

Holy Cross Family Ministries suggests six steps to foster more family prayer

NORTH EASTON, Mass. (CNS) – Create a sacred space in your home, have family members take turns leading prayer and establish a routine for prayer with your family.

These are among six simple steps Holy Cross Family Ministries in North Easton suggests as ways to help families engage in prayer especially during the Advent and Christmas seasons.

“As we round out 2020, Holy Cross Family Ministries wants to encourage families to take time to reflect and rejoice in prayer,” said a news release. “There is no right or wrong when it comes to praying with your family.”

Here are the six steps to promote family prayer:

– Create a sacred space no matter where you are: “At home with your family, light a candle, place your family Bible or an image of the Holy Family on the coffee table. If you find yourself in your vehicle on-the-go, roll down the windows and have everyone take a deep breath of fresh air. Wherever you are in this busy life, slow down long enough to welcome God’s presence.”

– Take turns leading prayer: “If someone is in charge of leading grace, they’ll hold your entire family accountable. Switch off days and include your children! Give them the opportunity to experience the immense humility of helping your family begin a meal by first recognizing God’s many blessings.”

– Routine: “It’s all about getting into habit. Once grace is in your family’s routine, you’ll notice your children will

remind you if you ever forget to pray. Don't let location deter you in praying together! Prioritize creating this time with your family near and far by establishing a schedule to do this often throughout the season. Engage together through a video call or simply connect and establish that you will all be doing this at the same time.

– Include special intentions: “Invite everyone to pray for the hopes, sorrows, or joys weighing on their hearts.” When praying with family remotely, choose a single intention that each individual family can touch on. “Sharing these intentions helps your family connect on a deeper level, as you're reminded of the struggles or excitements each person experienced that day and allows you to come together to pray over them.”

– Choose a prayer candle: “Set a prayer candle on your dinner table and whenever it's lit, encourage your family to see it as a reminder that Christ our light is with you in prayer. This is a great way to connect in prayer with loved ones who may be having dinner in another home, connecting the candle to the meal serves as a reminder that while you may not be physically together, you're able to share the same experience.”

– Try again: “Grace before meals won't be perfect every time. There will be distractions, extensive whining, regretful eye rolls and sometimes discouraging exchanges. Do not be disheartened, for one day you will fondly look back on these moments and recognize the spiritual growth in your family.”

This Advent and Christmas season “may look differently than years past,” said the Holy Cross Family Ministries news release.

“A loved one may no longer be with us, you may be practicing social distancing or may live too far from your loved ones to safely gather together,” it said. “Any family, near or far,

can gather in prayer and amazing things may come from it! Remember, the family that prays together stays together.”

The phrase “the family that prays together stays together” was popularized by Holy Cross Father Patrick Peyton, known worldwide as “The Rosary Priest.”

He was a Catholic media pioneer in the 1940s, using radio and later television to produce popular programs featuring Hollywood stars and other celebrities to promote family prayer.

Father Peyton, a candidate for sainthood who was declared “Venerable” by Pope Francis Dec. 18, 2017, founded Holy Cross Family Ministries in 1942. The ministries include Family Rosary, Family Theater Productions, Father Peyton Family Institute and Family Rosary International.

“Families have changed significantly” since 1942, but “one thing that hasn’t changed is that families still have the same innate longing for a relationship with the living God,” said Holy Cross Father Willy Raymond, who is president of the family of ministries.

“As families seek to grow in faith in these challenging times, we offer them many new, relevant prayer resources to serve them in this growing digital world,” he said. “We have evolved the better to meet the needs of the families and our new look and feel help them see and understand the unity among all our ministries and all we have to offer them.”

In October, Holy Cross Family Ministries unveiled a new logo and branding to “better connect with contemporary families.”

The design of the new logo focuses on the 10 beads of a decade of the rosary, representing “totality” and “unity.” The beads are arranged in a circle and each bead is designed to symbolize the family in prayer. The circle also calls to mind three flowers that are symbolic of Mary – the rose, lily and

iris.

The [new logo](#)'s elements taken together radiate outward, giving "a sense of welcome and invitation."