

Use These Inspiring, Easy-to-Do Activities and Prayers to Help Your Family Grow Stronger!

Recycle

Many communities promote the recycling of glass, aluminum, and paper. Participating in a recycling program can be an excellent activity for the family to do together to show its commitment to the preservation of the ecology and all of God's creation. If you don't already recycle, pick a time to begin the recycling process in your home. Local programs and guidelines will help you get started. As a group, talk about each family member's God-given responsibility to take care of the gift of creation. As part of this time, work on a plan to make sure that recycling becomes a habit for everyone in your home.

World News Tonight

Around the dinner table, talk about the news of the day. For each news story mentioned, answer these three questions:

What's the matter here?

What is needed here?

What (if anything) can this family do about it?

The news of the day can come from any source and can be from anywhere. The news stories may come from anyone in the family. You may wish to invite your children to watch, read, or listen to the news with you.

Saints on Sunday

Some weekend at church before Mass, challenge your children to find all the pictures, statues, names or other signs of saints at the parish. Some older churches will be loaded, while newer ones may make this task tougher. On the way home from church, encourage the children to talk about their discoveries.

Pray for Peace

Some evening, before leaving the table or right before bed, gather the family. Take turns mentioning places in the world, in the country, in the city, or in the neighborhood that are in need of a peaceful witness from the followers of Jesus. After each mention, the whole family prays, "Lord, give us your peace." End with this paraphrase of the Prayer of Saint Francis:

Lord, help us work for peace.

Where there is hatred, let us bring love;

Where there is hurt, forgiveness;

Where there is doubt, faith;

Where there is despair, hope;

Where there is darkness, light;

Where there is sadness, joy.

Take Time for a Few Minutes of Prayer

Even a few minutes of prayer each morning and each evening will go a long way to teaching the importance of daily prayer and prayer will also help focus your family. Don't make the prayer too long or too complicated. Just make it part of every day. Here is an action prayer that little ones may enjoy:

We praise God with our heads (rotate your head in a circular motion 2 or 3 times)

We praise God with our hands (shake your hands one at a time for 10 seconds)

We praise God with our arms (stretch arms over your head and arch your body from side to side)

We praise God with our bodies (reach down to your toes 5 or 6 times)

We praise God with our legs (run in place for a minute or so)

When you have finished, all join hands and pray the Our Father together.