

Praying in the family, the Domestic Church



My house shall be a house of prayer

Simply put, “A family that prays together stays together”.... Additionally, our Catechism tells us, “The Christian family is the first place for education in prayer” (No. 2694). We must endeavor to lay down a foundation of prayer in our domestic churches. It will undoubtedly be one of the most important things we will ever do as Christian parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles.

Prayer comes from the depths of our hearts and stretches up like incense to reach God. It is through the gift of faith that we pray. The Holy Spirit teaches the faithful to pray in hope. We learn from the Psalms, “I waited, waited for the LORD; who bent down and heard my cry” (Ps 40:2). Love is at the very core of prayer. So, we see that the theological virtues of faith, hope and love are tightly meshed together in the mystery of prayer.

To hand down the amazing gift of prayer to the family, we can start with our own example of praying in the company of our family, showing them that we can offer up prayers at any time, whether there is a particular need or just a desire to thank God for his many blessings.

As well, we should establish specific times to pray together as a family, such as: morning and evening prayers, a family Rosary (or a decade), and grace before and after meals....

A gentle approach to teaching prayer is preferred over a strict regimented one. We want to impress upon our children that prayer is, in reality, a personal conversation with God.

A valuable prayer lesson is in outwardly showing your Christian love for your spouse, your children, your neighbors and the world. Impress upon your children that they are loved by God and have been blessed with gifts to serve others too.

Setting up a prayer table or prayer corner provides a tangible way for the family to focus on prayer.... And all throughout the daily give-and-take within the family, dealing with inconveniences, differences and occasional discord, the family learns the valuable lesson of offering it all to God right in the nitty-gritty details of ordinary life, lovingly helping one another get to heaven

Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle - UCAn