

MONDAY: Invitation to Family

Receive this Invitation:

It is my morning ritual to sit at our kitchen table for coffee and study. In my view is the refrigerator, which is covered in photos, wedding invitations, birth announcements, and even though it's Lent, Christmas cards. Each of them represents family and friends whom I love and pray for on a regular basis. Their photographs and celebratory announcements are a visual connection and a reminder of the importance of intercessory prayer. Although most in my line of vision are of a joyful nature, some are sad reminders that we live in a broken world. Some of the photos are of our orphaned Ukrainian friends who live with constant uncertainty. Their innocent faces are a reminder that others have needs that are far greater than my own.

During Lent make time for lifting up others in prayer as a family. Author of *Raising Grateful Kids in an Entitled World*, Kristen Welch suggests making a collage with pictures of family and friends who need prayer. It is a tangible way to involve family members in intercessory prayer.

Pray the Scriptures over them as you pray for them. God gave us His Word, and He wants us to pray. When you combine the two spiritual disciplines of reading the Word and prayer by praying Scripture, it will help you apply God's Word to your life. For example:

- Pray for your family and friends to experience good health: "I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you even as your soul is getting along well." (3 John 1:2)
- Pray that your family and friends would always be thankful for all their blessings: "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." (1 Thessalonians 5:18)
- Pray for those who have worrisome thoughts: "Finally, brothers whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is admirable, it anything is

excellent or praiseworthy think about such things." (Philippians 4:8)

May God bless you as you lead your family in this form of prayer. May it become one that extends beyond the season of Lent and one that strengthens your family's faith.

(Grace Bailey)

TUESDAY: Read, Reflect, Respond, and React

Read:

Read these passages of Scripture.

That's why we can be so sure that every detail in our lives of love for God is worked into something good.

(Romans 8:28, The Message)

And you are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple. What's more, you are his holy priests. Through the mediation of Jesus Christ, you offer spiritual sacrifices that please God.

(1 Peter 2:5, NLT)

... you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light. "Once you had no identity as a people; now you are God's people. Once you received no mercy; now you have received God's mercy." Dear friends, I warn you as "temporary residents and foreigners" to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against your very souls.

(1 Peter 2:9-11, NLT)

Reflect:

Write your thoughts about this passage.

Respond:

Pray this prayer.

I believe, O sovereign Goodness, O mighty Wisdom, that you do sweetly order and govern all things, even the most minute, even the most noxious, to your glory, and the good of those that love you. I believe, O Father of the families of heaven and earth, that you so dispose all events, as may best magnify your goodness to all your children, especially those whose eyes wait upon you. I most humbly ask you, teach me to adore all your ways, though I cannot comprehend them; teach me to be glad that you are King, and to give you thanks for all things that befall me; seeing you have chosen that for me, and have thereby set to your seal that they are good. And for that which is to come, give me your grace to do in all things what pleases you; and then, with an absolute submission to your wisdom, to leave the issues of them in your hand.

John Wesley

React:

How will you engage family and friends today?

WEDNESDAY: Read, Reflect, Respond, and React

Read:

Read these passages of Scripture.

God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be satisfied.

(Matthew 5:6, NLT)

If you do, we'll share with you all the blessings the Lord gives us."

(Numbers 10:32, NLT)

Reflect:

Write your thoughts about this passage.

Respond:

Pray this prayer.

O first, greatest, fairest of all objects! While I feel your sacred Spirit breathing on my heart and exciting these fervors of love to you, I cannot doubt it any more than I can doubt the reality of this life, while I exert the actions of it, and feel its sensations.

Surely, if ever I knew the appetite of hunger, my soul hungers after righteousness, and longs for a greater conformity to your blessed nature and holy will.

If ever my palate felt thirst, my soul thirsts for God, even for the living God, and pants for the more abundant communication of his favor. If ever this body, when wearied with labor or journeys, knew what it was to wish for the refreshment of my bed, and rejoice to rest there, my soul rests upon your gracious bosom, O my heavenly Father, and returns to its repose in the embraces of its God, who has dealt so bountifully with it.

And if ever I saw the face of a beloved friend with complacency and joy, I rejoice in beholding your face, O Lord, and in calling you my Father in Christ. Such you are, and such you will be, for time and for eternity. What have I more to do, but to commit myself to you for both? I leave it to you to choose my inheritance and to order my affairs for me, while all my business is to serve you, and all my delight to praise you. My soul follows hard after God, because his right hand upholds me. Let it still bear me up, and I shall press on toward you, till all my desires be accomplished in the eternal enjoyment of you! Amen.

(Philip Doddridge)

React:

How will you engage family and friends today?

THURSDAY: Read, Reflect, Respond, and React**Read:**

Read these passages of Scripture.

Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.

(Philippians 2:3-5, NLT)

Reflect:

Write your thoughts about this passage.

Respond:

Pray this prayer.

I bless you, and give thanks to you, O Lord Jesus Christ, most mighty King of kings, for your persecution, and for the hardships forced upon you, in the days of your childhood, when you fled from the face of the most wicked King Herod, and were driven forth as a stranger and an outcast from your own land, and had to enter in secret that land of Egypt, from which, in the days of old, you had with a mighty hand led forth the children of Israel.

Grant to me now, I ask you, O my beloved Jesus, to tread, at least in my small degree, in your steps, in this matter of patience; give me grace not to murmur when I have to suffer wrong; but rather humbly to give way to an angry man, to submit cheerfully to being laughed at, and evil spoken of; and when any one vexes and annoys me, give me grace to curb my anger against him, to pray earnestly for his salvation, and so far as may be, to set down his fault to the account of the old serpent who led him into it.

Give me grace to live peaceably with others, willingly to give way to them, and with them patiently to bear, for your honor and glory, the lack of this world's goods, no matter how great it may be.
(Thomas à Kempis)

React:

How will you engage family and friends today?

FRIDAY: Read, Reflect, Respond, and React**Read:**

Read these passages of Scripture.

For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them."

(Matthew 18:20, NLT)

You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it!

(John 14:13-14, NLT)

Reflect:

Write your thoughts about this passage.

Respond:

Pray this prayer.

Almighty God and most merciful Father, we do not present ourselves here before your Majesty trusting in our own merits or worthiness, but in your manifold mercies. You have promised to hear our prayers and grant our requests which we shall make to you in the name of your beloved Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and you have also commanded us to assemble ourselves together in his Name, with full assurance that he will not only be among us, but also be our Mediator and Advocate toward your Majesty, so that we may obtain all things which shall seem expedient to your blessed will for our necessities.

Therefore we ask you, most merciful Father, to turn your loving countenance toward us, and impute not unto us our manifold sins and offenses, whereby we justly deserve your wrath and sharp punishment; but rather receive us to your mercy for Jesus Christ's sake, accepting his death and passion as a just recompense for all our offenses, in whom only you are pleased, and through whom you cannot be offended with us.

(John Knox)

React:

How will you engage family and friends today?

SATURDAY: Read, Reflect, Respond, and React**Read:**

Read these passages of Scripture.

And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

(Romans 12:1-2, NLT)

So set yourselves apart to be holy, for I am the Lord your God.

(Leviticus 20:7, NLT)

So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. Through him you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit.

(Ephesians 2:19-22, NLT)

Reflect:

Write your thoughts about this passage.

Respond:

Pray this prayer.

O my God! I offer you all my actions of this day for the intentions and for the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. I desire to sanctify every beat of my heart, my every thought, my simplest works, by uniting them to its infinite merits; and I wish to make reparation for my sins by casting them into the furnace of its merciful love.

O my God! I ask of you for myself and for those whom I hold dear, the grace to fulfill perfectly your holy will, to accept for love of you the joys and sorrows of this passing life, so that we may one day be united together in heaven for all eternity. Amen.

(Thérèse of Lisieux)

React:

How will you engage family and friends today?