities to experience transcendent prayer at Mass when children are growing. When beginning, the primary job is to make sure they begin to understand what happens at Mass. You may find that God has found ways to feed you, even on the most difficult of days with a teething toddler.

To the parents of our youngest children, please know, the presence of children at Mass is a gift from our Lord and a reminder that our parish is growing. Any noise that children may make during Mass is pleasing to God's ears and welcomed. We greet children and young families with smiles and encouragement. Relax! God put the wiggle in children; don't feel you must suppress it in God's house.

You get out what you put in. Here are a collection of tips to help invest in making mass the best experience possible for you and your children. Don't be overwhelmed by trying to check off all of these right away, but imagine how incredible the experience of attending Mass with your family would be if you could!

BEFORE MASS - FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN



Make sure children are well-fed right before Mass. They do not need to fast, nor will fasting help them to be on their best behavior during Mass.



Beginning even with the smallest infants, dress them in some special clothing that they wear only for church or other special events. This does not have to be expensive and can be as simple as a nice pair of shoes. It helps them to identify what we do at Mass as different from everyday activity.



Check your diaper bag to make sure it is stocked for any possible needs. Consider including a small toy or book that your child sees only on Sunday at Mass. These could be quiet and made of soft material so that they do not distract those around you from their prayer while they are being played with or in case they are dropped.



Put on a fresh diaper or visit the bathroom right before walking out the door of your home or into the church.

BEFORE MASS - FOR GRADE SCHOOL CHILDREN



Discuss with kids what everybody's prayers, works, joys, sorrows and sufferings are from the week. Remind kids to offer each of these to Jesus at Mass.



Remember that we are preparing our bodies to be a temple of Jesus, and should fast for one hour before receiving communion. It is good to have kids start to practice this well before receiving their First Holy Communion. Don't eat a doughnut on your way in the door.



You might read the readings in the car on the way to church. This could even be the job of an older child. Then everyone hears them at least once beforehand, which makes it easier to listen at Mass. Also, someone who may have to step out has already heard the readings.



Before going into the church take a moment to remind children what you are about to do. Make sure they know what their job is at Mass: Their job is to be respectful, and to participate by sharing their voices to pray. Also, their job is to not distract those around them from praying, which they would do by being quiet and still.



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AT CHURCH



Sit up front. Yes, sit even in the first few pews. It is easier for your little ones to see and hear what is going on in the sanctuary and on the altar. It can feel scary and even a little out of control the first few times, but it makes a world of difference for little ones to be able to see the action. Over time it also helps them to understand what is most essential about Mass without the distraction of backs and elbows between them and the altar.



You could physically hold your young children in your arms during Mass. The children get a better view; and you have a bit more control over their behavior. If an infant or toddler gets squirmy, often switching who is holding them is enough to calm them down. Otherwise you might play a quiet game of “point to the...candles, priest, altar, cross, etc.”



As they grow and mature you can talk them through the stories and the actions; it can be helpful to quietly explain the parts of Mass and to draw your children's attention to the action of the priest, servers, lector, choir, etc.



For yourself, sing the hymns, pray, make the sign of the cross and other gestures with intentionality. Children learn liturgical behavior by copying you.



During their two-year-old year, you could try to let your children stand for a portion of Mass or try sitting next to you quietly, instead of in your lap. Then when they turn three it can be a special milestone to be big enough to stand, sit and kneel all on their own (although if they can't see over the pew you could have them stand during the kneeling portions of the Eucharistic Prayer).



If an infant or toddler makes a little noise during Mass and settles down right away, try not to feel self-conscious. Most folks except for those closest to you do not even notice. And even if they do notice, give your fellow parishioners credit for being adults who can focus through a small distraction. If a child cries or makes continual noise, it is best to calmly step out of the pew and take the child out of the main assembly until they have calmed down or are quiet. However, it is important to return to the worship space as soon as they are quiet, so that children do not begin to associate poor or disruptive behavior with a pass to get out of Mass. Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me”. Stepping out and returning even a few times is not nearly as disruptive as a crying baby and parishioners appreciate your consideration of their attempt to pray. Those that are parents understand completely.



Kids can offer part of their own allowance or gifts that they receive. Foster generosity to Jesus' Church. Have kids learn to give their own money, and not from your wallet.



Remember the prayers, works, joys, sorrows, and suffering you discussed before Mass? During the preparation of the altar have your children imagine placing prayers from their own hearts into the chalice. At Mass our hearts are transformed along with bread and wine that become Jesus' Body and Blood. We offer the prayers in our own hearts to God to allow him to transform them.

AFTER MASS



Praise your children abundantly for their good behavior. If they need some improvement, mention briefly how they might do better next week and explain why. Let them know that you will help them by trying to remind them before the next Mass.



Answer questions children have about Mass and encourage them to understand the liturgy and its place in our lives.



For older children, consider taking time to discuss the readings and the homily.



Celebrate Sunday! Treat your family to a special food or visit a restaurant. Remember to keep holy the Lord's day by avoiding unnecessary work.

CONNECT WITH YOUR PARISH

Sunday Masses

8 AM St. Patrick
10 AM St. Denis

Weekday Sacraments & Prayer Monday at St. Denis

7 AM Adoration
5:30 PM Confession
6 PM Mass

Tuesday at St. Denis

7 AM Adoration
5:30 PM Confession
6 PM Mass

Wednesday at St. Denis

7 AM Adoration
5:30 PM Confession
6 PM Mass

Thursday at St. Patrick

6:30 AM Adoration
7 AM-Noon Confession
7 AM Mass

Saturday at St. Patrick

9 AM Mass
9:30-10:30 AM Confession & Adoration

For more information about how to prepare for these Sacraments, contact:

Baptism	Fr. Michael
1st Eucharist	Cassandra
Confirmation	Cassandra
Confession	Fr. Michael
Marriage	Fr. Michael
Anointing of the Sick	Fr. Michael
Priesthood	Fr. Michael

Websites:

www.stpatrick-stephensville.org
www.stdenis-shiocton.org

Office: 920.757.5090

After Hours Emergency: 920.986.3369

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Church Locations

St. Denis N5591 Second St., Shiocton

St. Patrick N3686 St. Rd. 76, Stephenville

Office Mailing Address

N3686 St. Rd. 76

Hortonville, WI 54944

*To learn about how to become
a parishioner, contact Liz in
our Parish Office.*

