



Home Rituals

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St. Ignatius Loyola Parish

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Introducing Rituals into your Home.

- * Back to School Prayers
- * Examen for Return to School
- * Back-to-School lessons for Finding God.
- * Saints for Students

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Happy New Year (Back to School)

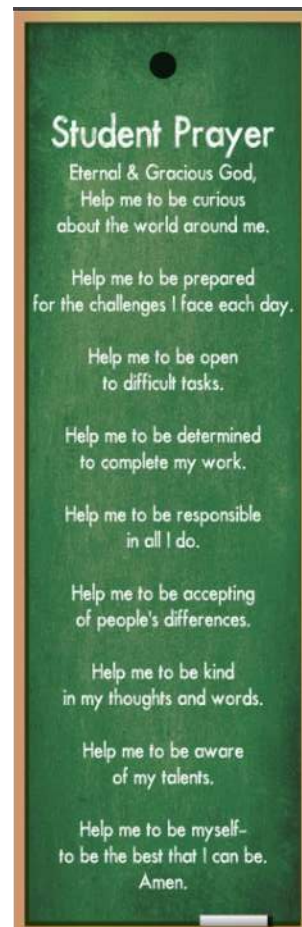
Introduction

For many of us our year revolves around the school calendar. This is true for all of us whether we are in school, have children in school or neither of these. We all know (and some hope for) that time when school begins once again.

Now we can look to the school year with an eye to academic and social development, we can also look forward to the year from a more prayerful perspective. For instance, what do you hope for your child this year in school? Do you hope that they might grow in grace as well as knowledge and wisdom? What is your prayer to God for your child? What prayers do you teach your child at this point in their life—do they pray for their teachers and classmates, do they pray for the ability to be caring to their classmates, do they pray for the grace to know that God is with them at school? You may wish to look at some of our adapted prayers and see what you would like to include in your prayers and what you might want to teach your children.

Part of the Jesuit framework of Spirituality is the cornerstone of the Examen—a looking back over the day to see where God has been, what God may have been calling us to and how we responded. An Examen for Returning to School will be included. You may wish to use this with your child as a simple series of questions sparking a conversation with you and with God about their return. Feel free to adapt as you see fit.

Denise Gorss wrote a little reflection on Six-Back-to-School Lessons for Finding God. Again, take this opportunity to adapt and encourage your children to seek God in their school day as well.



Student Prayer bookmarks @

<https://www.growchristians.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/student-prayer-bookmark.pdf>

Home Rituals

Prayers for Students

Xavier University (Cincinnati) has maintained a number of resources for Jesuit spirituality. Their website <https://www.xavier.edu/jesuitresource/> is a treasure trove of items but geared towards those college aged or older. Nevertheless, prayers for students whether college aged or younger still reflect the hopes and desires of parents and guardians. You may wish to read through these prayers and adapt for your own child. The following was offered by Aaron Meis:

Student's Prayer

This prayer appeared in the pastor's blog <http://concordpastor.blogspot.com/2009/08/going-back-to-school-let-us-pray.html>. It might be something you would want to have your children recite while in the car on the way to school. There are companion prayers for teachers and for parents as well. These prayers have been occasionally updated (2012, 2015), look for the links to updates in the postings.

A Prayer for Our Students

I pray for:

Strength - that God gives them the strength to do what they need to do each day.

Courage - that they will be brave as they face the challenges that are before them.

Peace - that their hearts will be calm and peaceful as they go through their day and in their sleep at night.

Provision - asking God to provide for all that they need - for stamina, spirit, and finances - for each day.

Direction - that they will be led to embrace what is good and right.

Protection - that God keeps them safe in this increasingly unsafe world and protects them from harm and wickedness.

Joy - that God fills them with the kind of bliss joy that can only come from the Divine.

Compassion - that they will show compassion on those in need and who have less than they do.

Justice - to give them a sense of justice to stand up for what is right and to defend the weak.

Wisdom - that they will grow in knowledge and understanding.

Hope - to give them the hope that comes from above - the kind that far exceeds what we have in the here and now.

Love - that our children are filled with the love of God. That they will know how deeply they are loved, and that love will overflow onto others.

A Student's Prayer

Dear Lord,

Help me to be the best student I can be.

Help me to study well and to study often, especially when I don't feel like studying at all.

Help me to be honest when I'm tempted to cheat.

Help me to listen to my teachers and my coaches.

Help me to play fair and to play safely.

Help me to be kind to everyone at school and especially to those whom others treat unkindly.

Help me to treat others as I would like them to treat me.

Help me to be a good friend to others.

Help me to help others who need my help.

Help me to do the best work I can do.

Help me to use all the gifts you have given me.

Help me to love and respect my parents.

Help me to trust in you, Lord, and in your love for me.

Help me, Lord, I need you!

Amen.

Children's Examen

We make the sign of the cross:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

- ◇ Can you think of five to ten things that happened today?
- ◇ What did you most enjoy about today? ... Tell God what you enjoyed ...
- ◇ Did anything make you feel sad? ...
- ◇ Are you finding it difficult not being able to play out with friends?
- ◇ What friends do you want God to bless today? ...
- ◇ Who else needs your prayers? ...
- ◇ Think of someone who might be lonely or unwell ...
Pray for them in your own words ...
- ◇ And ask God for what you and your family need ...

Thank God for your day.

We make the sign of the cross again:

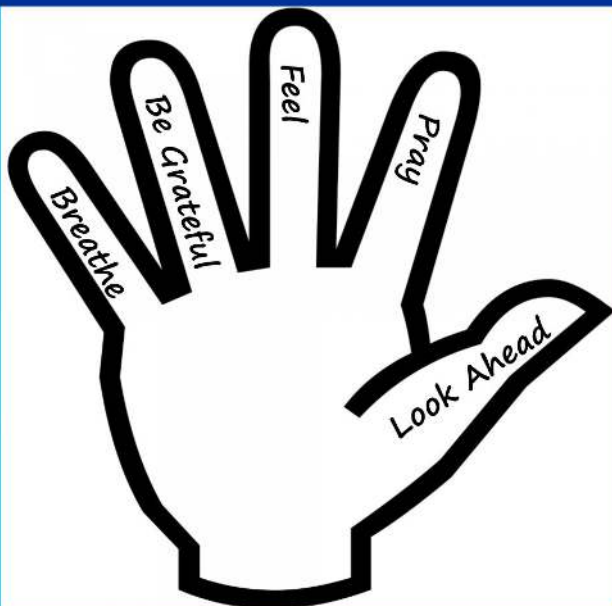
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

We all have our hopes for our children as they head off to school. But what about the end of the day? Do you have a way to reflect on the day, to see where God has been. The Examen (left) has been adapted for children by Pray-As-You-Go. The children may do this on their own or maybe as part of an evening meal, or as part of bedtime prayers.

Audio:

<https://pray-as-you-go.org/player/prayer%20tools/aspECIALexamenforchildren>

5-Finger Daily Examen for Children



@ Training Happy Hearts

Examen Adapted for Children

The blog "Training Happy Heart" has a simple, 5 finger version of the Examen you may wish to teach your children. <http://traininghappyhearts.blogspot.com/2015/07/the-5-finger-daily-examen.html> Her post includes various drawings suggestions to "illustrate" the concepts. In addition, Marianne Stanger includes links to a number of other sites that have presentations on the Examen. One of her links is to K.C. Ireton's experience of praying the examen at dinner time with the family. Nothing earth shaking, just a little ritual of prayer, meal and sharing of the day's activities in God's presence. <https://www.kcireton.com/2011/03/25/examen/> K.C. also recommends the book [Sleeping With Bread: Holding What Gives You Life](#) by Dennis Linn, Sheila Fabricant Linn, and Matthew Linn.

Follow the links, you never know what kind of treasures you might discover.

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Finding God in All Things

Continuing our focus on Saints you might just wonder who would be the patron saint of Students? Well, there are many that were teachers, especially of young children. Folks like Jean-Baptiste de La Salle (Christian Brothers) and St. Angela Merici (Ursuline Sisters). There are many examples of stellar saints who were very gifted in their studies, folks like St. Thomas Aquinas or Saint Albert the Great or Saint Catherine of Alexandria. There are also others who are known for their struggles in school, including St. Ignatius of Loyola <https://www.setonmagazine.com/latest-articles/st-ignatius-loyola-patron-saint-of-struggling-students>, St. Joseph of Cupertino <https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day/saint-joseph-of-cupertino> and St. John Vianney <https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day/saint-john-vianney>. It's simply good for you and your children to know that saints don't have to be scholars.

Patron Saints

Don't know if you have ever just scrolled through the list of patron saints. I never knew things like St. Patrick is the patron saint of electrical engineers. I guess if you can explain the Trinity then you can explain concepts like "imaginary power", "Fourier transforms" and "differential equations".



You can browse the list put out by Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_patron_saints_by_occupation_and_activity. Maybe you can browse through the list of suggestions for those choosing a "Confirmation name" <https://lifeteen.com/blog/biggest-best-list-confirmation-saints-guys-girls/>. Or maybe choose from the list that some have compiled for choosing the name for your baby https://www.babycenter.com/0_baby-names-inspired-by-saints_10305359.bc. Still, they don't include St. Patrick, so beware the lists.

Then there's that group that Pope Francis calls the ordinary or middle class saints—the folks that we all have known that inspire us to holiness. Maybe you could work on your list of ordinary patron saints—those who have inspired you to be helpful, joyful, prayerful and hopeful. You know, like my Aunt Opal who worked for the VA and took care of so many people as a



nurse. That and how she always remembered every one of the cousins' birthdays. The kind of person that set both an example and set an environment where you felt safe, appreciated, cared for, loved. Create the list and pass it along to your children. Maybe even ask your children who they would put on the list. It might inspire you or them to become ordinary patron saints ourselves.

