

# The Importance of Praying With Your Child

**Praying with your child** is important. Not only is it a time to bond but it's also a time to explore your faith and journey together as a family.

The world is full of events and activities and sometimes feels like it's one a spinning axis that is never going to slow down. During those times, it's important to stop and find comfort in your family and children.

One way to accomplish this is by slowing down time and stopping to pray with your child. Not only is praying essential to keeping and growing your faith, but you're also setting a strong foundation for the faith of your child as well.

## The Importance of Praying with your Child

Maybe you've heard the phrase, "Families who pray together, stay together", and this couldn't be truer. The power of prayer is nothing short of a miracle.

Lives have been completely turned around for the better all because of the power of prayer. Illnesses have vanished, families have been fed and thousands of people from all over the world find comfort every single day all because of their faith.

Praying with your child shows them that the power of prayer is true

When it comes to praying with your child, here are some reasons why it's so important to do so each and every day.

Kids are kids. And if you don't remind them constantly to do something, they may just forget about it altogether. This is where the importance of prayer shines the brightest. Tell them how praying has benefited you and your life and let them hear your stories.

Keep their interest and attention by telling them all the ways that the power of prayer has changed your life for the better.

Show your child how fun prayers can be!

So many times as parents and adults, we all tend to pray during the bad times only. Don't worry, it's something that we all do! And most times, we probably don't actually even realize it.

How quickly we all turn to the power of prayer when times are tough...but what about when everything is going great?! This is a great reminder to show your children that there is such a thing as fun prayers!

Prayers can be about saying “thank you” or being happy for the day! And if you don’t talk about that aspect of prayers with your child, you’re missing an opportunity to show them just how uplifting and positive a prayer can be!

Teaching your child to pray allows them to have their own voice anytime they want

Just think about when you pray...it’s a time where you’re connected to the Spirit and your voice is the only thing you hear. What a powerful feeling that is! Give that same feeling to your child as well and introduce them to prayer.

Let them know that prayers can be said out loud or kept inside their minds for only themselves to hear. But the biggest thing about praying with your child and talking to them about it is that they understand that their prayer is theirs to make! That conversation that they have with God is important and is one that can only happen through the power of prayer!

Tips for teaching how to pray

As I said earlier, there’s no right or wrong way to pray. But there are a few tips that you can pass along to your child so that they understand and know how prayer works.

- Let them know that prayer can happen at any point in time during the day
- Prayers can happen at any location that they choose
- If your child wants to pray for someone, tell them to pray for them!
- Prayers are a great way to bring a positive thought to a negative situation

The power of prayer is truly strong. And taking the time to understand the importance of praying with your child is key! Give them the foundation to understand what prayer is and then let them find that perfect praying path.

You’ll be there with them to help guide and answer questions, but that journey that they have with the power of prayer is one that they can and should make on their own!

How can you make praying with your child a daily priority from now on?

# How to Grow, as a Family, in Christ

- \*If you don't already, pray before each meal, as a family
- \*Do a family devotional
- \* Pray with your children (and spouse) at bed time
- \* Let your family hear you talking to God, praying and/or reading the Bible
- \* Make a blessings jar – have each family member write down something they are thankful to God for (daily, weekly, whatever works for you) and then put it in the jar. Periodically review all of God's blessings in your life.
- \* Make God a regular topic of your conversations

A PRAYER

For Those Who Live Alone

I live alone, dear Lord,  
 Stay by my side,  
 In all my daily needs  
 Be Thou my guide.  
 Grant me good health,  
 For that indeed, I pray,  
 To carry on my work  
 from day to day.  
 Keep pure my mind,  
 My thoughts, my every deed,  
 Let me be kind, unselfish  
 In my neighbor's need.  
 Spare me from fire, from flood,  
 Malicious tongues,  
 From thieves, from fear,  
 And evil ones.  
 If sickness or an accident befall,  
 Then humbly, Lord, I pray,  
 Hear Thou my call.  
 And when I'm feeling low,  
 Or in despair,  
 Lift up my heart  
 And help me in my prayer.  
 I live alone, dear Lord,  
 Yet have no fear,  
 Because I feel Your Presence  
 Ever near. Amen.

With Ecclesiastical Approval

THE PEACE PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Lord, make me an instrument of Thy Peace  
 Where there is hatred, let me sow love.  
 Where there is injury, pardon.  
 Where there is doubt, faith.  
 Where there is despair, hope.  
 Where there is darkness, light.  
 Where there is sadness, joy.

Oh, Divine Master, grant that I  
 may not so much seek to be consoled  
 as to console;  
 to be understood as to understand  
 to be loved as to love.  
 For it is in giving that we receive  
 it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
 and it is in dying that  
 we are born to eternal life.

God grant me the Serenity

to accept the things  
 I cannot change,  
 Courage to change the things  
 I can, and the wisdom  
 to know the difference.

Living one day at a time;  
 Enjoying one moment at a time;  
 Accepting hardship as the  
 pathway to peace.

Taking, as He did, this sinful world  
 as it is, not as I would have it;

Trusting that He will make all things  
 right if I surrender to His will;

That I may be reasonably happy  
 in this life,  
 And supremely happy with Him  
 forever in the next.

- Reinhold Niebuhr

One night I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord. Scenes from my life flashed across the sky. In each, I noticed footprints in the sand. Sometimes there were two sets of footprints. Other times there was only one.

During the lowest times of my life I could see only one set of footprints, so I said, "Lord, you promised me that you would walk with me always. Why, when I have needed you most, would you leave me?"

The Lord replied, "My precious child, I love you and would never leave you. The times when you have seen only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you."

# Prayer to Saint Joseph by Pope Leo XIII in 1889

To you, O blessed Joseph,  
do we come in our tribulation,  
and having implored the help of your most holy Spouse,  
we confidently invoke your patronage also.  
Through that charity which bound you  
to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God  
and through the paternal love  
with which you embraced the Child Jesus,  
we humbly beg you graciously to regard the inheritance  
which Jesus Christ has purchased by his Blood,  
and with your power and strength to aid us in our necessities.

O most watchful guardian of the Holy Family,  
defend the chosen children of Jesus Christ;  
O most loving father, ward off from us  
every contagion of error and corrupting influence;  
O our most mighty protector, be kind to us  
and from heaven assist us in our struggle  
with the power of darkness.  
As once you rescued the Child Jesus from deadly peril,  
so now protect God's Holy Church  
from the snares of the enemy and from all adversity;  
shield, too, each one of us by your constant protection,  
so that, supported by your example and your aid,  
we may be able to live piously, to die in holiness,  
and to obtain eternal happiness in heaven.

Amen.

MORE FROM REFERENCE

*Prayer to St. Joseph – composed by Pope Francis for the year of St. Joseph 2021*

*Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,  
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.  
To you God entrusted his only Son;  
in you Mary placed her trust;  
with you Christ became man.*

*Blessed Joseph, to us too,  
show yourself a father  
and guide us in the path of life.  
Obtain for us grace, mercy, and courage,  
and defend us from every evil. Amen.*



# LECTIO DIVINA

"Lectio Divina" means 'holy reading', and it is a discipline which helps us to blend Scripture and prayer together so that we can go deeper in our relationship with God. It consists of four different steps: reading, meditation, prayer, and contemplation.

## 1. Reading

- a. Choose a passage of Scripture (anything from 1 verse to 15 verses).
- b. Start by asking the Holy Spirit to shine light and insight on it as you read.
- c. Read it through several times. If possible, read it out loud.

## 2. Meditation

- a. Think about it. Make your brain work hard. What was the person writing trying to say?
- b. What happens in the story?
- c. What does it mean for your life today?
- d. Is there one word or phrase which really shouts at you from the page?
- e. What is it saying about you and your life today?

## 3. Prayer

- a. Respond to God. Speak out to Him your personal response to what you've read.
- b. Tell Him how it makes you feel. Tell Him what comforts you and what challenges you. Ask for His help to live out the truths you've uncovered today.

## 4. Contemplation: Resting in God's presence

- a. Stop. Be still. Stop talking, stop asking and slow your brain down. This is the time for listening to Him, for letting the Holy Spirit talk back to you.
- b. Spend some time silently listening to God. Go beyond all the words you've read, and allow God to root you in truth and wrap you in love.

**For guided practice in Lectio Divina, check out the book *Enjoy the Silence: a 30-Day Experiment in Listening to God* by Maggie and Duffy Robbins.**

## How to Doodle Your Prayers

- 1) Start with a blank piece of paper.
- 2) In the center, write a name for God, the name of someone for whom you're praying, or a scripture verse.
- 3) Draw a shape around the words to start the doodle. This is your prayer space. Start to doodle around it, releasing your words to God in prayer. Doodle in silence or talk to God if you feel led.
- 4) Add other people, other names for God, or other parts of the scripture verse to your paper. Draw a shape around each set of new words to create a separate prayer space. Doodle around these and pray.
- 5) Pause and say "amen" between each prayer space you add.



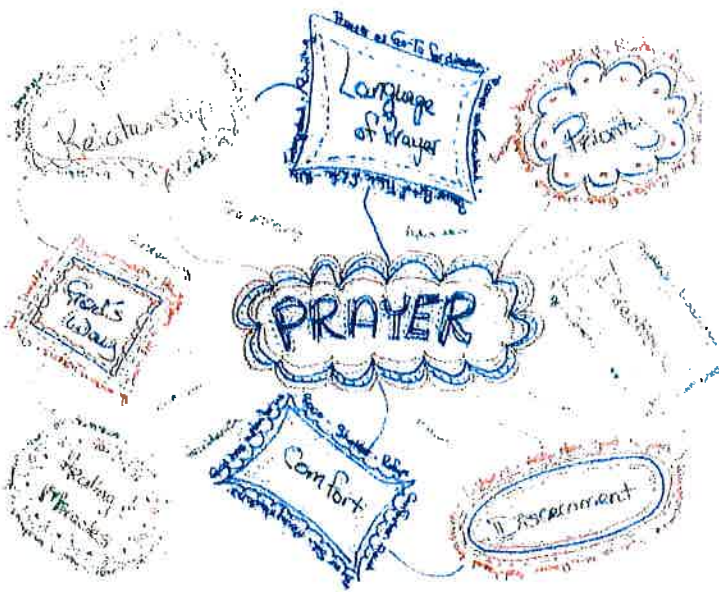
#1: Names or attributes of God

Prayer doodles can help you focus on praising and worshiping God, listening for his promises to you.

Start by writing out a name or attribute of God and doodle around that.

Then, continue with other names or attributes of God, or other words or promises you're hearing him whisper. In this prayer, you don't need to pray a lot of words, just listen as you doodle.





*#2: Prayers for Others*

Praying for others is one of my favorite ways to use prayer doodles. Start by writing out the name of someone you're praying for. Doodle around their name while you silently lift them up to God.

I'm very word-focused, so sometimes I'll write words for that person – my specific prayers and praises – around the name as I doodle.

As you finish with that one, write the next name you're praying for and do the same. Repeat until you've prayed through your list for the day.



### #3: Praying Scripture

Another favorite method is to pray scripture with prayer doodles. I'll write out a verse a few words at a time. I'll doodle around those words, listening for God's words to me.

This is a great way to soak deep in a verse – and can also help you memorize the verse.

### #4: Get Creative!

I've done prayer doodles for specific events, conferences, mission trips, doodling around names of participants, specific needs or concerns.

Sybil has templates on her site to use prayer doodles to pray through Lent and Advent, just doing one small prayer doodle each day over a single word from Scripture.

There's no limit to how you can use this form of prayer, so get creative.



### How Will You Use Prayer Doodling in Your Prayers?

Prayer doodling is one of my favorite ways to pray. It stills my mind and gives me a greater focus on the content of my prayers. I find I pray longer and more intensely when I doodle in my prayers. Doodling is also a great way to memorize scripture.

So, are you ready to grab your colored pens and markers and a blank sheet of paper and get started? Or maybe you're already doing this in your prayers and just haven't had a name for it.

Even if you can't draw, you can doodle. It doesn't matter what your prayer doodles look like. Rather, it's about the process of spending time with God, truly listening for his word to you.

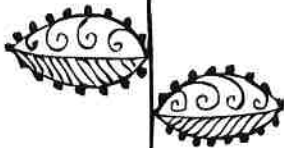
Will you give it a try?

I am



fearfully &

wonderfully



MADE



Psalm 139:14





