



# Parent Pages

## Preparing the environment of the Domestic Church\*

\* The term "Domestic Church" refers to the family, the smallest body of gathered believers in Christ. Though recovered only recently, the term dates back to the first century AD. The Greek word *ecclesiola* referred to "little church." The early Church understood that the home.

## Prayer and Liturgical Year: Ordinary Time

### Prayers for "Ordinary" Moments

Speak with your children about how they can recognize the presence of God in every moment and every situation in our day. Witness to them by offering your own prayers, for example:

After losing your temper: *Lord, help me when I feel angry or frustrated, to remove the hurt from my heart and fill it with your peace, peace, peace.*

When needing to apologize: *Dear Lord, I am sorry. Please forgive me. I love you.* It is very humbling, but very important to say similar words to your children when appropriate, to model for them how to ask another person for forgiveness. It is also important for your child to see you participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

When going to the store: *Lord, today is a day filled with interludes and pauses as I take care of the details of our home and family life. Help me remember that you are present in each of the errands and interruptions to the rhythm of this day. Allow me to find you hidden of the disruptions of my day.*

When folding laundry: *Dear Lord, I ask you to bless my family: Thank you for the boy who wears this shirt. Thank you for the girl's feet who wear these socks. Thank you for the towels and washcloths that clean our bodies, may they*

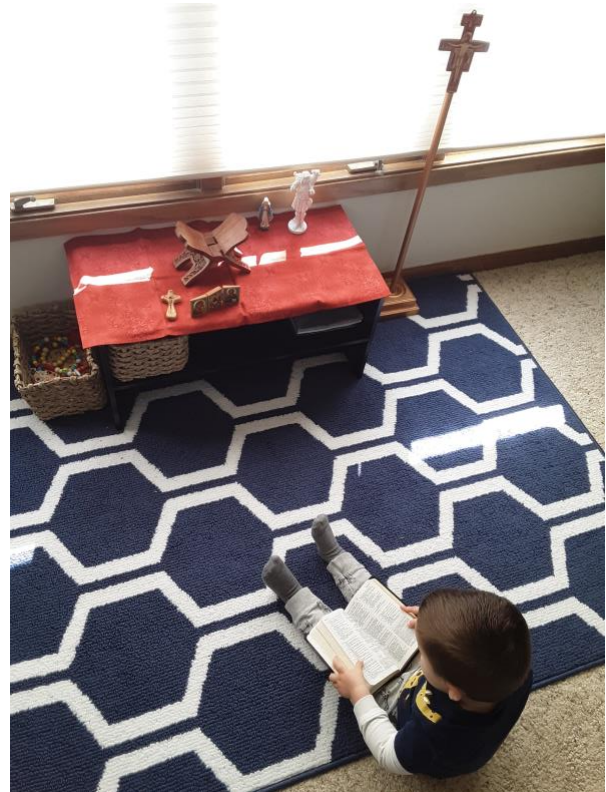


Photo by Cassandra Fortino

*remind me (of Psalm 51:10) that you create a clean heart in me Lord. Or when the stack of laundry to be folded is quite large, I am reminded of Paul's letter to the Philippians 2:14: Do all things without grumbling or questioning, asking God to change my grumbling heart to a grateful heart.*

If we as parents offer prayer to the Lord throughout our day, our children will begin to see that all things can be an avenue of prayer or lift our hearts and minds to God, even those things that cause us to stumble.

### *Prayer What role do our children play in those rituals?*

When our children were younger, they may have walked in procession, placed sacred items on the prayer table, or extinguished a candle. Now that he is older, the child may want to read a passage from the Bible. We want our children to be comfortable and successful in assisting in leading prayer and we need to help them develop those skills. Before you pray together as a family, review with your child how to stand when proclaiming Scripture. What is my posture when I read from the Bible? Where should I place my hands? How do I hold the Bible? How do I project my voice when I read aloud? Review any difficult words and practice reading out loud before prayer time.

### *Art as an aide to prayer*

In the earlier Church, religious art was used to teach those who could not read, about the essential stories of our faith. The sacred images found on the walls and ceilings of Church's are like a religious storybook that tells about the life of our Church. The religious art we display in our homes should be more than just decoration, but something that directs our hearts and minds to God.

The art should be at eye level for the child, ie placing it on a stand on your prayer table or at eye level in the child's bedroom or other rooms of your home. How accessible are sacred images in your home?



*Photo by Cassandra Fortino*