

Creating a sacred space in your home

What does a sacred space look like?

A Sacred space is a designated space in your home where it is easy to sit in the presence of God. It is a very simple, quiet place with either a few or many religious items. It should be distinctly different from the rest of the house so that it is "set apart". However, different does not mean expensive. The sacred space is typically a table-top, like a small table set against a wall, possibly in a corner. You could include a few religious items like:

Possible Items to Include

- Catholic Bible (picture Bible or board book for very little kids)
- Crucifix (small one to pass around for very little kids)
- Prayer Cards
- Sacred art (cutouts from previous year's calendar or Christmas Cards)
- Rosaries
- Candles
- Statue of Mary or other saints
- Holy Water
- Intercessory Prayer Basket
- Pillows for sitting on the floor
- Prayer journals for each family member (remember these are private)

Where is a good place for the sacred space?

Ideally, a sacred space is in a common area but with less foot-traffic so that everyone feels welcome and can pray without a lot of distraction. A corner in the dining room or a secondary living room would be ideal.

If little children will be using the space, then it should be closer to the ground. They can participate in the creation of the space by cutting out sacred art from the previous year's calendar or Christmas cards. They can also make homemade rosaries. Small children enjoy hanging the art on the wall, placing the Bible, crucifix and candle on a small table and placing pillows on the floor. Once the sacred space is set up, the family can **bless it with Holy water with the following prayer:**

"Heavenly Father, we ask you to Bless our sacred space. We ask for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on this space and on our family. Help us to grow closer to you and to each other. In the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen."

What if our space is small?

If you do not have a large area for your sacred space that's OK. It is not essential to have a table in your sacred space. A small placemat that can be rolled up and stored away when not in use will work for holding the Bible, crucifix and candle. A basket or plastic bin can be used to hold your sacred items. The important thing is that your family has a designated area where these items can be placed when in use.

Tips for using sacred items

- Read the Bible. Light the candle when reading the Bible and explain that the Bible is the Word of God and it is so sacred that we light a candle while reading it.
- If your family isn't used to praying an entire Rosary, then start with one Our Father and One Hail Mary. Work your way up to an entire Rosary. Be patient with very small children and let them wander around, look through a board book or color. For children 4 and older, let them lead the Hail Mary by starting the prayer while the rest of the family joins in.
- Use a small crucifix and let each family member hold the crucifix and say a prayer. Silent prayers held in your heart is fine. When the family member is finished praying, pass the crucifix.
- Use a declaration when lighting and extinguishing the candle. Examples
 - Jesus is the light of the world which no darkness will ever over come
 - Jesus is our Savior and he loves us.
 - Our prayers go up to Heaven (when extinguishing the candle)
 - Let little children snuff the candle if you have a candle snuffer
- Have family members put prayer intentions in a basket. Include personal prayers, prayers for other members of the family, extended family, the Church community, our country, etc.... Every day each family member pulls a prayer from the basket and keeps that intention in their prayers.
- Let each family member Bless themselves with Holy Water.
- Choose a prayer card and use that as a closing prayer.
- Keep prayer journals in the sacred space for family members to use privately. Little children should be encouraged to draw pictures in their journal.