

GUIDELINES FOR A FAMILY PRAYER RULE

**(Taken from *Acquiring the Mind of Christ*,
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- A Prayer Rule must not and cannot be said in the car. It is certainly good to pray when traveling, but the daily Prayer Rule must be done in front of the icons and the Gospel, preferably with a lit candle, and if possible, the room lights dimmed. It is important to remember that we will never have time for God, but rather must *make* time for God, for the “*Kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force*” (Matt. 11:12). The best time to pray is in the morning or in the evening when it is darker.

- Also, when using a Rule of Prayer, we must be flexible and do what we can do attentively and consistently. Our goal is to maintain the connection with God and cultivate a real relationship, not just fulfill our “rule” of prayer.

- The tempo of saying the Jesus Prayer can vary; if we are distracted, then we pray quickly; if we are relaxed, slowly.

- The Jesus Prayer is not a mantra or vain repetition. The words are a profoundly meaningful confession by which we begin our dialogue with God in fulfillment of the Lord's words: “*Whatever you ask in My Name, that I will do*” (John 14:13).

- We need to read the words of our Lord every day, at least one chapter. A consecutive reading of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John throughout the year greatly aids us in understanding and doing God's will.

A FAMILY PRAYER RULE

The Trisagion Prayers

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

Glory to Thee, O God, glory to Thee.

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere and fillest all things; Treasury of blessings and Giver of Life: Come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (*three times*)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, cleanse us from our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (*three times*)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Lord, have mercy. (*three times*)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Come let us worship God our King. Come let us worship and fall down before Christ our King and God. Come let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and our God.

- *Psalm 50 (if desired)*

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy; and according to the multitude of Thy compassions blot out my transgression. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee only have I sinned and done this evil before Thee, that Thou mightest be justified in Thy words, and prevail when Thou art judged. For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother bear me. For behold, Thou hast loved truth; the hidden and secret things of Thy wisdom hast Thou made manifest unto me. Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow. Thou shalt make me to hear joy and gladness; the bones that be humbled, they shall rejoice. Turn Thy face away from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and with Thy governing Spirit establish me. I shall teach transgressors Thy ways, and the ungodly shall turn back unto Thee. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation; my tongue shall rejoice in Thy righteousness, O Lord, Thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Thy praise. For if Thou hadst desired sacrifice, I would have given it; with whole-burnt offerings Thou shalt not be pleased. A sacrifice unto God is a broken spirit; a heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise. Do good, O Lord, in Thy good pleasure unto Sion, and let the walls of Jerusalem be builded. Then shalt Thou be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole-burnt offerings. Then shall they offer bullocks upon Thine altar.

- *The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed*

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things, visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light of Light, True God of True God, begotten, not made, of one essence with the Father, by Whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man. And He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried, and on the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and

sits at the right hand of the Father, and He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, Whose kingdom shall have no end. And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father, Who together with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, Who spoke by the Prophets. In One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church; I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

- ***The Jesus Prayer***

(Then 5 or 10 prostrations [or bows, if we are not able], saying the Jesus Prayer:)

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me.

(We pray for ourselves, for our loved ones, or for those with whom we have ill will. We cross ourselves each time and say the prayer slowly as we bow to the ground).

- ***Prayers for our Family and Loved Ones***

Grant rest eternal in blessed repose, O Lord, to the souls of Thy departed servants, the ever-to-be-remembered (*their names*), and make their memory to be eternal! Memory eternal! (*three times*)

O Physician of souls and bodies, with a contrite and humble heart, we ask Thee to bring to an end the physical and spiritual pain and suffering of Thy servants (*their names*), and as Thou did raise up the daughter of Jairus and Peter's mother-in-law by Thy divine touch, raise up Thy servants unto renewed strength and good health, and grant them many, blessed years! Many Years! (*three times*)

- ***Prayers from our Prayer Book***

(Here we can say prayers from the Prayer Book, especially Prayers in Preparation for Holy Communion, Prayers of Intercession for Others or Special Intention, etc.)

- ***A Chapter from the Scriptures***

(Then we read a chapter from the Gospel, or another book of the Bible, perhaps according to the Church calendar, or also a portion of Orthodox spiritual reading.)

- ***Morning Prayer*** (if desired)

I thank Thee, O Lord, that Thou hast again shown me the Light of a new day. Grant me to greet this day in peace. At all times, help me to rely upon Thy holy will. In every hour of this day, help me, teach me, and reveal Thy will to me. Bless, help, and save all those who surround me. Teach me to treat everything that comes to me throughout this day with peace of soul and with firm conviction that Thy will governs all things. In all my deeds and words, sanctify, bless and correct my thoughts and feelings. In unforeseen events, let me not forget that everything is sent by Thee. Teach me to act firmly and wisely without embittering or embarrassing others. O Lord, give me strength to bear the fatigue of the coming day with all it shall bring. Direct my will, teach me to pray, and Thyself, come, grant me Thy blessing, be with me, and pray within me. Amen.

- ***Evening Prayer*** (if desired)

O Eternal God and King of all creation, Who hast kept me safe to attain to this hour, forgive me all wherein I have sinned today in deed, word, and thought. Cleanse, O Lord, my transgressions and faults and make me a Temple for Thy Holy Spirit. Vanquish the enemies, both bodily and bodiless, that fight against me, and keep and deliver me from the vain thoughts and evil desires which tempt me. Receive my prayers in Thy great mercy. Shine into my heart the Light of the Holy Spirit. Grant me to live according to Thy commandments. Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God. O Lord, I thank Thee for all the things that Thou hast brought me this day and I commend it all into Thy hands, trusting that through Thy mercy all things will turn out for the good and for my salvation. Grant me also, as I go to sleep, rest for my body and soul, and preserve me from the passions of the flesh and the dark evil spirits. Amen.

- ***Rite of Forgiveness***

(Each member of the family lines up from the eldest to the youngest, and coming before each person, asks forgiveness of one another, offering the Kiss of Peace:)

Forgive me, a sinner. *(The other person responds:)* God forgives, and I forgive.

(You might also want to say to each other:) God loves you ... and I love you.

- ***Concluding Prayers (if desired)***

It is truly meet to bless thee, O Theotokos, ever-blessed and most pure and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the Cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim; without corruption thou gavest birth to God the Word: True Theotokos, we magnify thee!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (*three times*)

Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us. Amen.

Through the prayers of Thy most pure Mother, my holy Guardian Angel, my patron saint (*name*), and of all Thy Saints, have mercy on us and upon Thy world.

O Lord, into Thy hands I commit my spirit. Amen.

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