

Enhance your family prayer with  
**FAMILY ROSARY**

# Praying with Movies and TV

*Practicing prayer*

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THE FAMILY THAT PRAYS TOGETHER STAYS TOGETHER

# WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY

If you're struggling to make prayer a little more interesting or you're battling long groans after insisting on family prayer time, here's a way to shake up your prayer life a bit!

Using something your children already love could make the daunting task of teaching them how to pray more feasible.

Let us walk you through praying with a movie or TV show (intrigued? Keep reading!) and how it can help you ease your kids into spontaneous prayer or prayer in the moments of everyday life.

## 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.



THE KINGDOM OF GOD GROWS IN A MYSTERIOUS  
AND SURPRISING WAY THROUGHOUT THE WORLD  
WITH THE POWER OF A TINY SEED.

POPE FRANCIS



# PRAYING WITH MOVIES AND TV



We aren't born knowing how to pray. We have to be taught. Unfortunately, too often, the instruction for young children (and even some adults) stops at learning rote prayers. This can result in having to wing it when a serious moment comes up requiring prayer, for ourselves or others, and a memorized prayer doesn't always cut it.

## **PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT**

Like any skill, prayer must be practiced, and movies and TV shows can be a big help with this. Entertainment presents us with life situations, some joyful, some tense, and some downright upsetting and sad. But because they're happening to characters and not to us, it allows for a bit of distance.

One great thing that all stories have done throughout human history is to hold up a mirror to life experience. They can get us to think about things that have happened, or may happen, but aren't happening to us right now, so we can talk about them without getting overly emotional.

Also, because we're not talking about ourselves or people we actually know, stories can help us navigate a lot of touchy situations without the conversation becoming too personal (which is another great skill for kids to learn, that will serve them in life).

So, here's a rundown of ways you can use an age-appropriate movies or TV show to think about and practice prayer with children.

I consulted with a few parents on how to do this, and here are some of their suggestions:

- Pick a movie or TV episode you've seen many times before. The last thing you want to do is make a kid wait to see what happens next when you're trying to teach him or her something.
- Don't do it too often in the video. Pick just the big moments, the crisis and decision points, and ask, "If you had to pray for this character in this scene, what would you say?"

- Ask, from time to time, what the kids think God might want the character to do. Don't be afraid to disagree with screenwriters' choices. That improves critical thinking.
- Keep it quick and light. This is Prayer 101, not a Masters in Theology.
- If this sparks kids to talk about their own lives or that of their friends, keep that pause button on. No movie or teaching opportunity is more important than connecting with a child who's willing to open up.

## SOME EXAMPLES

For example, in "Finding Nemo" and "Finding Dory," characters get lost and scared and have to figure their way out of tense situations. How could we pray for Nemo when he can't find his dad, so that he doesn't get too scared? How can we pray for his dad, so he can find his son?

In "Finding Dory," Dory has to overcome her disability of short-term memory loss to find her family. How can prayer help someone who has an issue that complicates their life? Dory has to rely on a lot of other sea creatures to help her on her way. How can we pray for God's assistance, or for the intercession of saints, or for new friends to be put in our path, so we can find our way?

You can also decide to assign patron saints to movie and TV characters, depending on their situation.

Maybe the fearless Princess Elsa in "Frozen" could have the equally fearless Saint Joan of Arc as her patron. Look up Joan of Arc and help compose a prayer that Elsa could have used to help her with her troubles, invoking the intercession of the saint.

These are ways in which movies from the secular world, that lack overt religious content, can be brought into the Catholic worldview. As a bonus, parents can explain how, if the characters had faith, how much better, easier or more bearable their lives would be.

## GOING DEEPER

Pray together:

*"Lord Jesus Christ, let our family dedicate our hearts to you. Help us to love you and each other in a way that fills our hearts with the fire of your love. Inspired by the example of your Holy Family, help each one of us, parents and children, make a sincere gift of ourselves to each other throughout the day so that in all our interactions with each other we can cultivate "a respect for others, a sense of justice, cordial openness, dialogue, generous service, solidarity and all the other values which help us live our life as a gift." We ask this through the intercession of the Holy Family and in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Brother. Amen."*

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## CONTINUE THE JOURNEY

There are many ways to integrate prayer into your family's daily life. It doesn't always have to be the formal heads bowed, hands linked together in a circle kind of experience! For more ideas of praying with your family go to [CatholicMom.com](http://CatholicMom.com) and type "prayer" in the search box.



### KATE O'HARE

Based in Los Angeles, Kate O'Hare is a veteran journalist who covered television for the Tribune syndicate for two decades, doing thousands of interviews with celebrities and behind-the-scenes folks. After leaving the syndicate, she reported for famed entertainment-industry publication Variety, along with covering Church-related issues and pop culture for Breitbart News, CatholicVote and PJ Media. Now, as the Social Media and Internet Content Manager for Family Theater Productions in Hollywood, she brings together the worlds of entertainment, faith and technology.

## BRINGING FAMILIES TOGETHER IN PRAYER

We hope the time you've spent reflecting with this material has been enriching. Remember, we're with you in prayer, every step of the way!

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.*"

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