

# Saint Luke Faith Formation Packet

September 2020 to June 2021



***I give thanks to my God at every remembrance of you, praying always with joy in my every prayer for all of you, because of your partnership for the gospel from the first day until now.***

***I am confident of this, that the one who began good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus.***

***Philippians 1:3-5***

This year, St. Luke Parish is focusing on the Domestic Church and how we can

support you and your relationship with the Lord. The term “Domestic Church” has been used throughout Christianity to refer to the family, the smallest body of gathered believers. A family unit can be any size and includes all ages.

This is an exciting opportunity to grow closer to God!

If you have not developed a structure of sharing faith at home, we encourage you to start slowly and become comfortable with inviting the Lord into your family space. If you have a solid routine and rituals created, we encourage you to continue this and go deeper into your faith as a family. This packet is designed to help guide you regardless of where you are. It provides various levels of intensity and depth so that you can customize your personal “faith at home” experience. Start where you feel comfortable.

Developing faith at home is composed of three parts: **Prayer, Catechesis, and Ritual & Tradition.**

## Prayer

***"For me, prayer is a burst from my heart, it is a simple glance thrown toward Heaven, a cry of thanksgiving and love in times of trial as well as in times of joy."***

**– St. Therese of Lisieux,**

***Lord, teach us how to pray! (Luke 11:1)***

We have each been born for a time such as this, and we were made to continually come closer to Christ during this time. Whatever your prayer routine is, the Lord desires for you to go deeper, to draw closer to His heart.

**There are many ways you can do this.**

If you are just starting with a habit of prayer, choose a time of day to pray and consistently go to prayer in that time. Once you have

***In our own time, in a world often alien and even hostile to faith, believing families are of primary importance as centers of living, radiant faith. CCC 1656***

***The home is the first school of Christian life and “a school for human enrichment.”***

**CCC 1657**

the time of day, pray for a fixed time, increasing your prayer time as you feel comfortable. Beyond a set time, you can pray (talk to and listen to God) while gardening, vacuuming, driving, and more. We are asked to pray unceasingly, and just a reaching out to God in thanksgiving or supplication is a joy. Anytime you spend with the Lord in prayer deepens your relationship.

***“We have been given an immense opportunity for getting our priorities in order, for repenting, and establishing routines that place God more in the center of daily life . . . I really ask you to do that. “***

**– Father Brad, Mass Homily on March 29, 2020**

## **Memorized Prayers**

Consider learning new memorized prayers this year, perhaps the Morning Offering, the Memorare, the Angelus (traditionally prayed at noon), or the Anima Christi. Consider choosing one and praying it each day at the same time.

You can also make the Rosary or the Divine Mercy Chaplet part of your day. Traditionally, 3:00 pm is the hour of Divine Mercy, as it is the hour that Christ died for us on the cross.

<https://dynamiccatholic.com/rosary/how-to-pray-the-rosary>

<https://www.thedivinemercy.org/message/devotions/pray-the-chaplet>

## **Liturgy of the Hours**

**The Liturgy of the Hours, also known as the Divine Office or the Work of God (Opus Dei), is the daily prayer of the Church, marking the hours of each day and sanctifying the day with prayer. The Hours are a meditative dialogue on the mystery of Christ, using scripture and prayer.**

Each of the five canonical Hours includes selections from the Psalms that culminate in a scriptural proclamation. The two most important or hinge Hours are Morning and Evening Prayer. You can learn about it at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ web site: <https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgy-of-the-hours>

Consider praying Compline, or Night Prayer, together with your family before going to bed.

**iBreviary** is a free app that you can put on your phone or look at online to guide you through the Liturgy of the Hours.

<http://www.ibreviary.com/m2/breviario.php>

A shorter, ecumenical version is in The Little Book of Hours: Praying with the Community of Jesus. And for kids, the hours are explained in The Monk Who Grew Prayer by Claire Bradenburg.

## Lectio Divina – Praying with Scripture

***The word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.***

**- Hebrews 4: 12**

Lectio Divina is reading the Word of God in prayerful meditation, an ancient Christian tradition.

You can learn more about the prayer and the steps here:

<https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer/the-what-how-why-of-prayer/praying-with-scripture/>

The final step of Lectio Divina is Contemplatio, or Contemplation, when we rest in God, receiving the gaze and love of our Father.

***“Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ.”***

**- St. Jerome**

## Contemplative Prayer

Contemplative prayer is resting in God, being silent without thoughts or reflection. It is a complete listening to the Lord without adding our own perspective or biases. Thomas Keating wrote well on this type of prayer in Open Mind, Open Heart. You can also learn more here:

<https://contemplativeprayer.net>

***“Contemplative prayer in my opinion is nothing else than a close sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with him who we know loves us.”***

**- St. Teresa of Avila**

## Catechesis

***“At the heart of catechesis we find, in essence, a Person, the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, the only Son from the Father . . . who suffered and died for us and who now, after rising, is living with us forever.” Catechesis aims at putting “people . . . in communion . . . with Jesus Christ: only he can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make us share in the life of the Holy Trinity.” CCC 426***

The Catechism points to the truth that as we learn about our faith, we come to know Jesus! Catechesis is on-going and meant for all of us, from the time we are born until our death.

If you have not already done so, establish a routine for catechesis in your home. Some resources are found on the following page.

## Resources

These are suggestions to read, create, or watch together as a family. Learning can take many forms and does not need to be done as in school. Learning about the faith can be reading about a saint, creating a craft, discussing a movie, and much more. Below are some resources. This is not a comprehensive list, but a beginning to start you on the journey.

### General (for the entire family)

The Catholic Home by Meredith Gould.

This book discusses the celebrations and traditions for holidays, feast days, and every day. The author is a convert and does a great job of explaining the liturgical calendar and providing suggestions for living the faith.

A Year with God by Theresa Johnson.

This book was created for homeschoolers and gives many activities for celebrating the liturgical year.

Saints and Feast Days: A Resource and Activity Book by the Sisters of Notre Dame of Chardon, Ohio. A great book for following the feast days of saints. It provides a biography and then suggestions for activities.

101 Crafts to Help Kids Grow in Their Faith by Laurine M. Easton. This book provides crafts for teaching the sacraments and about the church. Simple and fun.

### Adults

Because we all have a different level of knowledge of the faith when we reach adulthood, I have tried to include a variety of resources for adults as well as books to encourage reflection of the faith. This is definitely not comprehensive. Also, the resources recommended for high school are also very good for adults.

The Way of Humility by Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio (Pope Francis).

This book reflects on the topics of corruption, sin, and self-accusation.

Prayer for Beginners by Peter Kreeft.

This book is simple, profound, and practical. A good book for developing your prayer life.

The Rule of Benedict for Beginners: Spirituality for Daily Life by Wil Derkse.

This short book discusses how the Rule of St. Benedict can be incorporated into the daily lives of lay people. A great way to look at the structure of your life and pattern your day with the motto “worship and work.”

Practical Theology by Peter Kreeft. The author looks at the writings of Thomas Aquinas, a doctor of the Church, and breaks down the theology into bits that lay Catholics can understand and reflect upon.

The Seven Deadly Sins: A Visitor’s Guide by Lawrence S. Cunningham.

A short look at the seven deadly sins, what they are and how we can use virtue to combat them.

Catholic Social Teaching: Our Best Kept Secret by Peter J. Henriot, Edward P. DeBerri, and Michael J. Schultheis.

This book goes through what social justice is, the church documents outlining the doctrine, and has study questions. A good book to approach with a Bible Study or other study group.

He Leadeth Me by Walter Ciszek.

This book is the personal story of Ciszek's spiritual journey while being held prisoner by Russia for being a "Vatican spy." He spent 23 years in prisons and labor camps in Siberia. A powerful story.

My Life with the Saints by James Martin.

The author goes through many saints and his relationship with them.

The Great Divorce by C.S. Lewis.

This 100-page book takes the reader on a journey from Hell to Heaven, examining the ways we turn away from God and how we are encouraged to turn toward him. Very compelling and reflective of sin and grace.

Racial Justice and the Catholic Church by Bryan Massingale.

This book goes through the definition and culture of racism, how the Catholic Church has historically approached it, and how we, as faithful Catholics, can work toward racial reconciliation and healing. A well-written, thoughtful, and practical book to guide us in these times of racial division.

### Kindergarten through Sixth Grade

Because you are learning together as a family, you will be talking to various ages. You can read and learn together without dividing into grades. Younger kids can listen to higher level material and older kids can listen to lower level books. Tailor your discussions and activities to suit the age.

Tomie dePaola – anything by this author is wonderful. Here are a few suggestions:

Mary, the Mother of Jesus

The Holy Twins: Benedict and Scholastica

The Clown of God

The Lady of Guadalupe

The Miracles of Jesus

Inos Biffi – this author is great for catechetical teaching. The illustrations by Franco Vignazia are beautiful and inspiring.

An Illustrated Catechism

An Introduction to the Liturgical Year

The Way to Bethlehem

The Magnifikid. This is a mass aid for kids that also includes daily prayer and activities.

<https://us.magnificat.net/home/magnifikid>

Kimberly Fries – this author explains to kids how to pray. Designed for littles but good for all.

[Divine Mercy for Little Ones](#)

[Lectio Divina for Little Ones](#)

[Guided Prayer for Little Ones](#)

[3 in 1 \(A Picture of God\)](#) by Joanne Marxhausen.

This is explaining the Mystery of the Trinity. Lovely. For younger kids.

[The Weight of a Mass](#) by Josephine Nobisso.

This is a lovely story about the importance of Mass. For younger kids.

[A Child's Book of Prayer in Art](#) by Sister Wendy Beckett.

This book is for many ages, containing wonderful art and the virtues they inspire.

[St. Patrick's Summer](#) by Marigold Hunt.

This book tells the story of two children who have not yet received First Reconciliation or First Communion. St. Patrick comes to Earth to teach them. Good for ages 8-12.

[The Illustrated Gospel for Children](#) by Jean-Francois Kieffer and Christine Ponsard.

This is published by Magnificat and is a fun way to read about the life of Jesus. There are three other books in the series. Good for ages 5-10.

[The Adventure of Lupio](#) by Jean-Francois Kieffer.

This comic series features an orphaned boy who makes friends with St. Francis and brother wolf. Good for ages 6-10.

### [Seventh and Eighth Grade](#)

Because the sacrament of Confirmation has been postponed this year, take this year to reflect with your kids about the sacrament and their own faith journey. Here are some suggestions:

[Decision Point](#) by Matthew Kelly.

This book discusses choices in life, who Jesus is, prayer, what is Confirmation, and how to live your faith. It includes catechism, information, and reflection. A great way for parents and kids to discuss these things together.

[Ablaze: Daring Stories of Teen Saints](#) by Colleen Swaim.

Have your tween/teen read about the saints. This book looks at teen saints.

[The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth](#) by Brian Singer-Towns.

This book goes through the four parts of the Catholic Catechism as well as providing information on saints and much more. A great resource to read together as a family.

## High School

This age can be tricky and any way you can present and discuss the faith is good. The books suggested above for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders will be good for high school as well. Here are some further suggestions:

An Introduction to Catholic Ethics by Lucien F. Longtin, SJ and Andrew J. Peach.

This book examines what ethics are, secular ethics, Christian ethics, how to form a Catholic conscience, and how to discern God's will. Each part contains discussion questions. This is a great book to work on together. Inviting another family into the discussion can deepen the discussion and keep you involved.

"The Catholic Church – A History" by William Cook and published by Great Courses.

This is a DVD with 36 lectures on the history of the church. Great to watch together as a family and discuss.

Movies That Matter by Richard Leonard, SJ.

This book recommends many movies to watch and provides discussion questions. Some of the movies are on Catholic topics and some are secular but good to discuss the faith and how we live in the world.

## Ritual & Tradition

Establishing ritual and tradition in your home is fun as well as essential for creating a culture of faith. There are many ways to create this culture. Below are additional suggestions on how to fill your home with the physical and emotional presence of a relationship with the Lord.

1. A ritual a month. This year will be dedicated to various rituals and how they can strengthen your and your family's faith. A monthly newsletter, along with homilies and chats from Fr. Brad, will discuss in detail how you can introduce and strengthen rituals in your faith and family life. This holy ordering provides strength in times of trial and sets us up for success.
2. Celebrate the Liturgical Year. The Catholic calendar shapes our approach to the year. Starting with Advent and ending with the Feast of Christ the King, the liturgical year walks us through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Here are some ways to make these seasons come to life:
  - a. Cooking. Sharing food is a fantastic way to make memories and build a connection to ideas and doctrine. From making hot cross buns to building an entire meal to celebrate an occasion, there are many ways to bring food into our Catholic culture. Check out this website for ideas: <https://catholiccuisine.blogspot.com/>
  - b. Decorating. Having Catholic decorations in your home gives reminders of what our focus in life is. A crucifix, icon of the holy family, a picture of the last supper, and a nativity scene are examples of traditional decorations. You can do more with the liturgical year such as creating a Stations of the Cross throughout your home or filling the dining room table with candles for Pentecost. Here is a website on decorating a Catholic home: <https://www.catholicistas.com/decorating-catholic-home-part-research/>

- c. Scheduling. Create a calendar of what you want to celebrate during the month. Here is a good website: <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/overviews/months/10.cfm>
  - d. Singing. Fill your house with spiritual music. There are many different kinds. Gregorian chants, songs from the St. Louis Jesuits, Praise and Worship, and much more. Follow what you like. Here is a suggestion for Gregorian chant, which is nice for a reflective mood in the home: [https://www.amazon.com/Lost-Meditation-Meditative-Gregorian-Chants/dp/B000001VIK/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?dchild=1&keywords=lost+in+meditation&qid=1601156773&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Lost-Meditation-Meditative-Gregorian-Chants/dp/B000001VIK/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=lost+in+meditation&qid=1601156773&sr=8-1)
  - e. Honoring. Having a home altar or a prayer table in the home directs our thoughts and actions more regularly to the Lord. Start with the color of the season and add statues or icons, flowers, pictures of saints, a rosary, a Bible, and more. Read this for more information: <https://fssp.com/the-home-altar-through-the-liturgical-year/>
  - f. Fasting. There are so many opportunities and many reasons for fasting. The Catholic Church encourages fasting, but only requires it two days of the year: Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. But we can fast any time and it is good to develop a habit of fasting occasionally. Read more here: <https://www.catholic.org/lent/story.php?id=54424>
3. Study the Saints. Reading about the saints gives us good role models in our faith journey. The saints were focused on their relationship with the Lord. They were not perfect and that is okay. They were human, but they also did extraordinary things in their quest for God. There are many, many saint books, so just pick up one and start. Or go here: <https://www.catholic.org/saints/stindex.php?lst=A>

Creating an atmosphere of love, joy, and learning will take time and some patience, so do not become discouraged.

Once you are at a place of contentment with your Domestic Church, we encourage you to add another piece or to take what you have to the next level.

Remember to rest in the Lord and to put your trust in Him.

The Holy Spirit will guide you and give you the grace and strength to develop your family relationship with the Lord.

If you are interested in more resources, or in attending a meeting on how to develop your Domestic Church, please contact Tanya Higgins at [tanyah@stlukecp.org](mailto:tanyah@stlukecp.org)