



# family MATTERS

## THE MONTH OF JUNE

hello  
summer

School is out and summer break has begun. Is your summer busier than the school year? Whatever your story, it's crucial that a break from school doesn't turn into a break from God. As your schedule changes from homework, and extra-curricular activities to family vacations, baseball, and family bbq's, it is important that your family stay focused on the one thing that never changes, your Heavenly Father.

## What will you do as a family to keep Jesus a part of your summer routine?

READ

**Read together as a family**, the bible (a paragraph a night), a novel, your favorite prayer book.

Reading together as a family exercises our God-given imaginations, it gives families a chance to spend quality time together, it helps to grow attention spans (reading isn't always easy, and reading aloud takes a high level of concentration). Reading a book together is a journey of shared experiences. Sharing these experiences become memories to our family. Hopefully, our kids will carry memories like these into their own families some day.

*Bless my reading Lord.  
May it unite me to your will, open me to your wisdom, and relax me into your arms.  
May the words that I read lead me closer to you.  
Amen*

GO TO CHURCH

**Go to church as a family.** A child learns mostly by doing. They also learn by watching what the parents do. Be careful, your children are paying attention to you. When you attend church as a family you are sending a very concrete and strong message to your child about who they are and who their family is. They know that they go to church, and that Mom and Dad do too. Many families can find attending mass challenging. Attending mass as a family may mean sacrifices, but it is essential for the life of our souls. Our faithful mass attendance sets a good example of what we parents and their extended family values. Going to Mass as a family and celebrating the great things that God has done for us through Jesus and the Saints at Mass can help strengthen our bond and instill morals and values in your children's lives, creating togetherness and traditions. When you establish your own family routine on Sunday, you are creating your own family traditions.

PRAY

### 5 Simple Ways to Pray together as a Family

1. Pray at meal time: Make the sign of the Cross and have the kids simply say, "Thank you, Jesus." Or, you may say the "Bless us O Lord..." prayer, or whatever other words of thanks to God may be on your heart! These are great reminders for the whole family, about where all good things ultimately come from.
2. Bless each other: Parents can offer a blessing by tracing the sign of the cross on their children's foreheads, and children can return the favor. This simple practice welcomes God into your relationships and reminds all that "our" family belongs to God.
3. Wonder at Creation: Help your children to recognize and adore the glory of God in all things: in the ocean; the night sky; the forest; etc. The awe experienced through His creation can point the family toward God and help to appreciate His power, goodness, and love.
4. Say sorry: When you or your children find yourselves in a situation that requires an apology as remedy, be sure to apologize to God, as well. This will help the family remember its duty to live well in relation to both God and neighbor.
5. Pray through joys and sorrows: Families can pray together in thanksgiving for a good day and for God's help in difficult times. Praying through both good and bad reminds the family of God's presence and that he answers all prayers as He sees fit. Prayer need not be difficult. A family can pray simply by living among one another. In addition to attending Sunday Mass, read scripture together, visit the adoration chapel, pray the Rosary.



The Rosary stops a busy family in its tracks, quiets the world's noise, gathers us together, and focuses us on God and not ourselves. This does wonders for a family psychologically and emotionally. -Tom Hoopes