

Fr. Martin's Reflection – February 19, 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This coming week begins the season of Lent - time for renewal and reflection. A time to re-focus on what is important for me personally, for my family and for my parish. There are so many things that we can do for lent, but I would love to highlight one important thing that will change the dynamics of your family for ever, **Family Prayer**. Family Prayer helps to introduce our young people to the importance and benefits of prayer. Prayer for an individual can help us focus, to calm ourselves, and realize there is a greater power that can help us through all things. Family Prayer can help the family to focus, to calm situations, and as a family, realize that there is a greater power that will help us through the difficulties of life. In our modern world many have moved away from or never established family prayer, so it is difficult to find a way to start. I would like to give a few suggestions:

- Have a discussion with the family on why you want to begin family prayer. Some reasons could be for the needs of the family e.g. school, health, work, bereavement.
- Choose a regular time that is best for all and has the least chance of interruptions. Some of you may have heard me speak about how I give up watching TV for Lent. Could you as a family chose a 'No TV Evening?'
- Keep it simple: quiet down, sign of the cross, an Our Father, Hail Mary & Glory be followed by the needs of the day – the ups and downs – the joys and celebrations and upcoming events and happenings. Finish with an Our Father, Hail Mary & Glory be.
- As the family becomes more comfortable with each other praying together then introduce scripture (the up-coming Sunday gospel) or other reflection pieces.

I have said it many times before that I have no problem with people taking the missal from the church to use at home for prayer and reflection – maybe Lent would be a good time. I also realize that modern technology allows us to download many kinds of apps – there are good faith and Catholic apps to suit all your needs, have a look around.

I would like to leave with a verse from Psalm 92 which I feel is very beautiful and a wonderful reflective piece:

“It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praise to your name, O Most High, to proclaim your kindness at dawn and your faithfulness throughout the night.” Ps 92

May you have a very a blessed Lent – open your heart to the voice of God who wishes to speak to each of us each day.

Fr. Martin