

# RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE FAMILY

Prayer is a way for families, communities and individuals to come together, show solidarity and be there for each other. We lift our hearts and minds to God. Everyone can pray and one only has to have the will to pray. Prayer can offer routine and comfort and a sense of peace in uncertain times. There are many ways we can pray alone and also with our families and communities. If you have access to electronic devices and internet, these opportunities could also be shared remotely with extended family and friends.



## Prayer Space

Create a prayer space in the home. This can be done with a small table and some coloured cloth. We are currently in Lent so use **purple** if you have it. Find a candle and a crucifix (if you have one). You might also like to add some flowers and prayer stones. If you have a Bible it could be placed in the space as well. Try not to over clutter the space. Keep it simple as sometimes all you need is a candle.



## Meditative Prayers

Practice silence and stillness. Light a candle to remind you of the presence of God and sit quietly alone or with others in your family. Close your eyes and become aware of your breath. You might like to include a mantra. *Maranatha* is an ancient Aramaic word meaning come Lord Jesus. This can be repeated gently with the breath. Spend 5-10 minutes on this meditation.



## Pray in Creation

Sit outside and take a moment to listen to the sounds, paying attention to what you can feel and see. Give thanks to God as you sit in stillness, peace and quiet.



## Routine

Develop a routine and try to have all the family participate (e.g. before bedtime). Each person might offer their own thoughts about what or whom they would like to pray for. Try and pray daily.



## Ignatian Examen

This prayer come from Ignatius Loyola the founder of the Jesuits (Pope Francis is a Jesuit). The Examen has 5 simple steps.

**Stillness:** Stop and become present in the moment. Let the noise stop and be aware of God.

**Thanks:** Think of the things you are grateful for in your day. They might not be the things you would expect.

**Awareness:** Think and pray a bit more. What is really going on in your mind and heart? Share your thoughts and feelings with God.

**Sorrow:** What am I sorry for and how can I do things better?

**Hope:** Look ahead to tomorrow. What is a positive way I could look at a new day?



## Traditional Prayers

Traditional prayers can provide comfort in repetition and simplicity. They can help to refocus the mind.

Take time to say the Our Father and/or the Hail Mary. Pray a decade of the Rosary as a family and share who or what is your offering for the prayer.



## Gratitude Prayer

Share the things you are grateful for, e.g. a moment of your day, good health or a person.

