

Make your home a church

Your home can be a domestic church in which you meet God every day. Try these suggestions for creating a sacred space:

Give prayer a central place in your home. Cover a table with a special cloth in the color of the liturgical season. Add a crucifix and small statues or pictures of saints, a family Rosary, a Bible, and add a candle. Leave space to kneel before it. No space for a prayer table? Fill a large basket with pillows, your Bible and some Rosaries, and take it wherever you can gather for prayer. Use it often.



Add sacred objects. Put a crucifix in every room, add holy water fonts, put up icons. Displaying sacred objects in each room of your home will help your family to remember that God is always with you.

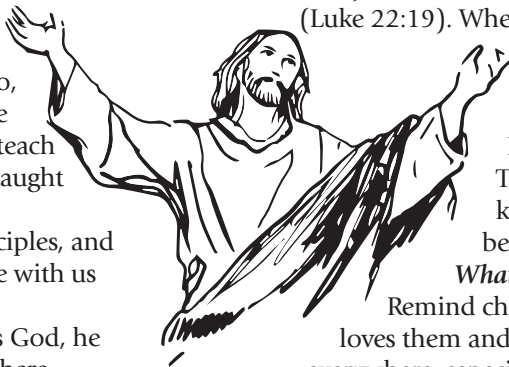
Start personal spiritual traditions. Pick days that are special to each of you – birthdays, patron saint feast days, anniversaries. Sing favorite hymns, recite prayers that you write yourselves. Read your favorite Scripture story or verse.

Scripture LESSON

Matthew 28:16-20, "I will be with you always."

Jesus appeared to the Apostles on the mountain-top in Galilee so the crowd with them could see the Resurrected Christ and get their final instructions: to go, baptize and make disciples, and to teach them all he had taught them. Jesus also promised his disciples, and us, that he will be with us always.

Because Jesus is God, he is present everywhere. However, we encounter him in a special way in the Sacraments, especially in Holy Communion. At the Last Supper, Jesus took bread and wine, blessed



them and gave them to his disciples, saying, "This is my body ... (this is my blood) ... Do this in memory of me" (Luke 22:19). When the priest prays

over the bread and wine at Mass, they become Jesus' Body and Blood. This is how Jesus keeps his promise to be with us always.

What can a parent do?

Remind children that Jesus loves them and is with them everywhere, especially in the Sacraments. Tell them that in every Catholic church where the Eucharist is kept, Jesus is really present, waiting to spend time with them.

Parent TALK

When my father died, we began visiting the cemetery regularly to pray for him. I noticed that some of the



surrounding graves looked neglected. They had dead flowers or mildew obscured the name on the stone. It was sad that the people buried there had no one

to take care of their memorials.

Prior to our next trip, we picked up cleaning supplies. We spiffed up the tombstones and cleaned up the areas around the graves. We said a prayer over each tombstone we cleaned for the person it named.

"Why are we doing this?" Tessa asked. "The dead people won't care."

I explained that caring for graves and praying for the people they contain is considered "burying the dead" – one of the Corporal Works of Mercy the Church asks us to do for others. I reminded the children that whatever kindness we do for others, we do for Jesus.

Feasts & Celebrations

May 1 – St. Joseph the Worker (1st century). Entrusted with the care of the Blessed Mother and Jesus, Joseph was a carpenter dedicated to his family and obedient to God.

May 20 – Pentecost (1st century). Today, we celebrate the birthday of the Church, when the Holy Spirit was given to the Apostles following the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus.

May 27 – St. Augustine of Canterbury (604). Despite mistakes and failures, Augustine persevered as a missionary in rough and dangerous

times in England. Wisely, he purified and retained local customs into Christian rites. His efforts would eventually bear fruit in the conversion of England after his death.

May 30 – St. Joan of Arc (1431). The patron saint of France, St. Joan was inspired by God in a vision to lead the French to victory during the Hundred Year's War against England. Her troops successfully freed Orléans from the English. She was captured, sold to the English, and falsely accused of sorcery. She was canonized in 1920.



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