

Prayer Parent Resource:

Overview:

The Prayer mini-course gives the students the opportunity to explore, through actual experience, different types of traditional prayer from our rich Catholic tradition. Each week the students will discuss difficulties they or others may have praying, as well as having a 'hands-on' prayer experience in an effort to show them improving our prayer life is essential to our relationship with Christ.

Things to Remember When Talking with Teens about Prayer:

1. Honor your children's opinions, learning, and experiences.
2. Listen actively to them; make eye contact to show your interest.
3. Be fair towards their experiences with prayer. If your children feel you are picking on a certain experiences they will resist and ultimately tune you out.
4. Do not make generalizations about their experiences with prayer.
5. You may feel embarrassed about your experiences or knowledge about the faith (or perceived lack thereof), but do not let that limit your encouragement of your child exploring the Catholic faith. Instead, share some of your favorite memories that involve prayer, and explain how pray is either easy or a struggle for you and how you (together) could improve the family prayer life.
6. Encourage inquiry and conversation about prayer.

There is absolutely nothing to fear from prayer or from the God you're going to meet in that prayer place. He loves you. Forever. No matter what. And He's waiting.

To have a healthy and powerful friendship with God, we need to share with Him the greater depths and complexities you're discovering in yourself every day. It's difficult. Other things seem more important than God. In fact, in this are going well in most areas of our lives, we may not even really feel the need to deepen our friendship with God.

But God is still there.

Ready with love, ready with grace, healing, answers, ready with nothing less than wholeness and utter peace.

(Adapted from Prove It, Prayer! By Amy Welborn)

Prayer:

Week 1:

Topics covered:

Prayer Habits

Creating a friendship with God through prayer

The rosary

Questions to ask:

1. How is prayer like communication in a friendship?
2. How do we know God loves us deeply?
3. Do 'go to pray' or 'pray as you go'?
4. Is one better than the other?
5. Why don't a pray more?
6. How could I easily pray more?

Activities to do:

1. Pray the rosary together. It generally only takes 20-30 minutes together. Try praying it together before bed one night a week.
2. Using the 'Pray the Rosary Daily' blue booklet go over the mysteries for whatever day it is. Take the time to read through the scripture listed next to each mystery.
3. Using an internet search, look up artwork associated with the mysteries for whatever day of the week it is.
4. Try to pray one decade of the rosary in a different language. Visit <http://www.pacifier.com/rosary-center.org/rosaryprayers.htm>

Quotes regarding prayer:

'A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter;
he who finds one finds a treasure
A faithful friend is beyond price,
No sum can balance his worth.'
~Sirach 6:14-15

'Look at Him who is looking at you.'
~St. Therese of Lisieux

'Mental prayer in my opinion is nothing else than an intimate sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be along with Him who we know loves us.'
~St. Teresa of Avila

Prayer

Week 2: (may be switched with week 3 depending on the availability of a priest)

Topics covered:

Reasons we have for why we don't need to pray
Eucharistic Adoration

Questions to ask:

1. What is Eucharistic Adoration?
2. What do you think of the experience?
3. What worked for you? What didn't?
4. What is a monstrance? Can you describe the one you saw?
5. If God is with us all the time why do we need to pray?
6. What is perpetual adoration?

Activities to do:

1. Attend Eucharistic Adoration at SJB, the first Thursday evening of every month, from
2. Plan to visit the Rose Convent in La Crosse, WI, where the Franciscan sisters have been providing perpetual adoration of the Holy Eucharist for over 100 years. Take a tour of the facility and chapel.

Quotes regarding prayer:

“Of all devotions, that of adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the greatest after the sacraments, the one dearest to God and the one most helpful to us.”

~St. Alphonsus Liguori

‘Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord;
cry out to the rock of our salvation.
Let us greet him with a song of praise,
Joyfully sing out our psalms.’

~Psalm 95

‘We are always in the presence of God, yet it seems to me that those who pray are in his presence in a very different sense.’

~St. Teresa of Avila

Prayer

Week 3: (may be switched with week 2 depending on the availability of a priest)

Topics covered:

What makes it difficult to pray
Lexio Divina

Questions to ask:

1. Why is it important to pray every day?
2. If prayer only needs to take 1-2 minutes each day, why do so many of us say we're too busy?
3. What is Lexio Divina?
4. Did it work for you?
5. Do you like the idea of reading the Bible in small chunks, better than sitting down to read a whole gospel at a time? Why or why not?

Activities to do:

1. Use Lexio Divina with your child on some of your favorite bible passages.
2. Set a timer for the same time every day for a week for 2 minutes. Have the whole family take those 2 minutes for individual prayer.

Quotes regarding prayer:

‘Contemplative prayer is the simple expression of the mystery of prayer. It is a gaze of faith fixed on Jesus, an attentiveness to the Word of God, a silent love. It achieves real union with the prayer of Christ to the extent that it makes us share in his mystery.’

~Catechism of the Catholic Church #2724

‘Lord, teach us to pray...’

~Luke 11:1

‘It is essential to being the practice of prayer with a firm resolution of persevering in it.

~St. Teresa of Avila

Prayer

Week 4:

Topics covered:

What makes it difficult to pray
Liturgy of the Hours
Litanies (specifically Litany of the Sacred Heart)
Year for Priests

Questions to ask:

1. What can keep us from being able to concentrate on prayer?
2. How can we help to minimize or eliminate those distractions?
3. What is a breviary?
4. What different times of day if the Liturgy of the Hours prayed?
5. What is a Litany?
6. What is the Year for Priests?

Activities to do:

1. Purchase a breviary. There are websites online to help you learn to how to pray the Divine Office, or you can always ask a staff member or priest.
2. Pick up a copy of the Litany of the Sacred Heart (available in both the church and chapel) and pray it as a family.
3. Use the prayer card for the 'Year for Priests' and pray it together as a family.

Quotes regarding prayer:

'A saint isn't somebody who tries harder,
but somebody who trusts more.'

~Peter Kreft, Prayer

'Be constantly committed to prayer or to
reading [scripture]; by praying, you speak
to God, in reading, God speaks to you.'

~St. Cyprian of Carthage, Ep 1, 15

'I have many distractions, but as soon as I
am aware of them, I pray for those people
the thought of whom is diverting my attention.
In this way, they reap the benefit of my distraction.'

~St. Teresa of Avila