

TLC—Total Lifelong Catechesis
Home Kit
Prayer in the Church—WEEK 3

Before you Begin:

Set table with a religious article (a crucifix, statue of Jesus or Mary, and/or a candle are examples). Be prepared with Bible, Catechism, Children's Folders (Textbook and Assignments), and supplies of pencil or pen.

Start with Family Prayer

Merry Christmas! This week join hands and take one minute of quiet time as you think about all the blessings God has given you this week, especially as we remember and celebrate the gift of baby Jesus coming into the world. Have everyone share and thank God for these blessings.

The Holy Spirit teaches all of us in the Church to pray.

Scripture, the liturgy, and the virtues of faith, hope and charity are all sources of prayer.

Regular prayers of the Church include daily prayer, the Liturgy of the Hours, Sunday Eucharist, and the feast of the liturgical year.

The Holy Spirit also brings prayer into the home.

The family is the very first school of prayer.

As a child, Jesus first learned to pray from Mary and Joseph.

Prayers that we say as a family are important and could include meal prayers and the Rosary.

Mothers and Fathers have an important role in teaching their children to pray.

Discussion with your Family

The Holy Spirit teaches us to pray. Have each family member recite the words, "Come Holy Spirit".

* Remember to call upon the Holy Spirit whenever you need help and guidance.

Everybody needs a little TLC!

+ ON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS +

Lessons in holiness from the pro's who have gone before us

Saint James

Feast Day: July 25

St. James is called James the Greater, possibly because he followed Christ before the other apostle named James. Very early in his public life, Jesus called James to follow him. Along with Peter and John, James was one of the favored three to witness the Transfiguration of Jesus, the raising of Jairus's daughter, and the agony in the garden on Holy Thursday night.

James and John were known as Boanerges, which means “sons of thunder.” They seem to have had strong tempers. We read in [Matthew 20:20-28](#) that the mother of James and John once asked Jesus to give her sons a high position in his kingdom. When Jesus asked the two brothers if they could endure the same suffering he was going to endure, they both said yes.

We do not know very much about James' life. Tradition says he may have traveled to Spain. During the Middle Ages there was a famous shrine to St. James at Compostela in Spain. Luke records in the Acts of the Apostles: “It was about this time that King Herod started persecuting certain members of the Church. He beheaded James, the brother of John” (Acts 12:1-2). James is thought to have been the first apostle martyred.

St. James is a very popular saint in England, where more than four hundred churches are dedicated to him.



<http://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/saints/saints-stories-for-all-ages/saint-james>

GOSPEL READING
The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)
December 25, 2016

John 1:1-5, 9-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came to be through him, but the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, but his own people did not accept him.

But to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to those who believe in his name, who were born not by natural generation nor by human choice nor by a man's decision but of God. And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

<http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/122516-day.cfm>

Family Connection

At Christmas we celebrate the great mystery that God became flesh and dwelt among us. We call this mystery the *Incarnation* (the word means "to take on flesh"), and it changes everything. Today's Gospel reminds us that we can also look upon the Nativity from God's perspective to better appreciate the significance of the Incarnation. The mystery we proclaim at Christmas is that God, the very God who created all things from nothing and who is light itself, took on our humanity in order to transform us. Through his birth among us, we have seen the face of God and have become nothing less than God's own children. At this awesome mystery, we adore.

Gather as a family around your Nativity set. Keep this image before you and talk about how familiar we are with this scene. Invite members of the family to recall the details of Jesus' birth that we hear in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Observe that the Gospel of John invites us to consider Jesus' birth from a different perspective. Read together today's Gospel, John 1:1-14.

John's Gospel reminds us that the image we see in our Nativity set is a most remarkable sight: God made himself at home with us by taking on flesh and becoming a human person. We call this mystery the Incarnation. What are some of the things that John's Gospel says happened for us because Jesus came to dwell among us? (Light overcame darkness; we see God's glory in Jesus; we became children of God.) Together thank God for this mystery of the Incarnation and the salvation that we received because Jesus was born among us. Sing together a Christmas hymn, such as "O Come, All Ye Faithful" or "Silent Night."

<http://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/liturgical-year/sunday-connection/nativity-of-the-lord-christmas-mass-during-the-day>

GOSPEL READING
Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God
January 1, 2017

Luke 2:16-21

The shepherds went in haste to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known the message that had been told them about this child. All who heard it were amazed by what had been told them by the shepherds. And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told to them.

When eight days were completed for his circumcision, he was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

<http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/010117.cfm>

Family Connection

After the shepherds receive the good news from the angel, they follow the sign to find the savior. They tell everyone they meet, including Joseph and Mary that this child is indeed special, the Son of God and Savior of the world. It is hard for people to understand what all this means; even Mary, still young in her faith journey, can't fully grasp all that the shepherds say. We are told, however, that she kept the words of the shepherds in her heart...words that she would reflect on throughout her life. Eight days later, Mary and Joseph take Jesus to the temple where he is named Jesus.

When we first held our children in our arms, we wondered so many things about them. Who will they become? What will they do with their lives? What will their growing up years yield? Like Mary, we "held these things in our hearts" and probably are still holding. But, what we can learn from Mary? She trusted, though not fully understanding. What thoughts would have gone through her mind knowing that the name "Jesus" meant "savior"? We don't know our own future or the future of our children. What we do know is that God loves us enough and wants us to share in the kingdom enough that he gave us his Son.

Today would be a good day to remember the sacrament of Baptism and connect it to the ritual action of naming Jesus in the temple. Take some time after a meal or at the end of the day to talk about every family member's name, what their name means, why they were named as they were, who else in the family (or family history) shares the names, and family stories connected with the name. Share symbols, photographs, and memories from family baptisms.

http://faithfirstlectionary.com/gospelreflections/?page_id=164

GOSPEL READING

The Epiphany of the Lord

January 8, 2017

Matthew 2:1-12

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, He inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it has been written through the prophet: *And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; since from you shall come a ruler, who is to shepherd my people Israel.*"

Then Herod called the magi secretly and ascertained from them the time of the star's appearance. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search diligently for the child. When you have found him, bring me word, that I too may go and do him homage." After their audience with the king they set out. And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was. They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.

<http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/010817.cfm>

Family Connection

The tradition of giving gifts at Christmas is thought by some to be rooted in the gift giving of the Magi. In many cultures, gifts are not exchanged at Christmas, but rather on the feast of the Epiphany. Whenever you exchange your Christmas gifts, take some time to reflect on this tradition of gift giving at Christmas. Think of the best gift you have received. What was it? What made it special? Was it the gift itself, the thought that went into it, or the person who gave it to you?

Read today's Gospel, Matthew 2:1-12. The gifts of the Magi—gold, frankincense, and myrrh—have come to be understood as symbols of Christ's royalty, divinity, and eventual suffering and death. They are special because in giving them, the Magi acknowledge who Jesus was to be: our Savior. We pray that we will acknowledge Jesus as Savior in all that we do and say. Conclude by singing together "We Three Kings."

<http://www.loiyolapress.com/sunday-connection.htm?slD=26745>