

Our Family Prayer Time

This time of prayer focuses on the *Hail Mary*. Praying the *Hail Mary* each day will help you understand that Mary loves you and wants to lead you closer to Jesus. Pray the *Hail Mary* two times: the first time for understanding, the second time from the heart.

Follow the steps that are listed below.



Begin your prayer with the Sign of the Cross.

The *Sign of the Cross* affirms our belief in the three Persons of the Triune God and that we are saved by Jesus' death on the cross.

Sign of the Cross

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

Mary, please intercede with God that I may receive the grace to quiet down and become aware of your love for me as my Spiritual Mother. I want to spend this time with You. Please help me to give you my full attention and pray from my heart.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.

Blessed art thou among women,

and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy, Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners

now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

- **THINK** about something you have done wrong today and tell God that you are sorry.
- **PRAY** the *Hail Mary* a second time from the heart, more slowly than the first time.
- **CHOOSE a word** or phrase from the Prayer that you like. Share why you liked this word, if you can, with those with whom you are praying.
- **THANK** Mary, and her Son Jesus, for something good you received. Share this aloud.
- **ASK** the Lord for something that you need. Share this aloud if you can.
- **PRAISE Jesus** using one of His names: my Savior, Good Shepherd, Lamb of God, my Helper.

Close your prayer time with the *Sign of the Cross*.



Dear Parents,

You are the primary educators of your children. It is necessary to help your sons and daughters come to know the Person of Jesus Christ through studying the Catholic Faith, daily conversation with Him in prayer and attending Mass every Sunday with the parish community. The Catholic school teacher or parish catechist will support you as the primary educators of your children.

Learning about God needs to be accompanied by daily prayer in the home so that your child will develop and grow in personal friendship with Him. This friendship with Jesus in turn strengthens your child and all members of the family, as together you walk the path to true happiness – interior peace and joy. While your child will be learning other prayers in the First Grade, the *Hail Mary* is the prayer that will be the specific focus throughout the entire year. Praying and focusing on the *Hail Mary* will allow your child to come to know Mary and her special role in God's plan as the Mother of Jesus and our Spiritual Mother.

Why pray the *Hail Mary* daily?

As our Spiritual Mother, we can turn to Mary and talk with her about anything. She will listen and pray with us. Mary leads us to Jesus and we can learn from her how to be a committed follower of Our Lord. As recorded in the Bible, Mary said, "Do whatever He tells you." (John 2:5) As we speak with our Blessed Mother each day in prayer, we will come to recognize more and more how much she loves us and find **peace** and **calm** in the midst of life's difficulties.

It may be helpful to begin by having your child repeat each phrase after you. Further, praying the *Hail Mary* slowly as a family on a daily basis will make it easier to learn the words. To be consistent, it is essential to choose a specific time that best fits your family life, such as at a meal time, in the morning, in the evening or at bedtime

It is helpful to have a picture or statue of Mary and/or Jesus to help stay focused during prayer time. It is recommended that your family kneel (next to your bed or at a chair) while you pray. We can pray with and to Mary for all of our intentions. Some people, with great respect, call her "Mama" or "Mommy."

It is common to experience **distractions** during prayer. It is important not to follow the distraction, but as you notice it, simply turn back to the prayer at hand. If the same distraction keeps returning, it could be something you will want to talk about with Jesus.

When we pray for something, we can trust that God will answer every prayer, through Mary's intercession, in a way that is best for us. Remember, sometimes the answer will be "yes," sometimes the answer will be "no," and sometimes the answer will be "not now, but later" as God's timing is perfect.

For further suggestions to help your child learn and understand the *Hail Mary* go to www.dioc.org/prayer/ First Grade

