



Family Prayers and Blessings

Traditional Prayers

Here are some well-loved prayers you can learn and say as a family to support your Advent journey.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father,* who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil:

For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.

*or Creator

The Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

A Blessing

May God bless you and keep you.
May God's face shine upon you
and be gracious to you.
May God look upon you with kindness and give you peace.
(Numbers 6:24–26)

Table Grace

For food in a world where many are in hunger;
For faith in a world where many are in fear;
For friends in a world where many are alone,
We give you humble thanks, O Lord.

Creative Blessings

Here are some enjoyable ways to build your joy and gratitude this Advent season.

Hot Cocoa Prayer

1. Measure two tablespoons of cocoa powder. Taste it (it's bitter). Pray for some of the things that are bitter in your life and a little hard to take on their own.
2. Measure and add 1–2 tablespoons of sugar or sweetener. Taste it (it's sweet). Offer a prayer of thanks for all the things that are sweet in your life and are perhaps best in small doses.
3. Add a pinch of salt. Taste it (it's salty). Offer a prayer for moments of grace and clarity, experiences that bring out the flavour of life.
4. Warm some milk (or milk beverage) while reflecting on when you have experienced the Holy in the past day or week. What has warmed your heart?
5. Mix warmed milk beverage with hot chocolate mixture. Taste it (it's yummy). Give thanks to God and enjoy.

Blessings Cube

Before every meal roll a die to pick your blessing. Paste a different prayer or blessing on each side of a cube or large die (or number 6 blessings and read the blessing of the number rolled). Here are 6 blessings to start with; be creative and create your own family favourites.

1. We love our bread, we love our butter; but most of all we love each other. (*Madeline* by Ludwig Bemelmans)
2. For each new morning with its light; For rest and shelter of the night; For health and food; For love and friends; For everything Thy goodness sends. Amen. (Ralph Waldo Emerson)
3. (sing to the tune of "Frère Jacques") We are thankful, we are thankful. We are glad, we are glad, for the many blessings, for the many blessings, that we have, that we have. Amen. (Unknown)
4. God is great, God is good. Let us thank God for our food.
5. For food that stays our hunger; for rest that brings us ease; for homes where memories linger; we give our thanks for these.
6. Be present at our table, Lord. Be here and everywhere adored. Thy people bless, and grant that we may feast in paradise with thee. (John Wesley)

Joy Jar

Create a list or Joy Jar of 105 things that bring you joy. Write or share 15 things that bring you joy (you could do 5 per meal) each day on separate sheets of paper and add it to your Joy Jar. Keep your Joy Jars somewhere prominent (like on your kitchen table or under your Christmas tree) and make sure to give thanks for all of the little things that bring you and your loved ones joy each day. On days when you are having a hard time giving thanks, dip into your Joy Jar.

Rule of Life

How do you hope to improve or enhance your spiritual health this year? What steps can you take to deepen your relationship with Jesus? How do you grow closer to people in your life whom you love? One way to strengthen your spiritual health is to develop a rule of life, which is sort of like a guideline or goal for your daily behaviour. Many have attributed a rule of life from the writings and teachings of Martin Luther King Jr. (particularly from his instructions to demonstrators). This rule includes things like: meditate daily on the teaching and life of Jesus, walk and talk in the manner of love, and seek to perform regular service for others and the world. What would be included in your Rule of Life?

Create your own rule and place it somewhere prominent so that you are reminded of it every day.