**10 Tips for Teaching Your Children to Pray**

**By Dianna Kennedy**

As the mother of five children, finding time to pray can be a distinct challenge.

Another daunting task on my plate? Teaching my children how to pray.

**1. Start simple.**

Set a small goal — in our house, we started out with the Hail Mary. Once your kids have mastered that, move on to another.

**2. Don’t underestimate your children.**

My daughter had the [St. Micheal prayer](http://www.ourladyswarriors.org/prayer/michael.htm) memorized by the time she was 5. I didn’t know she’d been listening that well until one day, she said, “Mom, can I lead it myself?” I was amazed. Even if it seems like your children aren’t paying one bit of attention, they really are hearing you.

**3. Let them see you praying.**

In a perfect world, you’d get up long before the children and be able to sit quietly in prayer. Life as a mother isn’t that neat and tidy. Let your children hear and see you praying as you rock the baby. Encourage them to join in with grace before meals. Give them a chance to lead a prayer before going on a road trip.

**4. Encourage them.**

If my children make it through evening prayers without a meltdown, I praise them — A LOT. Leading my children in the faith is important to me. I want them to know how proud I am of them and how Heaven rejoices when they pray.

**5. Get some kid-friendly equipment.**

Around my house, you’ll find lots of rosaries. We have plastic and wooden ones that I leave out for the children to touch and carry around. We also have [board book Bible stories](http://amzn.to/UJBJNo) and [soft Mary dolls](http://www.etsy.com/listing/100087374/lady-of-guadalupe-doll?ref=sr_gallery_5&ga_search_query=guadalupe+doll&ga_view_type=gallery&ga_ship_to=US&ga_search_type=all) for the baby.

**6. Get your husband involved.**

Be sure and ask your husband to give you a hand. If I’m off nursing the baby to sleep, I’ll often hear my husband leading my children in night prayers. As parents, it’s both of our responsibilities to lead our children to Christ. It warms my heart to watch my husband teach our children our Faith.

**7. Write it down.**

When I began homeschooling, our curriculum called for copy work of prayers. I chose the Hail Mary and Our Father to help reinforce those prayers for Rachel.

**8. Make a joyful noise.**

Prayer doesn’t have to be spoken all the time ….. you can make it a song. We use [Making Music Praying Twice](http://www.makingmusicprayingtwice.com/) at home, singing some of the prayers my children will hear in the liturgy. There are also [children’s prayer CDs](http://www.catholicchild.com/KIDS-SING-FOR-JESUS-CATHOLIC-SONGS-FOR-LITTLE-ONES-CD/productinfo/16906/) to check out as well.

**9. Make it a family priority.**

With many small children, I know it’s hard to take the time out to say prayers before meals, or before bed.

Be persistent. This is a way I connect my family to God and try to show my children just how important prayer can be.

**10. Ask the saints for help.**

Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in teaching your children to pray. Lean on Mary and seek her help in leading your family to Christ.

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