

Teach My People to Pray

Year II: Family & Parish Prayer Resources

2015-2016 | Office of Family & Married Life

About this booklet: Use these prayers, ideas, resources, and activities in your household or parish to foster a deeper family spirituality. Whatever your family looks like, your home is a household of faith where Christ is at the center.

Resource packets will be released quarterly with new information, activities and ideas. They will be posted on our website at www.gbdioc.org/familyliferesources.

In addition to quarterly releases, be sure to check back as we post additional resources! They will be available in PDF form as well as in a Word Document for easy cut-and-paste.

- Quarter 1 - September
 - Quarter 2 - October, November, December
 - **Quarter 3 - January, February, March**
 - Quarter 4 - April, May, June
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Diocese of
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Year II: Family Prayer Resources

Quarter 3 | Office of Family & Married Life



January - Monthly Themes and Activities

National Human Trafficking Awareness Month

A Prayer for the End of Human Trafficking

As shared by the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, Convent Station, N.J.

God of freedom, beauty and truth
we believe that your deepest desire,
your most powerful energy,
is that all creation might know abundant life.

We raise our voices in anguished prayer
for our sisters and brothers,
women and girls, men and boys,
who are modern day slaves;
They are your beloved daughters and sons,
exploited sexually or forced to work
because of human violence and greed.

Fill us with your holy anger and your sacred passion
that those who are trafficked might know healing and justice;
that traffickers will come to repentance and conversion;
that all of us might live in such a way
that others are not made to pay the price
for our comfort and convenience.

Hasten the coming of the day when all people
and our precious Earth itself
will be treated, not as a commodity,
but as radiant images of your freedom, beauty and truth.
Amen.

A Prayer for Those Who are Working to End Human Trafficking

God of hope and freedom,
inspire and strengthen us in our work to loosen the chains of human trafficking in our world,
so that like St. Josephine Bakhita, we may stand firm in our resolve to create a slave-free world.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

“Human trafficking is a crime against humanity. We must unite our efforts to free victims and stop this crime that’s become ever more aggressive, that threatens not just individuals, but the foundational values of society.” - Pope Francis, 2013

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Year II: Parish Resources for Families

Quarter 3 | Office of Marriage & Family Life



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January - Monthly Themes and Activities

Respect Life Prayers “Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children”

Pro-Life Prayers for Children

Song of Life

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God, my God, you are a giant God.
You make everything with love.
You make stars, mountains, oceans, elephants, and whales.
God, my God, you made me.
God, my God, you know how to be tiny.
You make things I can't even see.
You make grains of rice, specks of dust, hummingbirds, ants.
God, my God, you made me.
You knit me together in my mother's womb.
You loved me before I was born.
You love me when I'm sick, sad, fragile, or old.
God, you're my life and my breath.
This is the beautiful truth, my God.
Teach it to me every day.
Help me respect life deep in my heart,
in all that I do, think, and say.

The Love God Gives Me

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I may seem a lot like everyone else,
When I eat or sleep or play.
But I can do things that no one else can,
When I do them in my own way.
God speaks to me deep down in my heart:
“I love your smiling face!
I have some work for you in this world
That no one can do in your place.”
“Love, child, love!” my Lord says to me.
“LOVE is the work you can do!”
When you work, when you play, when you're happy or sad,
Love others, because I love you.
I am made special through God's love for me;
His love is a gift I can share.
I want to protect life!
Because God made us all.
And keeps us in his loving care.

Respect Life Prayer

Every Life is Worth Living, 2015 United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington D.C.

Heavenly Father, thank you for the precious gift of life.
Help us to cherish and protect this gift, even in the
midst of fear, pain, and suffering.
Give us love for all people, especially the most
vulnerable, and help us bear witness to the truth that
every life is worth living.
Grant us the humility to accept help when we are in
need, and teach us to be merciful to all.
Through our words and actions, may others encounter
the outstretched hands of Your mercy.
We ask this through Christ, Our Lord, Amen.

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January - Monthly Themes and Activities

Martin Luther King Jr. Day: Monday, January 18, 2016

At one time in America, African Americans were not treated equally as human beings. This is not how Jesus taught us to live—we are to love everybody and to see every person as created by God in God’s image. From the beginning of our country until the 1860s, Africans were kidnapped and shipped to America, where they were bought and sold as property and made to work as slaves for white people.

After the Great Civil War, 1862-1865, African Americans were no longer forced to be slaves, but they were not treated equally. They were denied the right to vote, they were not given equal protection of our laws, and they were often violently mistreated. They could not attend the same schools as white children, sit wherever they wanted on buses, and were not allowed to eat at or go to the same places as white people.

Martin Luther King Jr. was a preacher, a teacher, and a leader in America during the early 1960s, a time called the Civil Rights Movement. He worked with many people—men and women, white and African American, Christians and people of other religious backgrounds—to protest in non-violent ways an end laws and policies that treated African Americans unequally. He gave great speeches and wrote letters, and was jailed and finally murdered for his work.

Each year around his birthday we take a day to honor Dr. King by remembering how hard people fought for fair treatment of African Americans, and we try to keep Dr. King’s Dream alive by doing acts of kindness to make the world a better place.

How might we celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day?

1. Learn and sing the song made famous during the Civil Rights Movement: We Shall Overcome. This song began as a song called No More Auction Block for Me, a song sung by slaves who did not want to be sold at an auction like property. To hear the tune played: www.8notes.com/scores/5811.asp

We Shall Overcome



We shall o- ver come. We shall o- ver come. We shall o- ver come some day.



Oh, deep in my heart I do be- lieve, that We shall o- ver come some day.

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February - Monthly Themes and Activities

Super Bowl Fever

See what professional football players do to maintain a prayer life with their families!

Philip Rivers (QB for San Diego Chargers)

"I can't put into words how much I enjoy praying with my kids. Most of them are a bit too young to have the attention span for a Rosary, so our favorite devotion is the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, which is shorter. We pray that every day of Lent, and we actually sing it most of the time. If the end of the day is coming, and we haven't prayed the chaplet, one of the kids will enthusiastically insist that we do so."

Joe Reitz (Offensive Tackle for the Indianapolis Colts)

"Someone told me to think of our marriage as a triangle—with each of us on one side leading up to God. We've tried to keep faith as the most important thing for each other and as a couple. We pray every night as a family, and we go to Mass together. We feel if we make our faith life stronger, our family life will be even stronger."

Joe Lombardi (Grandson of Vince Lombardi)

"Our family tries to pray the Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet every day. Marian intercession and the mercy of God are so closely related, so we've even started the Angelus at 6am, noon and 6pm. The first one, that early in the morning, is a challenge, but even if we pray the Angelus at 8, it's 6 somewhere, right? Plus, no matter what time of the day it's done, prayer is always a good thing."

*"Do you not know that the runners in the stadium all run in the race,
but only one wins the prize? Run so as to win."*

- 1 Cor 9:24

February 10, 2015 – Ash Wednesday

Set up a prayer space in the home for Lent, using symbols of Lent that are meaningful to the family; purple, a cross, ashes (burn palms from the previous year), cactus plant in sand, bible.

Make a commitment to pray together (daily readings, devotionals, traditional prayers, intercessions, or use the Sunday Psalm response).

Examples:

1st Sunday of Lent - Ps 91 - Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble.

2nd Sunday of Lent - Ps 27 - The Lord is my light and my salvation.

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February - Monthly Themes and Activities

Leaping in the Direction of Jesus

When we think of the childhood game of Leap Frog or the expression from the play Annie, “Leapin’ Lizards,” we can imagine a burst of energy and a radical jump on behalf of the participants. There is something surprising and adventuresome about imagining ourselves leaping over or into anything.

Of course, our marvelous Creator offered us a unique challenge to “leap” in regard to this incredible universe we call home. Scientists over the centuries have discovered and addressed this issue in a unique and practical way. They came up with the concept Leap Year to help the wonder of creation make sense to humankind.

As you may know, Leap Year is celebrated by adding an extra day to the month of February. This day is added to help correct the calendar because the earth does not orbit around the sun in exactly 365 days. Leap Day is officially celebrated on February 29th.

As households of faith in the midst of the season of Lent, we might want to consider how we can make an extraordinary leap toward Jesus in 2016. Perhaps we might focus on the word generosity and take our lead from the life of Jesus or our favorite saint or saint in the making. What one thing can we do to model Jesus’ generosity in a new and radical way? How might our household take a “holy” leap of faith in 2016 that will draw us closer to a living relationship with Jesus?

Lenten Activity to Connect to Families Around the World

Looking for meatless meals to prepare this Lent?

[Fasting from meat](#) on Fridays during Lent helps us “acquire a mastery over our instincts and freedom of heart.”(CCC 2043). Fasting is meant to free us. It helps us feel our physical hunger, and in turn, our spiritual hunger for the infinite love found only in God. Gather your community, your friends or your family for a simple meal, an opportunity to eat meatless on Friday while living in solidarity with our brothers and sisters around the world. If you’re hosting a community event, consider using this [simple supper outline](#). And don’t forget to print [placemats](#) for those who gather!

When you’ve cleaned your plate, remember to put the money you saved by not buying meat – an average of \$3 per person per meal – into your [CRS Rice Bowl](#) to feed our brothers and sisters in need around the world.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) Rice Bowl highlights 5 countries each year:

- Colombia
- Laos
- Rwanda
- Honduras
- Madagascar

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February - Monthly Themes and Activities

Authentic meatless recipes from each country that can be used during Lent are available on at: www.crsricebowl.org/recipe. Check out one example from Colombia.

Cheese Empanadas with Beans - Colombia

2 c flour
2 T vegetable shortening
1 t baking powder
1 c cold water mixed with 1 t salt
12 oz queso fresco or farmer's cheese, shredded
4 T fair trade olive oil

Beans

2 16-oz cans of kidney beans, drained
1 onion, diced
1 red bell pepper, chopped
1 t cumin
Cilantro (for garnish)

Empanadas:

- Mix the flour, shortening, baking powder and salted water in a medium-sized bowl. Knead until combined.
- On a floured surface, form dough into a roll. Cut into 6 to 8 equal pieces.
- Flatten each piece into a circle about 5 inches in diameter.
- Place about a tablespoon of cheese on one half of the circle and fold the other half of the dough over the cheese, making sure to seal the cheese inside.
- Add oil to a large pan and heat until very hot.
- Place one empanada in the pan. Once the bottom is browned, turn over to cook the other side.
- Remove from pan and place on a paper towel to absorb the extra oil.
- Repeat with the other pieces of dough.

Beans:

- In a separate pan, sauté the onion and bell pepper with oil.
- Add the beans and cumin until warm.
- Garnish with cilantro.

Makes 6-8 empanadas.

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March - Monthly Themes and Activities

National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

In 1987 President Ronald Reagan proclaimed March “Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month.” We are challenged each year to spend time reflecting on how to treat all persons as having dignity and being created by God in the image of God. This includes persons with physical, cognitive, learning, and emotional disabilities.

Ways we might celebrate National Disabilities Month

Learn about persons with Disabilities: We can learn how to effectively include persons with disabilities into the life of our communities, especially within our parishes, and how to use better language so that persons with disabilities are understood as “persons” first and foremost.

Here is a link to download of a coloring book, *Ready, Set, Go*, that includes best terminology when speaking about and to persons with disabilities: www.indianadisabilityawareness.org/assets/docs/ReadySetGoColoringBook.pdf

Reach out to persons with disabilities and pray daily for them:

Prayer for Persons with Disabilities

God our Father, who created all people in your image:
give persons with physical, cognitive, or emotional
disabilities opportunities to do all that they are able to,
and strengthen them to overcome challenges.

Jesus, who show great compassion for those who suffer:
comfort all who feel like their gifts are not used or that their value is not understood,
so that they might take courage in your affection.

Holy Spirit, who fills believers with all good gifts:
help me to reach out to persons with disabilities through friendship, care, and working to be sure that our
church includes them in everything that we do
and to break down barriers to inclusion in society.

We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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March - Monthly Themes and Activities

St. Joseph - March 19

St. Joseph - Right with God

Do you ever wonder what daily life was like for the husband of Mary and the step-father of the child Jesus? Who was this person that was chosen to protect, support and nurture the salvation of the world?

On March 19th, our Church invites us to celebrate the Feast of St. Joseph by remembering the faith, values and courage of a simple man, born with original sin like you and me, yet selected by God for this important role.

Scripture tells us that Joseph was a righteous man (Mt 1:19). A simple understanding of this would suggest that he was a faith-filled person who put his trust in God and lived his life in the context of that trust. His strong relationship with God would have greatly influenced the decisions and actions in his daily life. Joseph was an ordinary man who was right with God.

So what can we learn from this important member of the Holy Family? St. Paul tells us that our righteousness before God comes only through the cross (1Cor 5:21) but yet we are invited to put our bad habits and sinfulness aside and become right with God.

As households of faith, we have to decide who we are most “right with.” Is it with a culture of busyness and success or one of faith, relationships and gratitude? Perhaps on this Feast of St. Joseph, we could celebrate the ways our household is right with God and consider one new opportunity to model the life of this simple yet holy man who held the Son of God in his arms.

Pope Francis' Five Finger Prayer

1. The thumb is the closest finger to you. Start praying for those who are closest to you. They are the persons easiest to remember. To pray for our dear ones is a “sweet obligation.”
2. The index (or pointer) finger reminds us to pray for those who teach you, instruct you and heal you. They need the support and wisdom to show direction to others. Always keep them in your prayers.
3. The tallest finger reminds us of our leaders, the governor and those who have authority. They need God's guidance.
4. The ring finger is our weakest finger. It should remind us to pray for the weakest, the sick or those plagued by problems. They need our prayers.
5. The smallest finger is the smallest of all. Your pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself. When you are done praying for the other four groups. You will be able to see your own needs but in the proper perspective. Also, you will be able to pray for your own needs in a better way.

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Jubilee Year of Mercy (Dec. 8, 2016 – Nov. 20, 2016)

Pope Francis: “Mercy is the beating heart of the Gospel.”

“How much I desire that the year to come will be steeped in mercy, so that we can go out to every man and woman, bringing the goodness and tenderness of God,” he wrote. “May the balm of mercy reach everyone, both believers and those far away, as a sign that the kingdom of God is already present in our midst.”

Here are a few suggestions for families to experience the Jubilee Year of Mercy and to make connections between the wider Church and the domestic church (at home):

Go on a Pilgrimage

This ancient practice signifies our journey in life; we are pilgrims on the journey. Pilgrimages are encouraged during the Holy Year to focus on the opportunity for conversion and the path of our own path towards conversion in life. Not everyone can travel to the Holy Land or Rome, but some holy places closer to home are: St. Francis Xavier Cathedral in Green Bay and the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Hope in Champion.

AT HOME: Take a walk through your neighborhood and pray for your neighbors as you pass by their houses.

The Holy Door of Mercy

Walk through the Door of Mercy at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral or at the Shrine “By crossing the threshold of the Holy Door, we will find the strength to embrace God’s mercy and dedicate ourselves to being merciful with others as the Father has been with us.”

AT HOME: Create your own “Door of Mercy”. Design a banner with the motto of the Jubilee: “Merciful Like the Father.” Discuss with the family, how to make your home “open to mercy” and what that looks like – inside and outside the home.

Pray for the Intentions of Pope Francis

(can be found at Apostleship of Prayer www.apostleshipofprayer.org/2016-intentions/)

AT HOME: Pray for the intentions of others in the family, neighborhood, school, parish and work. Keep a notebook, prayer box or jar in a special place so people can add intentions.

Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation – experience God’s power of forgiveness and mercy

AT HOME:

- Avoid judging and condemning others – be kind and give compliments
- Forgive others – say, “I forgive you” when a family members apologizes
- Give to others – be generous in small ways (smile, perform an act of kindness, offer to help with chores)

PRACTICE THE CORPORAL AND SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY

[Click here](#) to see Year of Mercy resources on the Diocese of Green Bay website.

AT HOME: Set a day of the week to make a special meal together, go through closets and donate clothing to St. Vincent de Paul, visit someone at the nursing home, start a prayer jar to pray for the needs of others.

Thank you to contributors from the Departments of Education, Living Justice and Stewardship and Pastoral Services.

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