



Enhance your family prayer with
FAMILY ROSARY

**5 Ways to Help Your
Children Discern
Their Personal
Vocation**

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THE FAMILY THAT PRAYS TOGETHER STAYS TOGETHER

WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY

How do we help our children say “Yes” to God’s calling?

Helping your child discover their place in God’s plan is a journey that you can embark on together with five easy, joy-filled steps.

A LITTLE HISTORY

Father Patrick Peyton, C.S.C. began his ministry in 1942 with the goal of building **family unity** through daily prayer of the Rosary. Inspired by his own father who had a deep devotion to family prayer, praying the Rosary became the foundation for the life of Father Peyton (1909-92).

We at Family Rosary are ever so grateful Father Peyton’s family instilled in him the importance of **family prayer**. Now it can be part of your family’s tradition so you can fulfill the vision that “The Family That Prays Together Stays Together,” the message created by Father Patrick Peyton, C.S.C., so many years ago.



SAYING “YES” TO GOD’S LOVE IS THE FIRST
STEP TO BEING HAPPY, AND TO MAKING
MANY OTHER PEOPLE HAPPY.

POPE FRANCIS

FIVE WAYS TO HELP YOUR CHILDREN DISCERN THEIR PERSONAL VOCATION

1) GROUND THEM IN THE REALITY OF THEIR PRESENT CALLING.

We generally treat 'vocation' as calling to a state in life like priesthood or marriage or to a profession—e.g. nurse, teacher, entrepreneur.

While it is good to help our children consider their future state in life calling, personal vocation is a current opportunity and responsibility to embrace.

Because our children are baptized and, in teen years, confirmed, we know that they are already called to be vital members of the Church. Their personal vocation – the unique and unrepeatable way God intends them to build his Kingdom – is now.

What activities are they involved with in their home, school, or parish? Who are the people in their lives they serve? Meeting these responsibilities is key to their calling.

Yes, they will face key decisions with regard to marriage and professional direction but they are undoubtedly called to live fully for Christ in the present moment. Helping them to recognize this reality is one of the greatest gifts we can give them.

2) DRAW OUT AND LISTEN TO THEIR STORIES OF ACHIEVEMENT.

In nearly 20 years of work as a coach and teacher I've never encountered a young person without achievement stories—i.e. stories of activities they deeply enjoyed doing and believe they did well. Sadly, many have never been asked about these stories.

First, ask them to brainstorm achievement activities. Let them know they can come from any time of life or any kind of activity. Assure them that "achievement" does not have to be grand success in worldly terms. What matters is that it brought joy.

Ask about what your child actually did in the activity. Get plenty of detail. The point is to get a picture of him/her in authentic action. Finally, ask what actually brought your child deep fulfillment in the activity itself.

The impact of this simple exercise can be powerful. Listening with interest to your children as share their achievement stories is like warm sunshine on a sapling in need of light.

It gives basic affirmation that they are good. It builds rapport. It enlivens them with the positivity of the memory they are sharing. It helps them recognize their own potential and how it is concretely realized. All of this lays strong foundation for effective vocational discernment.

3) AFFIRM THEIR UNIQUE GIFTS AND THE VALUE OF THEIR CONTRIBUTION.

The achievement story, grounded in activity natural to the child, is about authentic fulfillment. Rarely do children describe passive or negative experiences.

“What did you deeply enjoy doing and believe you did well?” almost always evokes stories of behavior that is inherently good.

Since the question requires children to reflect on and articulate their own authentic action, they grow in self-understanding. But they need the reflection of loving others to solidify and deepen that emerging awareness.

As your children share their achievement stories pay attention to the pattern of unique behavior they reveal. Point out the inherent gifts that you see and how it does (or could) bless others. Be sure not to project or fantasize or inflate. Simply reflect what they actually shared.

Since this observation is grounded in real action you will be holding up a mirror of the kind of action God has literally designed them to contribute to the world.

4) CULTIVATE PRAYERFUL SILENCE.

Our children face increasing pressure to conform their lives to The Age of Distraction, especially through social media. Snapchat, YouTube and the like are designed to profit from, not cultivate, the minds of our children.

Recent studies have shown that empathy markers are down 40 percent in the current generation of youth, that the average child spends less time outdoors than do prison inmates and consumes a record nine hours of digital media per day.

It is absolutely essential that we unplug our children and cultivate in them habits of interior depth and silent listening.

Without that we cannot hope to help them discern the voice of God, the needs of others or even the authentic longings of their own hearts.

5) AWAKEN SELF-CREATIVE FREEDOM.

Every semester as a teacher and coach I encounter young people who assume that discerning their vocation is like following a blueprint of exact instructions.

They hunger for God’s will but don’t recognize that being made in His image and likeness includes self-creative freedom, that their vocation, at least in part, is to direct their own lives.

Of course, they ought to exercise that freedom in conformity with God's law. But God's way is to incorporate our free actions into his own plans for us. This is the marvel and mystery of Providence, but true.

Relieving youth of the opinion that vocation = blueprint is often a simple matter of connecting their longing for freedom with their own created nature and God's clear intention that they fulfill that nature.

As children awaken to their self-creative freedom they are often filled with joy flowing from doing God's will and building up His kingdom. At the same time, they begin to develop strong habits of ongoing discernment they can draw upon as they mature into adults.

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GOING DEEPER

Lord, help me lead my children in their present vocation and those to come. Give me the strength and patience to hear my children, understand the call they feel on their heart and become overwhelmed with support when I see them joy-filled. Through your Mother's intercession, I ask for the courage to be a brave and loving parent. Amen.

CONTINUE THE JOURNEY

Are you a parent looking for a supportive prayer community? We've got you! Follow CatholicMom.com on Instagram or Facebook for conversations, updates and simple prayers from parents just like you. It's not always easy, and we're here to help!

JOSHUA MILLER

Joshua Miller, PhD is the Co-Founder and Head of Education for Inscape and co-author with Luke Burgis of *Unrepeatable: Cultivating the Unique Calling of Every Person*. Dr. Miller and his wife are the parents of six children.

BRINGING FAMILIES TOGETHER IN PRAYER

This e-book and all our resources represent a culmination of Father Peyton's passion for family unity through prayer. We hope our services will enhance your family's prayer life particularly remembering Father Peyton's famous words, "The Family That Prays Together Stays Together."

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