

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
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| <p>Read Read Psalm 8 in the morning when the sun is bright and at night when the moon is high. How do the words make you feel each time?</p> <p>Pause - Examen – reviewing the week – thorns, roses and blossoms</p> | <p>Share Take pictures of God's creation. Share at dinner time.</p> <p>Pause Make up a family breath prayer of two short phrases, such as "Creator God, be with us." Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16–17.</p> | <p>Create Start flower seeds in cups or small pots.</p> <p>Pause Thank you prayers Set a timer for every hour between breakfast and lunch or dinner. When it rings, give thanks to God for one thing, a different thing each time. End the day by reading Psalm 100.</p> | <p>Move What do you like to do outside? Ride a bike, skate, walk in the park?</p> <p>Pause Please God remember prayers</p> | <p>Notice Look for signs of hope today—a beautiful flower or a kind act. Read Genesis 1.</p> <p>Pause Help prayers</p> | <p>Help Read Luke 10:25–34. What can you do to help a neighbor?</p> <p>Pause Oops! prayers</p> | <p>Play Play a game your family enjoys. Take turns with family members choosing a game.</p> <p>Pause Wow! prayers</p> |
| <p>Read Listen to <i>God's Dream</i> read by Desmond Tutu on YouTube. What is God's dream for our world? What is yours?</p> <p>Pause Help prayers</p> | <p>Share Select a topic, such as forgiving others. Each family member has one minute to talk about the topic. Others can ask questions if time remains.</p> <p>Pause Thank you prayers</p> | <p>Create Cut a 1-2 inch square in file cards, one for each family member. Tape it at eye level to a window. What do you see when you look through the hole? How does it change from time to time? Thank God for all creation.</p> <p>Pause Please God remember prayers</p> | <p>Move Try practicing yoga together. Watch a YouTube video.</p> <p>Pause Breath prayers</p> | <p>Notice Take turns at a meal, with one person sharing their favorite family story.</p> <p>Pause Examen – thorns, roses, blossoms</p> | <p>Help Do something nice for a family member today, but do it without the person knowing. Reveal your good deeds at the end of the day. Read Matthew 22:36–40.</p> <p>Pause Wow! prayers</p> | <p>Play Exchange a game with a friend.</p> <p>Pause Oops! prayers</p> |
| <p>Read Listen to <i>Who Is My Neighbor?</i> read on Flyaway Books Facebook page. What kind of neighbor are you? How can your family be good neighbors? You can also read this in Luke 10:25–37.</p> <p>Pause Oops! prayers</p> | <p>Share Select a topic such as names for God. Each family member has one minute to talk about the topic. Others can ask questions if time remains.</p> <p>Pause Wow! prayers</p> | <p>Create Read 1 Thessalonians 1:1–2. Make a greeting card of joy to send to someone you miss or someone who needs a happy card from you.</p> <p>Pause Examen</p> | <p>Move Plan a walk or hike where you've never been before.</p> <p>Pause Breath prayers</p> | <p>Notice Look for a familiar hymn or song of faith on YouTube. Sing along. Read Colossians 3:16.</p> <p>Pause Thank you prayers</p> | <p>Help Call or email someone in your church family. Read about the early church family in Acts 2:42–47 and 4: 32–35.</p> <p>Pause Please God remember prayers</p> | <p>Play Start a jigsaw puzzle together.</p> <p>Pause Help prayers</p> |
| <p>Read Listen to Sandy Sasso read <i>When God Gave Us Words</i> on her Facebook Page. What are kind words? What words hurt? What's your favorite word?</p> <p>Pause Thank you prayers</p> | <p>Share Plan and prepare a meal together. If possible, eat outdoors. Talk about the meals Jesus ate with his friends. Read Luke 22:1–20.</p> <p>Pause Breath prayers</p> | <p>Create Listen to Bobby McFerrin sing the 23rd Psalm on YouTube. Use art supplies you have and illustrate anything you hear.</p> <p>Pause Please God remember prayers</p> | <p>Move Spring cleaning Select a room that everyone helps to clean, even drawers and closets. When you finish, talk about how working together helps everyone. Read Ephesians 4:1–16.</p> <p>Pause Wow! prayers</p> | <p>Notice What do you hear, see, feel or smell in nature today? If you have a birdfeeder, notice the kinds of birds that come to eat.</p> <p>Pause Oops! prayers</p> | <p>Help Do you have neighbors who live alone? Check on them once or twice a week to see how they are doing.</p> <p>Pause Examen</p> | <p>Play What outside games can you set up to play?</p> <p>Pause Help prayers</p> |

Nurturing a Child's Spirituality (and your own)

A very simple definition of children's spirituality might be: God's ways of being with children and children's ways of being with God. For Christians, this definition helps us to remember that children's spirituality starts with God—it is not something adults have to initiate. God and children (regardless of age or intellect) have ways of being together because this is how God created them. The difficulty comes in trying to appreciate, and support the ambiguous forms these ways can take. Rebecca Nye, *Children's Spirituality, What It Is and Why It Matters* (London: Church House Publishing, 2009) 6.

Connecting Faith and Life

In these challenging days, parents are trying to be teachers in addition to everything else you are already doing. Add to that, teaching about faith. Remember that nurturing your child's growth in the life of Christian faith means that you are also nurturing your own. So practices of faith that sustain you can also be life-giving for your family. They can be simple. This daily calendar selects seven practices. They are meant to be suggestive and you will be able to come up with some of your own ideas. As people of faith we:

Read – We read the Bible and Bible storybooks and books that help children and youth make connections between ancient biblical stories and living faithfully as disciples of Jesus today.

Share – At the heart of all world religions are texts about sharing what we have with others. In these difficult days, there is enough if we share. Perhaps when all this is over, we will all have discovered new ways to share who we are and what we have with others.

Create – Sometimes we must tap into that creative place that God has placed in each one of us. What is it for you and your family — art, music, poetry, photography, drama, fiber/cloth? Creating as a spiritual practice connects us with God's most incredible creative act described in the two stories of creation in Genesis 1–2:4a and 2:4b–22.

Move – We live in the bodies which we have been given. Caring for our bodies is a spiritual practice. As a parent you know how important it is to get out and get moving, exercising muscles. It is a great way for caring for our whole being.

Notice – When we are attentive to our surroundings, noticing what we see, hear, feel, it can be as if we see with God's eyes. When we pause to notice, it means we slow down. And in days like these, we certainly have time to slow down and to pause and notice the song of the birds, the eyes of a neighbor who steps outside to breathe fresh air.

Help – There is that incredible story in Matthew 25:31–40 when Jesus reminded disciples and those who would follow him that when they fed those who are hungry, or visited those in prison, or gave clothes to those who needed them — they were doing that for him. It's a challenge when we are all trying to survive to think about helping others but it's possible.

Play – Time together as a family playing a board game, or a game of corn hole on the grass or watching a movie helps everyone remember how good it is to laugh, to play, to just be together.

Kinds of prayers

There are so many different kinds of prayers. We help children and youth become at home with prayers by encouraging them to say prayers. Prayers can be formal as the kind you hear in worship or they can be as simple as those uttered spontaneously like when you see a beautiful flower or see someone helping someone else and you say "Thank you God..." Try keeping small glass jars or votive candle holders or even cups or classes on your dining table. Mark them this way: Thank You, Oops!, Wow!, Please remember, Help! Have small sticky notes and a pencil or pen so everyone can write something each day for one or more of the prayers. These simple words represent the basic kinds of prayers we pray to God:

Thanksgiving – Thank you

Confession – Oops!

Intercession – Please remember – when we are praying for someone else

Petition – Help – prayers of petition to God for something we need help with

Adoration – Wow! – praise for something we see, hear, experience in God's world

Examen – This is an ancient spiritual practice of reviewing the day — in the language of children/youth — sads and glads or thorns and roses or thorns, roses, and blossoms. These are the hard parts of the day, good parts of the day or a blossom — things I'm looking forward to. Or another way to practice the Examen is to think about the places where you saw God's love being shared, places where you shared God's love or where you received God's love from someone.

Breath – such a simple prayer form – the prayer you can say with one breath, in and out: "Be with me, Jesus". "Be still and know that I am God."

Created by Elizabeth Caldwell and Carol Wehrheim May 2020