

Enhance your family prayer with  
**FAMILY ROSARY**

*Six Simple  
Ways to  
Cultivate  
Gratitude*

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THE FAMILY THAT PRAYS TOGETHER STAYS TOGETHER

# WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY

There is no right or wrong when it comes to praying with your family. It may be chaotic and imperfect one day and quiet and orderly the next. Take comfort in knowing there is no one "correct" way of doing it. Any family can gather in prayer and amazing things may come from it!

No matter where you are, create a sacred space: On the train or bus, put ear buds in and play soft music. If you're waiting for your children's game or concert to begin, close your eyes and silently chant, "Come Holy Spirit, Come." Wherever you are in this busy life, slow down long enough to welcome God's presence.

We're so glad to be joining you in prayer. We promise to be with you, growing in faith, every step of the way. May God continue to bless you and your family.

## A LITTLE HISTORY

Servant of God Patrick Peyton 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).

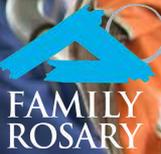
We at Family Rosary are ever so grateful Father Peyton's family instilled in him the importance of **family prayer**. Now it can be part of your family's tradition so you can fulfill the vision that "The Family That Prays Together Stays Together," the slogan coined by Father Patrick Peyton, C.S.C., so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



“LET US ASK OUR LADY TO HELP US RECOGNIZE THAT EVERYTHING IS GOD'S GIFT, AND TO BE ABLE TO SAY 'THANK YOU.' THEN I ASSURE YOU OUR JOY WILL BE COMPLETE. ONLY THOSE WHO KNOW HOW TO SAY 'THANK YOU,' WILL EXPERIENCE THE FULLNESS OF JOY.”  
POPE FRANCIS



# SIX SIMPLE WAYS TO CULTIVATE GRATITUDE



## ***Could your children use an adjustment in their attitude of gratitude?***

Gratitude isn't easy. It often feels as though we're hardwired to focus on the negative aspects of our lives, no matter how many blessings have come our way. It's glaringly obvious when you think about it: my husband and I often catch ourselves asking, "When are we going to get a break?" only to be blasted from our self-pity by events in the news or the struggles of family and friends. The truth is, being grateful takes practice and effort, and that's especially important when it comes to our kids.

I first realized we had a problem with gratitude when my seven-year-old began complaining about package deliveries.

"Why don't I ever get a box?! No one ever sends anything to meeeeeeee!!!!"

This is patently false, and I think deep down she knows it. But the instant negative response to someone else's good fortune (even if it's just a box of diapers from Amazon) made it pretty clear we had some work to do.

Since gratitude seems to be a universal problem in our house, I enlisted the help of some faithful Catholic women in my online circles. The following suggestions come from brainstorming sessions with the members of Real Catholic Women and Catholic Homeschool Moms on Facebook. I know I'll be implementing a few in my own home. Want to join me?

## 6 SIMPLE, NO-FAIL WAYS TO CULTIVATE GRATITUDE IN YOUR KIDS (AND YOU):

### **START IN YOUR HEART**

As with all things, our children learn through the things they see us do. If our own approach to life exudes a sense of gratitude, our children will hopefully follow suit.

Sometimes, though, it is difficult to find that virtue within ourselves. If you struggle with gratitude as much as (or, perhaps, more than) your children, find inspiration in the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas, who devoted an entire section of the Summa Theologiae to thankfulness and gratitude.

## READ ABOUT IT

We live in a society of excess, and that's mostly what our children see. Reading quality literature that features characters leading simple, less-material lives can be eye opening. Try the works of authors such as Laura Ingalls Wilder, Eleanor Estes, or Edith Nesbit with younger children, and perhaps the stories of Charles Dickens for teens.

## WRITE ABOUT IT

Have you ever kept a gratitude journal? Now might be the perfect time to start, and you can keep one as a family or as individuals. Encourage your children to write at least one thing they are thankful for each day, even if it's as simple as the sun streaming in the window or the clean clothes in their drawers. Keeping track of moments of gratitude helps all of us be more mindful of the blessings in our lives, no matter how insignificant they seem in the moment.

## PERFORM WORKS OF MERCY

Visit the elderly. Buy gift cards for the homeless. Make meals for families in need or volunteer to mow a neighbor's lawn. The act of serving those in need creates a positive feedback loop associated with giving: the reaction of those you serve fills your spirit, and your spirit, in turn, seeks to fill that of others.

## MODEL THE MASS

During dinner time, start your own Prayers of the Faithful. Go around the dinner table and ask each person to make one prayer of petition and one prayer of gratitude, following the same "We pray to the Lord/Lord, hear our prayer" format we use after the homily. By bringing elements of the Mass into your home, you'll connect the more abstract elements of the faith to your family life. It becomes much easier to see the hand of God in our daily experiences, both in need and gift.

## MAKE IT CONCRETE

Keep a gratitude jar, where you keep bits of thanksgiving and praise for all to see. Make it a rule to write thank-you notes before playing with a gift, even if a child has offered verbal thanks. Encourage your children to work for items they want, either by performing specific chores or by saving money they have earned. If your children have an allowance, ask them to divide it into three portions: one for giving, one for saving, and one for spending on their own purchases.

Thanks to the thoughtful suggestions of my online Catholic women's groups, I think we're on the road to a gratitude adjustment. ***Which techniques do you think you'll try? Do you have others to add?***



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# BRINGING FAMILIES TOGETHER IN PRAYER

We hope the time you've spent reflecting with this material has been enriching. Continue to pray with your family every day, wherever you are.

For additional online resources for family prayer including a Prayer Petition Page and our World at Prayer Blog, please visit our website at [www.FamilyRosary.org](http://www.FamilyRosary.org).

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.*"

## WHERE YOU CAN FIND US:



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