



# Home Rituals — Introduction

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St. Ignatius Loyola Parish

Volume 1 — Introduction

## Pandemic Drives Us to New (Old) Ways to Pray.

- House Churches, a history of praying at home
- Mass online, celebrating liturgy in the digital age.
- A Spirituality that incorporates the old and the new.

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## During the Pandemic: If you can HomeSchool, why not HomeChurch as well.

**House Churches:** Many of us are staying at home due to the new corona virus. That staying at home includes “attending church” via television, radio or Facebook livestreams. While this may seem unusual to us now, the church has a great tradition of “house churches”. Franciscan media lists a number of references in the New Testament of homes where early Christians gathered for prayer and eucharist. (<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/house-churches-in-the-new-testament/>) When a new parish was being formed it was not unusual for church services to be held in a hall or home awaiting a time when a chapel or church might be built. It seems that most of us have come to associate the church setting as the sole or most appropriate place for prayer and worship. This is quite unfortunate since

it is in the home where we first learn our faith, our prayers and how God acts in our lives.

When will we be able to “go back to church”? Some experts predict it might be a year or more before the development of a vaccine that will allow us to return to group interactions, let alone worship. So, we need to consider adapting our lives and our worship in new ways to support both prayer and community. Every week about 30 individuals and couples gather for the parish town hall via Zoom. Hundreds log in and watch our Sunday 10 a.m. liturgy either live or as a recorded video. Yet we yearn for more. What else can we do to help us in this time of isolation to “build church” and support our growth in faith?



**There are possibilities for all sorts of rituals at home. These are great teaching moments.**

## Praying Together at Home:

[PathwaystoGod.org](https://www.pathwaystogod.org/resources/ignatian-insight/five-tips-enjoy-digital-celebration-fullest) proposes some simple steps to help make online liturgies more fruitful. Simple steps like **“Say the prayers aloud, stand or kneel, as if you were celebrating in your church.”** It may sound dumb, but we are embodied people and our bodies remember the movements and gestures of reverence.

(<https://www.pathwaystogod.org/resources/ignatian-insight/five-tips-enjoy-digital-celebration-fullest>) Still, our faith is more than Sunday liturgies. For instance, how can I make a “church visit” when places of worship are locked down?

Maybe it’s time for a new way of praying and sharing—stuff that we can do at home with

our own little lockdown community. Instead of just adjusting education to “homeschooling”, let’s begin adjusting faith to “home-churching” with some rituals that will deepen our prayer and awareness of God in our home lives. What we hope to send along to our parish families are some suggestions for developing your own family rituals. They will probably feel

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### Finding God in All Things

What stories do you remember in Scripture of Mary and Joseph taking Jesus to Church? You may recall the Feast of the Presentation with Simeon and Anna (Luke 2:22-40). This is followed by the story of Jesus staying behind at the Temple (Luke 2:41-52). And while the story says that Joseph and Mary traveled annually to Jerusalem for the Passover Festival, there are no other mentions of the Family at temple. Where did Jesus learn so much about scripture and tradition? We can imagine a local synagogue, but there was probably so much learned at home from parents and from extended family. Many of the Jewish customs were celebrated in the home.

What religious customs do you celebrate at home?

Our Sunday, 10 a.m. liturgy is online either live on Facebook (link at [loyoladenver.org](http://loyoladenver.org)) or recorded and linked under "Video Resources"

### Praying Together at Home (cont.)

awkward at first, but repetition will help that to pass.

For many families this idea is not new. Many different cultures have evolved devotions and practices of familial piety. That might be singing church hymns while cooking and cleaning, kneeling for night prayers, mealtime blessings and a holy place within the home where folks gather during times of storm or great concern. If you wish, you may want to send along to the parish or simply share them directly with other families. St. Ignatius in his pragmatism

used say "use what works" when it comes to prayer. Try it out, see what works and share your success with others.

We would like to know "what works" and be able to share that with the rest of the community. If you have a home church ritual that you use and wish to share with others, send it along to Fr. Pat [FrPat@LoyolaDenver.org](mailto:FrPat@LoyolaDenver.org). We will share some of these through our the "connect" link of our website.

Of course, you're free to share and/or talk about these topics with others yourself, building up a parish dialog of homechurch practices.



It's different without you here.