



FAITH in Family



NOVEMBER 2020

Making our Catholic faith alive in our hearts and in our homes

Uniting with God— My Prayer

The Sign of the Cross

"In the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit" St. John Vianney taught that "a Christian who makes a sign of the cross . . . fully aware of the action which he is performing, makes all hell tremble." (Sermons of St. John Vianney #8) This prayer proclaims that our mind, heart and body belong to God as we pray.



Grace Before Meals *"Bless us O Lord and these Thy gifts which we are about to receive from Thy bounty, through Christ our Lord."*



When we say grace, we sanctify what we are about to eat recognizing it is a gift from God. Claim the dinner table as a sacred space by keeping distractions away from the table,

taking the time to gather together and pausing to give thanks to God.

How I Started Praying the 23rd Psalm With My Kids

BY **SHEMAIAH GONZALEZ**. It's difficult to slow down, especially when, like my 9-year-old son, you live with anxiety. His mind is a constant swirl of what he thinks he should do and what might go wrong. Fortunately, I'm perfectly suited to be his mother, as I, too, suffer from anxiety. I've taught him a few tools, such as exercise and journaling, but over the summer, along with his 7-year-old brother, I taught him the best tool of all — prayer.



One Sunday, after we brushed our teeth before bed, I invited them to try a new bedtime ritual. We sat on the floor in a circle. When I lit a candle in the middle of us, they knew it was a special and sacred time.

We started with [Psalm 23](#), reading it aloud, each taking a turn to read a line. It was the first chapter of scripture I learned. As a child, the verses comforted me when I tried to fall asleep, and as an adult, I found solace in the prayer when I didn't have the words to pray. My sons are familiar with the Psalm, as I have prayed it over them, aloud, during illness, bouts of nightmares, or when they are beyond reason or comfort.

Living with God— My Virtue

"Jesus does not demand great actions from us, but simply surrender and gratitude."

—St. Thérèse of Lisieux

By **Chris Meadows OSV**. German mystic Meister Eckhart once said, "If the only prayer you said your whole life was 'thank you,' that would suffice."

Gratitude has that kind of power, not just in prayer, but in the most ordinary moments of our lives. When we are thankful, grateful and appreciative of what we have — even the things that don't necessarily warrant a special thank-you prayer — we tend to be more generous, loving, patient and kind toward others. Gratitude shifts our focus away from our own complaints and problems. If we are busy noticing the blessings in our lives — even something as simple as a beautiful sunrise coming up over the highway as we drive to work, or our family gathered around the dinner table after a long day — we are less likely to wallow in self-pity. But that doesn't mean developing an attitude of gratitude is easy. It requires action and determination to look for those moments of grace, even when they are hidden among the thorns of disappointment.

"To be grateful is a characteristic of humility, and that in itself opens the heart to grace, opens the heart to others, and allows you not to put yourself at the center of the conversation but others," said Father Francis Hoffman, JCD, executive director of Relevant Radio, who is known as Father Rocky. "Gratitude naturally takes us away from ourselves and opens us to others and to God, and that always brings joy with it." Father Rocky says people who manage to maintain an attitude of gratitude even during deep sorrows and struggles do so from a place of God-given grace. "That takes faith, doesn't it?" he said. "And faith itself is a gift. Every priest has come across people who are objectively in painful and difficult situations and discover that they have this marvelous peace and serenity and joy in the midst of the cross, and it's not a natural experience; it's a supernatural experience because they have this deep faith in God that is at work in all of this. The expression of gratitude in those circumstances is almost like a barometer of the faith we have." That's not to say that if we get angry and upset, we don't have faith, because it is only natural to get angry and upset with God sometimes. It can be hard to go from greedy to grateful, jealous to generous. So, what to do in those tough moments? Start by saying a prayer ... God will help us to take the spotlight off ourselves and put it onto others...and our mood begins to change.



Growing with God— My Participation in the Sacraments

Confession—The Sacrament of Reconciliation Each of us should take advantage of the Sacrament of Reconciliation on a regular basis. This practice of faith helps us to receive forgiveness and participating in the Sacrament as a family helps our children see that, though we all struggle with sin, God is eager to forgive and help us to follow Him when we ask for help.



3-Minute Video

"A Place of Light, Conversion and Reconciliation"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hTw1_fJ6uIQ

5 STEPS TO A GOOD CONFESSION Fr. Alek Schrenk, Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh, walks you through how to make a good Confession.

THE EUCHARIST IN A PANDEMIC: BEING FED AND FEEDING OTHERS



BY **MADDIE LAFORGE** This pandemic swirled up the epidemics of poverty and loneliness in our country. Once, they bubbled below the surface. Now, here they are flying wildly around us. We are forced to see the suffering in our world. We know *there must be another way. Jesus revealed another way of being, and he gave us the Eucharist so that we could see it again and again. He knew we would need reminding. So, each Sunday we hear it again. Jesus welcomed the stranger; he healed the sick; he offered mercy and forgiveness. His friends, his disciples, followed him. Each Sunday, we are reminded that Jesus broke bread and ate it—and not just with his friends. He ate with the homeless, with women and children, with sinners, with the unclean. Each Sunday, we are welcomed to the table. We imagine the possibility of a world characterized by love and mercy, and we commit ourselves to living this way. Each Sunday we experience a conversion. We imagine the possibility of a world characterized by love and mercy, and we commit ourselves to living this way.*

