



FAMILY PRAYER NIGHT

A Higher Purpose

Strengthen the bonds within our parishes and build faith-filled families. This is an opportunity for council members, their families, and the whole parish community to come together once a month for an evening of prayer, dinner, and fellowship.

Overview

Catholics often struggle with the reality that they do not have the opportunity to socialize and/or pray with other faith-filled Catholic families. It can be quite a challenge to raise our children in the faith when their only exposure comes from Mom and Dad. Put plainly, the majority of our time can easily be spent in secular circles unless we intentionally create ways to live out the domestic church.

Family Prayer Night is an opportunity for children to be exposed to regular people living their faith in a casual setting. Families of council members, as well as other Catholic families within the parish and community, will gather for prayer, dinner and fellowship. Multiple groups can be formed and families are encouraged to rotate between these groups.

Chairman Role and Responsibilities

- Promote attendance at Family Prayer Nights in the parish, council, and community.
- Coordinate which families are willing to host and/or participate in the event.
- Work with participating families to set dates for Family Prayer Nights, well in advance.
- Ensure a welcoming, joyous, and reverent atmosphere at all Family Prayer Nights.
- Complete and submit all associated reporting forms to the Supreme Council Department of Fraternal Mission.

Action Steps

1. Before preparations begin for your Family Prayer Night Program, assess interest among your council, parish, and larger community to see which families would participate. Ask your pastor for his input and suggestions on potential host families.
2. Build public interest before each Family Prayer Night! Promote the event in your parish and larger community through a variety of efforts:
 - Prominently display promotional posters (which can be ordered through Supplies Online)
 - Bulletin announcements
 - Pulpit announcements
 - Posting on your council and parish website/social media pages
3. The Family Prayer Night chairman should strongly consider hosting the first Prayer Night to model the proper format and launch the program.
4. Coordinate a schedule for upcoming Prayer Nights. The same day every month does not necessarily need to be used. That said, families who regularly attend may prefer a certain day of the week. Make sure that Family Prayer Nights are scheduled *three to four months in advance* so that they can be properly advertised and families can plan ahead.



5. Before each event, remind attending families that the meal at Family Prayer Night is potluck-style. Suggest that families bring a side or main dish to share, as their means allow. The Family Prayer Night chairman should work with that month's host family to coordinate the potluck, to the best of his ability.
6. A typical Family Prayer Night should ideally last between two and three hours, with guests leaving as needed. The schedule should include, but not be limited to:
 - Introductory period to meet the other families
 - Prayer in community
 - A fun activity such as a game
 - Meal and social time
 - Concluding prayer
7. On the day of the event, consider wearing Knights of Columbus-branded apparel and bring Knights of Columbus brochures and membership documents (including *Prospect Cards* #921A). Do not forget that this event is a recruiting opportunity!
8. To gain credit for your program, complete the associated reporting forms and submit them to the Supreme Council Department of Fraternal Mission. Remember to retain copies for your council records.

Guidelines

- **Purpose:** The purpose of Family Prayer Night is to embody the domestic church by having a fun gathering of regular people, living their faith in a casual setting. The goal is not to discuss high-level theology, but to simply enjoy family and faith.
- **Prayers:** The prayers said should be Catholic and chosen by Family Prayer Night participants. Allow prayers to be generated organically and relate to the events in the lives of those present, as opposed to following a rigid prescription for the night. If you need help getting started, consider using the resources available in the Knights of Columbus Catholic Information Service *Building the Domestic Church Series*, particularly:
 - #309 - *Prayer Time*
 - #319 - *A Scriptural Rosary for the Family*
 - #304 - *Lord, Teach Us to Pray*
- **Intentions:** There are many life-changing events taking place every day in the lives of our council members and parish families. This group is the perfect place to discuss and to pray for guidance on milestone events such as an upcoming wedding, anniversary or birth. It is also an opportunity to offer support in cases of illness, death or other concern.
- **Family Inclusion:** Since this is a Family Prayer Night, one of the few rules is that every family member should be able to participate, in some form. For example, praying the rosary may be a bit mature for a toddler, but he/she can drop a marble in a cup to count the prayers or place a flower in a vase for every decade. There are simple but meaningful ways to incorporate all into the prayer and joy of the night!
- **Pastor Involvement:** Invite your parish priest, but do not pressure him to preside over the evening. Allow him the opportunity to enjoy the evening as a guest, in the relaxed family atmosphere.
- **Frequency:** Family Prayer Nights are intended to be conducted regularly. In order to fulfill the requirements of the program, Family Prayer Nights should occur at least quarterly, four times during the fraternal year. Hosting more prayer nights is better and monthly Family Prayer Nights are ideal!
- **Speakers:** Consider inviting someone from the parish or council to explain their vocation/job and what brought them to that position – or a more formal Catholic presenter.