

Enhance your family prayer with
FAMILY ROSARY

***This Lent, Try
Being Flexible***

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THE FAMILY THAT PRAYS TOGETHER STAYS TOGETHER

WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY

Transitioning out of Ordinary time and into Lent, we're reminded how the special seasons of the Church are a gift from God. Though we're called to continuously grow our faith throughout the year, Lent gives us a particular reason to take time and reflect. So as we enter this Lenten season, embrace this spiritual opportunity you and your family have been gifted by God.

During this time, commit to beginning or ending each day with family prayer. After a few days you'll soon be in the habit of praying together! Don't worry, it doesn't have to be perfect! Take comfort in knowing there is no one "correct" way of doing it.

We know it's a busy time and you've likely already decided on a few other Lenten promises. Let us help you accomplish this part of your family's Lenten journey, so you can nurture your relationships and enjoy the time you share together.

Know that we are joining you and your family 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

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.



“ IN OUR DAILY LIVES WE EXPERIENCE THE TENDERNESS OF GOD WHO LOVINGLY SAVES US FROM OUR SINS, FEARS AND ANXIETIES. ”
POPE FRANCIS



THIS LENT, TRY BEING FLEXIBLE



I love Lent, but I often fail to embrace an appropriate attitude during this season. Instead of focusing on growing closer to Christ, I will become obsessed with my Lenten ideals.

For example, there was one year when I—excitedly—decided to have a really intense Ash Wednesday. Over the course of a very full day that involved college classes, manning a table in the student center, and doing homework, I ate only one small dinner roll. I waved away all thoughts of food, because they did not align with my plan of penance for that day. As you can imagine, by the time evening rolled around, I had a bad headache, could not focus on anything, and did not feel well.

I was so stuck on my vision for Lent that I did not see the reality: I was putting my own stubbornness above what God wanted of me; namely, to take care of myself appropriately and only do such extreme penances with the guidance of a spiritual director. Different thoughts swirled in my mind that day, some of dissatisfaction with myself:

If only I was stronger and could do an intense fast.

If only I could have a silent life, focused on prayer, like cloistered nuns.

To this day, there will be times when “*if only . . .*” thoughts arise in my mind. I will grasp an idealized image that I have of holiness and focus on that, instead of opening my eyes to see what God wants of me in the present moment.

I’ve been learning that I need to stop saying “*if only*,” and start saying “*fiat*.” A simple four-letter word that refers to Mary’s acceptance of God’s plan for her life, fiat reflects a surrender to God.

Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” (Luke 1:38)

If I start saying “fiat” with my life, I need to let go of my plans and desires, so that God may take them. I need to be open to God moving my life in radical ways. I need to stop being so stubborn.

Each year as Lent begins, one of the ongoing conversations among many Catholics revolves around one's "Lenten Plan." Creating a solid outline or regime for prayer, fasting, and almsgiving during Lent is a great way to keep yourself accountable as you strive to contemplate Christ Crucified. However, as we look at our Lenten routines, we need to remember two important words: Be flexible.

If we obstinately hold onto our Lenten penances when God is moving us in a different direction, are we truly living out a penitential spirit of trust and acceptance? If we become grumpy and irritated each time unpredictable events disrupt our routine, are we really saying "fiat" with our lives? When our daily Rosary is interrupted by a crying child or a lonely neighbor ringing the doorbell, how will we react?

Once Easter comes, we could say: "I'm so proud of myself for strictly following my Lenten plan!" But, wouldn't it be better to be able to say: "I'm glad that I was flexible with my plans, so that God could work in my life"?

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GOING DEEPER

Often we buy into the notion that we have to "do it all" to be pleasing to our Heavenly Father. The reality is if we are seeking God, He will meet us where we are at and help us to go deeper in relationship with Him.

There are times when, like Saint Teresa of Calcutta, we may be in the "spiritual desert." But even these times can bear abundant fruit as is witnessed by her life. "Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed" (John 20:29).

CONTINUE THE JOURNEY

Consider this week gathering your family around a candle to take a moment to sit quietly. Small children will be mesmerized by the light, and older children might relish the stillness of this simple act which defies our 24/7 noisy world. If you live on your own, offer this time to God for all those you love.

"Be Still and Know that I am." Let this simple act help you to be truly present to those in your life, whether or not they are physically near you. **Be open to hearing God's plans for you this Lent!**



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Eagerly seeking new adventures each day, AnneMarie enjoys life in Oklahoma with her husband and little boy. She has a passion for the Faith and particularly loves learning more about the Liturgy, saints, and various devotions. AnneMarie's musings on Catholicism, literature, and motherhood can be found on her blog, Sacrifice of Love.

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.

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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