

Family Page

Background Reflection

Relationships grow through communication. Taking the time to talk and listen to another is an important part of strengthening a crucial bond. Our relationship with God requires the same care, and prayer is a key way we can take the time to communicate and grow closer to God.

Prayer can be memorized vocal prayer or silent reflective prayer. And our prayers can express a wide range of emotions and feelings. Prayer is always meant to be from the heart and not merely words coming from our lips. Our heart speaks through our prayer and we grow closer to God through our exchange.

This chapter will explain how our gratitude for all the gifts we have been given can form the basis for prayer to God, especially in the greatest prayer of thanksgiving, the Mass. As you help your child develop his or her understanding of prayer and gratitude, be sure to spend time reflecting on how you can grow your own prayer life and better open your grateful heart to our loving God.

Family Activities

- Create a gratitude journal for your family, and at each family dinner, add a few things from that day that your family is thankful for. You can also include things to be thankful for in the prayer before meals or at bedtime prayer. Help your child to become more aware of things to be thankful for throughout the day.
- Read together the Featured Story on page 1866 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (Colossians 3:15–17). Discuss what this story means to your child and how you can be more thankful to God for all that he has done.
- Watch the video "Thankful (children's Thanksgiving song)" (YouTube, 2:11) together. Take time to create a special prayer of thankfulness to God that your family can pray together.

People of Faith

Saint Clare of Assisi (1193–1253)

Saint Clare was a rich young woman when she heard Saint Francis preach about being poor and holy. She left her money and her family to follow Francis and his way of life. Other women joined Clare for a life of prayer. Saint Clare's feast day is August 11.

Prayer

Pray this prayer together as a family, beginning and ending with the Sign of the Cross.

God our Father, help us to love you more. May our hearts be filled with thanks for all that you do for us. Amen.

