



Gather and Grow

FOR FAMILIES WITH TEENS & YOUNG ADULTS

A personalized and flexible retreat for growing and improving family life and relationships

This is meant to be a personalized and flexible at-home retreat for yourself and your family. This is not intended to “reinvent the wheel” but rather to serve as a curated set of ideas for activities, prayer, and discussion. How the day looks is completely up to you, however you are provided with a rough outline and ideas for prayers, activity, and round table discussion. You can choose to use whatever you think your family needs, and leave out anything you do not desire to do.

The day is split up into three main categories: fun family activities, family prayer time, and round table discussion

GENERAL (FLEXIBLE) SCHEDULE:

BREAKFAST & ROUND TABLE

PRAYER TIME

ACTIVITY

LUNCH & *OPTIONAL* ROUND TABLE

PRAYER TIME

ACTIVITY

DINNER & ROUND TABLE

PRAYER TIME

ACTIVITY

NOTES:

- Allow everyone to be involved in decision making for the day: for example, let each family member choose an activity and a prayer or have some form of input
- Engage in open and honest communication, actively listen and make sure everyone feels understood and listened to
- Consider limiting screen time during the day

Family Activity Ideas

An asterisk () indicates there are more resources for the activity attached at the end*

1. GAME TIME // Choose a board game, card game, or dominos to play together.
2. FAMILY AFFIRMATIONS // Each family member writes a letter to one another affirming them and telling them why they love them.
3. CREATE A TIKTOK TOGETHER // Do a TikTok challenge or make up a dance
4. MOVIE MARATHON // Each family member picks their favorite movie, shares why they love it, and the entire family watches the movies together throughout the week.
5. ORDER TAKE OUT // Choose the family's favorite restaurant, order a meal, and share it together while answering round table questions.
6. LISTEN TO A PODCAST* // Choose an interesting podcast, listen together, and discuss after.
7. BUILD A FORT // Pop some popcorn and watch a movie inside (you're never too old for a fort!)
8. HAVE A PICNIC OUTSIDE
9. DO A PHOTO SCAVENGER HUNT*
10. GO LIVE ON SOCIAL MEDIA // Go live on Instagram or Facebook as a family. Do something fun like a dance off, or answer questions people ask.
11. CORE EMOTIONS ACTIVITY* // See the attached paper and questions.
12. WORK OUT TOGETHER*
13. COOK OR BAKE // Cook a meal or bake a dessert together as a family. Give everyone a certain job.
14. GO ON A FAMILY WALK OUTSIDE
15. HAVE A FAMILY TALENT SHOW
16. WHITE ELEPHANT GIFT EXCHANGE // Have each person find an item in the house, wrap it up, and do a white elephant gift exchange with the items (bake some Christmas cookies for a fun flair).
17. SIX-WORD STORY* // Have everyone write a six-word story and share
18. CREATE A FAMILY MISSION STATEMENT // Gather together and have all the family members contribute to a mission statement for the family. Write it, sign it, and display it in your house.
19. START A PUZZLE
20. HAVE A DANCE PARTY* // Throw on your favorite tunes. Learn a dance together or watch on online dance video.
21. MAKE CARDS // Write cards for family members/loved ones and deliver them today or at a later time.
22. CREATE A BASKET // Make a basket filled with cards, snacks, toys, etc. to deliver to a neighbor together as a family.
23. WORK ON A HOUSE PROJECT TOGETHER // Split into teams or make a competition out of doing housework, painting, cleaning the yard, or any other house projects.
24. FACETIME OR ZOOM // Call family or friends. Ask how your family can pray for them during this time.
25. FAMILY BOOK STUDY // Everyone chooses a book and reads it together, discussing at certain intervals. Or have read aloud time- one person reads aloud to the rest of the family then discuss.
26. PLAN A FAMILY TRIP // Plan a fun family trip for when quarantine ends.

Family Prayer Ideas

1. ROSARY* // Pray the rosary together and offer up your intentions together as a family. Alternate who leads each decade.
2. DIVINE MERCY CHAPLET* // Pray or sing the Divine Mercy Chaplet and offer up your intentions together as a family.
3. LITANY* // Pray a litany together (Litany of Humility, Litany of Light, etc.)
4. LECTIO DIVINA* // Choose a scripture passage to pray with together. Afterwards, discuss what moved you in prayer.
5. JOURNALING* // Journal and have individual silent prayer time. You can use journaling prompts as a resource if someone needs guidance.
6. FREE PRAYER // Set aside a certain amount of time and each family member can pray however they desire.
7. GRATITUDE AND PETITION // Everyone prays for things they are thankful for and makes petitions out loud.
8. GOSPEL // Read the Gospel for the day or for the coming Sunday and discuss it.
9. LORD'S DAY DINNER* // Make dinnertime a Lord's Day meal as a family. See attached resource for guidance.
10. CREATE A SACRED SPACE* // As a family, pick an area of your house to make into a sacred prayer space.

Round Table Questions

Some questions are for everyone to answer, some are for parents to answer, and some are for teens/young adults to answer. Either choose which questions you want to answer or print, cut them out, and draw at random!

BREAKFAST ROUND TABLE

You can talk about the day ahead and allow everyone to be involved in decision-making. If you feel it is necessary, you can create a "schedule" or any rules or boundaries you think might be helpful to set (for example, limiting screen time).

What is one family activity that you would like to do today?

What is your favorite movie and why?

What makes you feel loved and known?

What is your favorite memory?

What is one prayer activity that you would like to do today?

How do you know when someone is listening to you?

What is one thing you would like to get out of this family retreat?

What is the most difficult thing about being a teenager/parent?

What hurts your feelings?

If you could give your parents one gift, what would it be?

What are some of your hopes and dreams?

OPTIONAL LUNCH ROUND TABLE

What is your favorite family tradition?

When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

What was your favorite game to play when you were a child?

What makes you feel welcomed and loved when you get home?

What is your favorite holiday and why?

What do you worry about the most and why?

What is one thing about each of your family members that makes you proud?

Name a change that was hard for you. Why was it hard?

DINNER ROUND TABLE

What was your favorite part of today?

What was dinnertime like when you were growing up?

What is one thing we did today that you would like to be a regular occurrence in our family?

When is it hard for you to say "I love you"?

What was a time that you felt loved today?

How does the family need to grow spiritually? How can we better live our faith once quarantine is over?

What is your favorite thing about each family member?

What was a time that you felt like you could not be yourself in our family?

How can I love you better?

What is your favorite part about being Catholic/Christian?

Resources

PODCAST IDEAS

This American Life, Abiding Together, Rough Translation, Stuff You Should Know, All Songs Considered, Snap Judgement, Stuff You Missed in History Class, How Stuff Works, Catholic Stuff You Should Know, Unlocking Us, Revisionist History

Choose an episode as a family and then discuss. Some possible questions to answer...

What stuck out to you in this episode?

What is one thing you learned from this podcast?

What information surprised you in this podcast?

What do you want to learn more about after hearing this podcast?

Is there anything from this podcast you want to apply to your life?

What was your favorite part of the episode?

PHOTO SCAVENGER HUNT

You can either get into teams within your family or do this as individuals competing. Everyone must take a photo or video of as many things as possible listed below. Choose a time limit (10 min, 20 min, etc) and see who can get the most in the time limit!

- ☐ Someone taking a picture
- ☐ Pine cone
- ☐ License plate
- ☐ Something blue
- ☐ Reenacting a Disney scene
- ☐ Jumping mid-air
- ☐ Something you love
- ☐ Your favorite drink
- ☐ Doing a dance move
- ☐ The loudest thing you can find
- ☐ With a mustache
- ☐ Something inherited
- ☐ An old childhood toy
- ☐ Something living
- ☐ Mug with initials on it
- ☐ Something that smells bad
- ☐ 42 cents exactly

CORE EMOTIONS ACTIVITY

Look at the core emotions sheet attached and answer the following questions together.

1. How are you feeling right now?
2. What three emotions do you feel most frequently and why?
3. What three emotions do you not experience frequently and why?
4. What is one emotion you wish you could experience more?
5. What is one emotion you wish you could experience less?
6. Have each person choose an emotion. What does it feel like to experience that emotion? In what situation do you feel it?
7. When was a time you were angry/excited/happy/lonely/overwhelmed?

SIX-WORD STORY

This is a great creative activity and way to encourage prayer and thoughtfulness, Stories can empower and restore. The ability to articulate your story to another is something that is unique to you and you alone. There is no single story. The six-word story is exactly what it sounds like- an entire story broken down to 6 words. It is beautiful because so much can be said with so little (like in some of the examples). It is a very thought-provoking activity that can be used for different prompts.

Write a story about...

**The type of person God wants you to be
Your biggest dream
Your favorite memory
A mistake you made
A letter to your younger self
Summarize your life
Something funny that happened to your family**

Examples: All those pages in the fire. // For sale: baby shoes, never worn. // I hid. It was a mistake. // It hurts, but You're worth it. // Her own flames might kill her. // Longed for him. Got him. Crap. // Saigon Hotel. Decades later. He weeps. //

ONLINE DANCE CLASSES

Move with Colour, 305 Fitness on YouTube, Ailey Extension on Instagram, STEEZY Studio, Skill Share

List of

Core Emotions*

Anger

Anxious

Belonging

Blame

Curious

Disappointed

Disgust

Embarrassment

Empathy

Excited

Fear | Scared

Frustrated

Gratitude

Grief

Guilt

Happy

Humiliation

Hurt

Jealous

Joy

Judgment

Lonely

Love

Overwhelmed

Regret

Sad

Shame

Surprised

Vulnerability

Worried

*This list is based on current data. Brené is doing new research on emotional literacy right now so expect an updated list this year.



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ONLINE WORK OUT CLASSES

There are many free online workout classes offered through YouTube channels, as well as many companies currently offering free trials for their programs right now. The following programs are all free!

Sweat with SELF on YouTube, Popsugar Fitness on YouTube, Heart and Soul Fitness, Orangetheory, Tone It Up App, Obe Fitness, Yoga with Adrienne, GLO Online Yoga, The Yoga Collective

ROSARY

Here are instructions for how to pray the Rosary, as well as the prayers you need to know. Attached, you will also find a Rosary/DMC decade coloring sheet for children to color in and follow along, as well as the enlarged prayers that they can hang up and practice.

1. While holding the crucifix, make the sign of the cross and pray the Apostles' Creed
2. On the first large bead, pray the Our Father
3. On the next three small beads, pray the Hail Mary
4. In the next space, pray the Glory Be.

There are five decades, or groups of 10 small beads, that make up the rosary. The prayers for each decade are repeated many times. This gives you an opportunity to reflect on the words, which are deeply rooted in the Bible and Christian tradition.

5. On the next large bead, pray the Our Father.
6. On each small bead in the decade, pray the Hail Mary
7. In the space after the 10th bead, pray the Glory Be and Fatima Prayer.

DIVINE MERCY CHAPLET

This prayer was given to Saint Faustina in a vision of Jesus in 1935. It is typically said with the aid of rosary beads.

1. Make the Sign of the Cross
2. Say the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Apostle's Creed
3. For each of the five sets of beads, on the large bead, say:
"Eternal Father, I offer you the body and blood, soul and divinity of your dearly beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world."
4. On each of the ten smaller beads, say:
"For the sake of his sorrowful passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world."
5. Conclude by saying, three times:
"Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world."

Litanies

THE LITANY OF HUMILITY

O Jesus, meek and humble of heart,	<i>Hear me.</i>
From the desire of being esteemed,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the desire of being loved,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the desire of being extolled,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the desire of being honored,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the desire of being praised,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the desire of being preferred to others,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the desire of being consulted,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the desire of being approved,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the fear of being humiliated,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the fear of being despised,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the fear of suffering rebukes,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the fear of being calumniated,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the fear of being forgotten,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the fear of being ridiculed,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the fear of being wronged,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the fear of being suspected,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
That others may be loved more than I,	<i>Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.</i>
That others may be esteemed more than I,	<i>Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.</i>
That, in the opinion of the world, others may increase and I may decrease,	<i>Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.</i>
That others may be chosen and I set aside,	<i>Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.</i>
That others may be praised and I go unnoticed,	<i>Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.</i>
That others may be preferred to me in everything,	<i>Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.</i>
That others may become holier than I, provided that I may become as holy as I should,	<i>Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.</i>

THE LITANY OF TRUST

From the belief that I have to earn Your love,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the fear that I am unlovable,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the false security that I have what it takes,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the fear that trusting You will leave me more destitute,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From all suspicion of Your words and promises,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the rebellion against childlike dependency on You,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From refusals and reluctances in accepting Your will,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From anxiety about the future,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From resentment or excessive preoccupation with the past,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From restless self-seeking in the present moment,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From disbelief in Your love and presence,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the fear of being asked to give more than I have,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the belief that my life has no meaning or worth,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From the fear of what love demands,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
From discouragement,	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
That You are continually holding me, sustaining me, loving me,	<i>Jesus, I trust in You.</i>
That Your love goes deeper than my sins and failings and transforms me,	<i>Jesus, I trust in You.</i>
That not knowing what tomorrow brings is an invitation to lean on You,	<i>Jesus, I trust in You.</i>
That You are with me in my suffering,	<i>Jesus, I trust in You.</i>
That my suffering, united to Your own, will bear fruit in this life and the next,	<i>Jesus, I trust in You.</i>
That You will not leave me orphan, that You are present in Your Church,	<i>Jesus, I trust in You.</i>
That Your plan is better than anything else,	<i>Jesus, I trust in You.</i>
That You always hear me and in Your goodness always respond to me,	<i>Jesus, I trust in You.</i>
That You give me the grace to accept forgiveness and to forgive others,	<i>Jesus, I trust in You.</i>
That You give me all the strength I need for what is asked,	<i>Jesus, I trust in You.</i>
That my life is a gift,	<i>Jesus, I trust in You.</i>
That You will teach me to trust You,	<i>Jesus, I trust in You.</i>
That You are my Lord and my God,	<i>Jesus, I trust in You.</i>
That I am Your beloved one,	<i>Jesus, I trust in You.</i>

LECTIO DIVINA

Lectio Divina is Latin for “divine reading” It is a simple and powerful way to immerse yourself into the word of God, and can easily be done alone or with your family. It is broken down into the following steps: *lectio, meditatio, oratio, contemplatio*. If you are doing this as a family, consider taking turns reading the scripture passage out loud. Then, have some individual silent time to meditate and pray. Then, everyone can discuss how the scripture passage spoke to them and any call to action they may feel.

Possible scripture passages to pray with:

The upcoming Sunday Gospel, Luke 10:38-42 (*Mary and Martha*), Mark 10:46-56 (*Healing of the Blind Man*), John 8:2-11 (*The Adulterous Woman*), Matthew 13: 1-9 (*Parable of the Sower*), Matthew 6:25-34 (*Dependence on God*), Matthew 26: 36-46 (*Agony in the Garden*), Mark 12:28-34 (*The Greatest Commandment*), Mark 14: 3-9 (*Anointing at Bethany*), Luke 1:46-56 (*Cantic of Mary*), Luke 9:40-48 (*Hemorrhaging Woman*), Luke 19:1-10 (*Zacchaeus the Tax Collector*), John 2:1-12 (*Wedding at Cana*), John 4:4-39 (*Samaritan Woman*), John 14:15-24 (*The Advocate*), Acts 2:42-47 (*Communal Life*)

How to Pray Lectio Divina

Lectio means “read”. First, ask the Holy Spirit to come and open your heart and guide your mind during this time of prayer. Then, slowly read over the scripture you are praying with. Take note of any words or phrases that stand out to you as you read.

Meditatio means “meditation”. Read through the scripture again and meditate by entering into the passage- allow God to bring up certain thoughts or memories that relate to the passage you are reading, or place yourself in the text. Bring the scene to life and meditate on the words that struck you.

Oratio means “prayer”. Begin a conversation with God about the scripture you have been reading. Ask Him why certain words or phrases stuck out to you, why certain thoughts or memories came to mind, and what His word means for you and your life.

Listen to what God has to say to you.

Contemplatio means “contemplation”. Rest in what God has spoken to you or revealed to you through His Word. Sit and be with God who loves you.

JOURNALING PROMPTS

- Reflect on what God has revealed to you during this time of coronavirus and quarantine.
- Journal about the things that cause you fear. After you have made your list, ask God to enter into each fear and cast it away with His love.
- Do an examination of conscience asking God to help you see the areas in your life that you have not been loving Him. Ask God for forgiveness.
- In your own words, write an act of surrender to God. Give over your life, your concerns, your fears, your goals, your anxieties, and your dreams to Him.
- Write a love letter to Jesus.
- Journal and pray for your future or current spouse.
- Pray for peace regarding a situation that has been bothering you or causing anxiety.
- Pray for guidance on a decision you have been struggling with.
- Write a letter to someone that you have been struggling to forgive. Surrender it to God.

LORD'S DAY DINNER

Visit <https://www.mbtangleton.org/lords-day-dinner> for a more information about Lord's Day dinner, a video, and a format to follow!

The Lord's Day dinner is an opening meal at the beginning of the Lord's day (Sunday) modeled after the Jewish opening meal of their Sabbath day. The Sabbath day went from sundown to sundown, so the Lord's Day Dinner is celebrated Saturday night. It consists of prayers acknowledging that this is a day to honor and worship the Lord. However, you are still able to do a "Lord's Day" type dinner on any other night of the week if you are doing this retreat on a day that is not Saturday.

We are created for the Sabbath rest of heaven where we will worship God for all eternity. The Lord's Day should remind us of what we are created for, which is why it's a day of worship, setting aside our own pursuits to slow down and focus on God.

Because it is modeled after the Jewish meal blessing prayers, the Lord's Day prayers may sound weird to us, or may sound like parts of the mass. The Jewish formula of praying, "Blessed are You, God, for the gift of..." is a way of praying in thanksgiving for whatever it is we are blessing God for, and asking God to bless it.

Therefore, the blessing of bread and wine is the blessing of the meal, a prayer of thanksgiving for the food God provided. No need to pray a normal meal blessing - you are already doing it in the prayers!

Since it is a celebration, there are simple things that we can do to make it more of a feast: serving especially good food & drink, singing joyful Christian songs that are fitting for the Lord's Day, making the room/table look nicer (using nicer plates, cleaning, decorating), dressing up a little, lighting a candle, using the Lord's Day prayers, staying longer in conversation at table, and doing something fun together as a family afterwards (playing board games, for example).

CREATING A SACRED SPACE

Especially in this time of coronavirus, quarantine, and having less access to prayerful spaces such as churches and chapels, consider creating a sacred space or prayer corner in your home. Creating a designated space for prayer, quiet, silence, and listening can help us to hear God's voice in our life more clearly and encourage prayer at home individually or as a family.

Here are some tips on how to create a prayer space within your home:

1. Assess your home and choose an area. When considering the best place within your home, think about where might be best for yourself or your family. Where would be best for entering into time of prayer? Do you want the space to be easily accessible for the family to see every day, or set apart to get privacy? Do you want natural light?
2. Place a chair, lounger, kneeler, or shelf/altar in your prayer space- something that will allow you to comfortably spend time there in prayer.
3. Consider placing a side table next to your kneeler or chair. Here you can leave item you frequently use during prayer- a journal, Bible, book, rosary, etc.
4. Surround yourself with any holy images, items, or statues you may have that can help make it a sacred space and enter into a prayerful atmosphere- rosaries, prayer cards, saint statues, holy water, icons, etc.
5. Add anything else you desire that can help set the space apart for prayer- candles, string lights, etc.
6. Pray in your sacred space daily!