

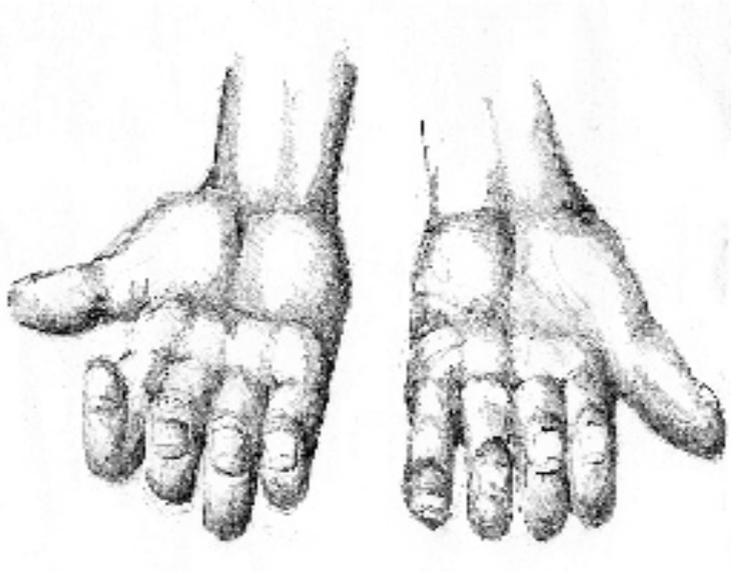
The Father in my Home

Second Week of Lent

1

Retreat for Journeying through Lent Everyone

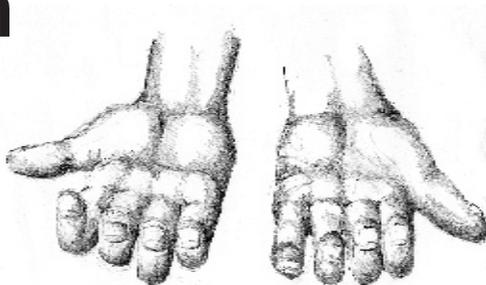
Retreat for The Father Everyday



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Introduction and Programme



Introduction

A recognised form of spiritual renewal is the retreat. Many people would find it difficult to take the step to such a retreat, be it for personal reasons or because of work or family commitments. As the Schoenstatt Family prepares to celebrate 100 years of the covenant this programme offers all of us the chance to take a “step back” and renew our life of faith as individuals, parishes and groups. The retreat takes place in the home, but in this way extends the life of the Church and gathers communities together in the “prayer of the Church” in the world.

Project format

This “Retreat” is meant to fit into a normal working day of the individual or family (school day). For each week there is a theme. An extensive Sunday home-liturgy is prepared with material that can be used during the week. A short thought for each day is given from the Liturgical texts of the day. Each week there is a new booklet. The daily time requirement is anywhere from 5-15 minutes, depending on the circumstances of the individual, family or group.

The place for the retreat is a prayer corner in the home, classroom, office or the “homeshrine” as it is known. It helps if you decide on a place to pray. It could be in front of a cross or a holy picture, the important thing is that there is some continuity. The retreat can be done individually but gains a lot if shared with

others, i.e. family, colleagues etc...

There should be some form of “enrolement“ in the retreat. This helps you to make a conscious decision for the retreat during the weeks of Lent and the Holy Week, five weeks is a long time.

Some common activites can add a community element to the retreat eg. Station mass, school assembly, Sunday mass in the parish.... At these occassions people can bring their intentions to be shared with all those involved in the retreat.

Each week there will be a mass in the Shrine at 6.00am - you can come along to the mass or accompany us on the internet.

Retreat Material Structure

There are five booklets with meditations, prayers, liturgies and ideas for the week.

Each Booklet contains the following:

Intorduction / Explanation

Meditation on the Theme

Story relating to the theme

Sunday Liturgy

- Opening prayer
- Lighting of a candle
- Reading of the Gospel
- Gospel Meditation
- Quiet
- Prayers of petition
- Common prayer (from appendix)
- Blessing Prayer to finish

- Weekday Liturgy
- Opening prayer (from Sunday)
 - Verse from Scripture
 - Quiet
 - Blessing Prayer to finish

Faith in the Family

Appendix of common prayers

Prayer for 2014

A look at the themes

The themes are set out around the Gospels of the Sunday liturgy and look to emphasise the God of Providence, “The Father”. Holy week emphasises the Passover of the Lord and the central meaning of the Eucharist in the life of the Church. Each unit attempts to integrate the preparation of Lent into an everyday experience and to encourage and develop a life of prayer and faith in the home and in the parish community.

- Week One - The Father in my Home
- Week Two - The Father in my Life
- Week Three - The Father in Others
- Week Four - The Father in Suffering
- Week Five - The Father Walks with Us

For further Information

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Meditation

The Father in my Home

Going home. For most people this is their favorite destination. A day's work done - it's time to go home. After a long journey, we just want to get home (and put our feet up). Perhaps if we are in trouble or have received bad news, we want to get home and find the people who will support us. Home is about people and places which are familiar. Home for many of us is about acceptance, respect and love. Home is surely the workshop of our relationships. This does not happen without friction, tension - even falling out and having to find the road to making-up. The journey of "highs and lows", joys and sorrows, of growing up and accepting responsibility take place normally in the space we call home. In today's world we become patently aware of the meaning of home when we see or perhaps feel in ourselves the effects of a home that does not work. The name "dysfunctional" is used for a home that does not work and the results of a dysfunctional family can be heart-rendering and long-lasting. One of our basic needs is a nest in which we are secure and feel safe.

Considering the natural need and significance of family life which forms the basis of building a home, we recognise the importance of living, and the feeling of being at home. A whole new dimension arises when we consider that God the Father is in my home. Some people have a sign of God's presence in their homes - perhaps a picture of Our Lady, a statue of the Sacred Heart, a crucifix or the plaque of a house blessing written above the door to welcome all who enter their homes. When we allow ourselves to be touched by the reality of God's presence in our homes then we see that the values and needs we associate with our home - both human and spiritual - take on a new depth since each of these naturally human values and needs take on the extra dimension of being supernatural and spiritual. Normal everyday things become changed, transformed, transfigured and we see the God

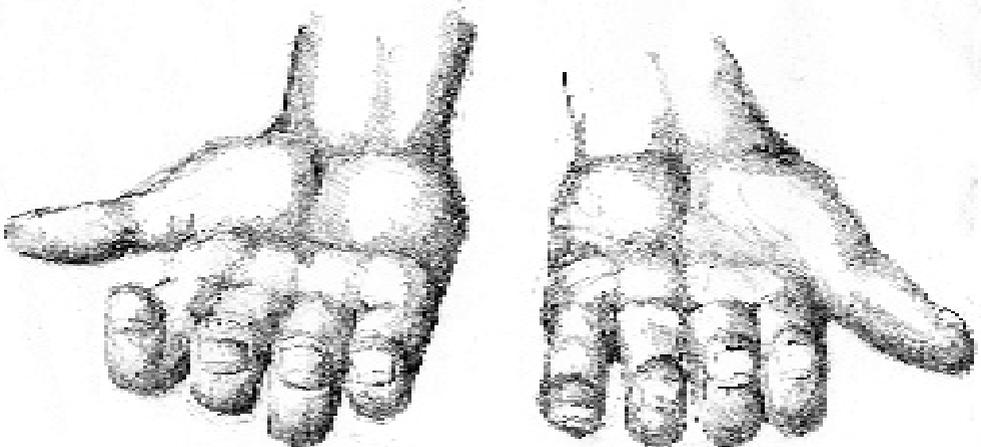
in our World, the God in my Home.

Going home. A favorite and deep-rooted longing in the hearts of each of us - I want to go home to my Father. Just before Jesus was to begin the long journey to Jerusalem - leaving his home in Nazareth - he told his friends that this journey was about going home to his Father and that he wanted to go home so that he could prepare a place for each of us to come and join him. Right at the beginning of his public life Jesus was approached by some who were interested in following him, who asked him "Master where do you live?" Jesus replied: "Come and see." God in my Home means that the workshop of my personal relationships happens in God's presence. We know from experience that building relationships is hard work and requires "give and take". Sometimes, sadly, this "give and take" is not enough and homes break down, families break-up and this shelter of human longing is lost, broken or severely damaged. Even then the longing for home does not diminish. It may even be heightened.

When we consider that God is in our homes, we are consoled by the thought that the grace of his presence brings about a deeper level in our relationships. If you like, our relationships become more than skin-deep. We look for a unity among persons not just based on human effort and shared values but on the sharing of the atmosphere of being in God's presence. One of the wonderful gifts of a home is the hospitality and welcome it can offer. Sometimes we see the blessing plaque in homes on which the words are written: Christ the unseen head of this house, the secret guest at our table and the unseen partner in each conversation. If our home is a place of joy then we see this joy in the context of Christ's promise that we should be where he is and that his joy should be in us and our joy will be complete. When we suffer bereavement then we can expect that Christ will "walk" to our home as he did to Martha's and Mary's at the time of the death of their brother Lazarus. To know that he weeps with us for he knows our sorrows. The achievements, the disappointments of home are

shared with the God of my Home. Fr. Joseph Kantenich sums it up in the "Home Shrine Prayer". Here he compares the Home to a Shrine, a small Chapel or a place of grace. The Shelter of human acceptance can be transformed into the sacred place of God's daily presence.

My home is your shrine, where you work to the glory of the Father. There he transforms my entire being into the Trinity's most beloved shrine, where the sanctuary light constantly burns and the glow of the love never dies; where the fire of sacrifice upon sacrifice banishes all selfishness from the heart; where roses adorn the altar and lilies never cease to bloom; where a breeze of paradise blows and raise heart and mind to heaven; where the spirit of the world cannot enter as in heaven; where peace reigns and happiness laughs because God's angel keeps diligent watch; where Christ rules and is triumphant and leads the whole world to the Father. Amen

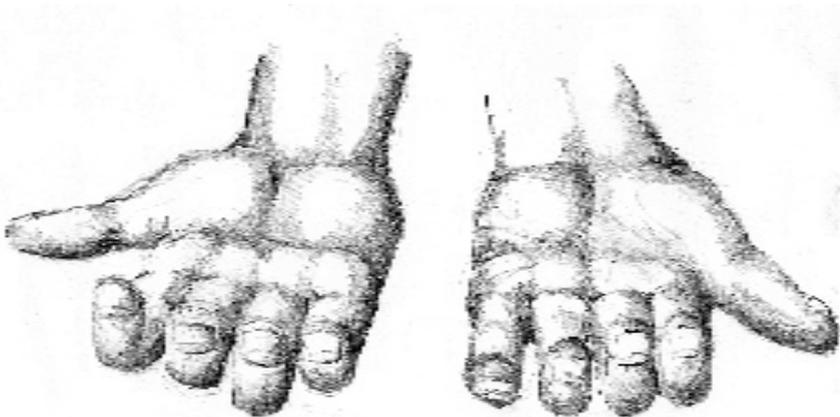


Story

God in my Home

The Story of the Courageous Prayer

A farmer once came into a Restaurant for a meal. The restaurant was full of people and a large group of businessmen, who were celebrating a colleagues promotion. The farmer sat down and ordered his meal. Then he joined his hands and prayed the “Grace before Meals”. Some of the business people pointed at him and started to snigger. A young man said to the farmer: “Is that what you do on the farm? Probably, everything that moves prays on your farm!” The farmer, who had already started to calmly eat his meal by this time, turned to the young man and replied: “No, not everything that moves prays on a farm.” The young man laughing then said to him: “Is that right? What doesn’t pray on your farm then?” “Well”, the farmer answered, “for example my donkey, my ox and my pig don’t pray. They go, without a prayer, to get their food.”



Sunday Liturgy

God in my Home

Greeting

Let us begin our prayer together.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

Opening Prayer

Let us pray

Father - In the Transfiguration, Jesus shows us the glory of his message. In this way he was preparing his closest friends for what was going to happen. As we welcome you into our homes, open our hearts to the voice of your Word in our lives. Restore our sight that we can look upon your Son who calls us to forgiveness and change of heart. Prepare us to celebrate the glorious resurrection of your Son at Easter.

Amen.

During this prayer a candle can be lit.

Gospel Reading

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

This is my Son, the Beloved.

Jesus took with him Peter and James and John and led them up a high mountain where they could be alone by themselves. There in their presence he was transfigured: his clothes became dazzlingly white, whiter than any earthly bleacher could make them. Elijah appeared to them with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus. Then Peter spoke to Jesus. 'Rabbi', he said 'it is wonderful for us to be here; so let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah'. He did not know what to say; they were so frightened. And a cloud came, covering them in shadow; and there came a voice from the cloud, 'This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him'. Then suddenly, when

they looked round, they saw no one with them any more but only Jesus.

As they came down the mountain he warned them to tell no one what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead. They observed the warning faithfully, though among themselves they discussed what 'rising from the dead' could mean.

Gospel Meditation

Take some time to think about the Gospel you have just heard. Perhaps the following questions might help you - but don't let them distract

- * How do you welcome God the Father into your home; is there a special place for him?*
- * How do you maintain God's presence?*
- * How would you react if you came face to face with Jesus in similar circumstances to that of the Disciples?*

Time for Quiet

Personal Bidding Prayers

Jesus said where two or three are gathered in my name - I am with them. Gather all your prayers together either aloud or in the quiet of your own heart.

*Join your prayers with the prayers of Mary as you say-
Hail Mary, full of grace...*

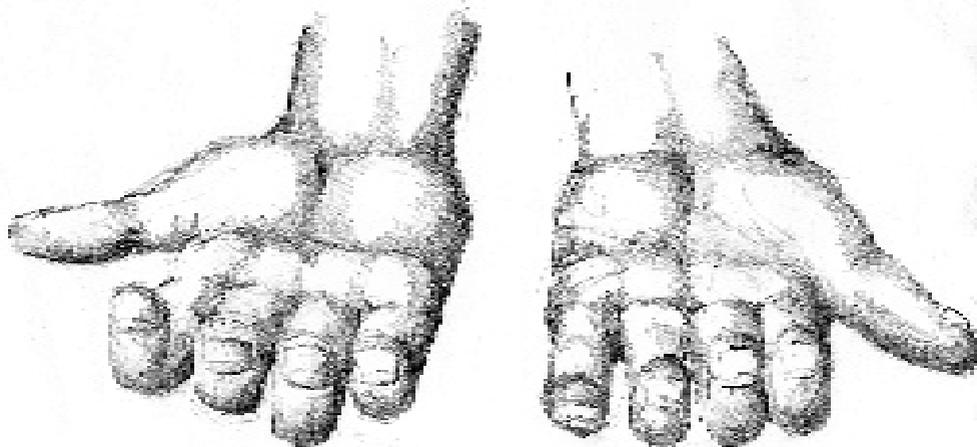
Moment of Prayer

Choose one of the prayers from the collection on Page 14

Blessing Prayer

Father,
as we journey toward 2014
help us to remember that You are always close to us.

May we welcome You into our lives and homes this Lent.
Let us create a unique place where we can speak to You each day and gain the strength and confidence to live life with You.
Give us Your continued love, and help us to never lose faith.
In this Year of Grace may your Church grow through our prayer.
With Mary we journey in faith in our home where you are Lord,
living and reigning for ever and ever.
Amen.



The Gospel of the Transfiguration of the Lord puts before our eyes the glory of Christ, which anticipates the resurrection and announces the divinization of man. The Christian community becomes aware that Jesus leads it, like the Apostles Peter, James and John “up a high mountain by themselves” (Mt 17: 1), to receive once again in Christ, as sons and daughters in the Son, the gift of the Grace of God: “This is my Son, the Beloved; he enjoys my favor. Listen to him” (Mt17: 5). It is the invitation to take a distance from the noisiness of everyday life in order to immerse oneself in God’s presence. He desires to hand down to us, each day, a Word that penetrates the depths of our spirit, where we discern good from evil (cf. Heb 4:12), reinforcing our will to follow the Lord. Benedict XVI

Thoughts for the Week

God in the Good News

Greeting

Let us begin our prayer together.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

Opening Prayer

Let us pray

God with us.

In the Transfiguration, Jesus shows us the glory of his message.

In this way he was preparing his closest friends for what was

going to happen. As we welcome you into our homes, open our

hearts to the voice of your Word in our lives. Restore our sight

that we can look upon your Son who calls us to forgiveness and

change of heart. Prepare us to celebrate the glorious resurrection

of your Son at Easter.

Amen.

Thought for the Week

Read the passage from scripture for the day. Spend some time in quiet. Gather all your prayers and offer them to God.

Blessing Prayer

Father,

as we journey toward 2014

help us to remember that You are always close to us.

May we welcome You into our lives and homes this Lent.

Let us create a unique place where we can speak to You each

day and gain the strength and confidence to live life with You.

Give us Your continued love, and help us to never lose faith.

In this Year of Grace may your Church grow through our prayer.

With Mary we journey in faith in our home where you are Lord,

living and reigning for ever and ever. Amen.

Monday - Jesus said to his disciples: “Be compassionate as your Father is compassionate. Do not judge, and you will not be judged yourselves; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned yourselves; grant pardon and you will be pardoned.”
(From: Luke 6)

Tuesday - “Cease to do evil.
Learn to do good,
search for justice,
help the oppressed,
be just to the orphan,
plead for the widow.” (From: Isaiah 1)

Wednesday - “No; anyone who wants to be great among you must be your servant, and anyone who wants to be first among you must be your slave, just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (From: Matthew 20)

Thursday - “I, the Lord, search the heart, I probe the loins to give each man what his conduct and actions deserve.” (From: Jeremiah 17)

Friday - Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures: It was the stone rejected by the builders that became the keystone. This was the Lord’s doing’ and it is wonderful to see?” (From: Matthew 21)

Saturday - But the father said to his servants. “Quick! Bring out the best robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the calf we have been fattening, and kill it; we are going to have a feast, a celebration because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found.” And they began to celebrate. (From: Luke 15)

Faith in the Family

Keeping your Home Catholic

If we are going to have Catholic families and catholic homes, we must work at it.

The ancient Israel like to live in a mental and spiritual world which made no distinctions between the ordinary and the holy.

Look at the life of any typical family. Most of the significant human events or car there. Birth and death, marriage and childhood, sickness and unemployment -- these are but a few of the ordinary events of life, and all belong to a family spirituality. Each event presents an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the presence of God at the heart of family life.

Most Catholic families grow up with our spirituality which offers a wealth of religious signs, symbols, traditions, and rituals. All of these provide a potentially lively network of experiences to nourish the faith of both children and adults. **A very important tradition in the life of any catholic family is the issue of family prayer.**

Whenever I speak to parents on the development and enjoyment of prayer and celebration in the home, **I find I don't need to sell them on the idea as much as in confidence and method.**

When we pray at home we are trying to bring together two things: Prayer together and enjoyment. These two elements parents finds difficult to blend. Why?

Because we don't see prayer as something to enjoy together. Prayers are something we learned. However, once the awkwardness is faced and overcome, the family can really enjoy prayers and celebrations together -- as unbelievable as it may seem to us.

Why pray at all? I'm afraid this one has to be hit head-on. Why do we want our children to pray? Through clear we need God in a real person to our children, someone with whom they can converse casually and enjoyably.

Talking with God -- how do we go about it? First of all, let us look at ourselves. Every grown-up Christian knows that if he or she is to become warm and open to God, he has to overcome some childhood hangups.

A good way to start a more open response towards God in children is by making them familiar with some of the Old Testament characters who spoke to God comfortably -- and dearly. You can start by retelling the story of Jonah. You can bring Jonah to life by translating his words into children's language. For example tell them how Jonah argued with God.

The Old Testament is filled with stories of people who talked with God. The New Testament is filled with stories of people who talked with Jesus. Let's start teaching openness to God by making our children familiar with the Bible, something we were not familiar with the children.

Bible stories won't do it alone, however. If we don't want to teach your children embarrassment and discomfort towards open prayer, we're going to have to start overcoming our own. This means making confident oral responses at Mass,. It means saying some meaningful graces, not formulas, at mealtimes. It means being able to talk about God without feeling foolish. We must become more open ourselves, free to say to each child leaving for school, "God keep you today." Free to say, "well, I talked it over with God".

Family prayer and celebration -- how do we started?

Firstly, start while you and your children are young. Secondly, attend Mass together as a family. Thirdly, make Sunday special. And fourth, pray together as a family. For example, say a decade of the Rosary. One decade of the Rosary would take at the most two minutes. It is the most powerful spiritual weapon outside of the Mass we have. When a family prays together you are actually saying to the children: "I believe prayer helps and I know God hears."

Common Prayers

God in the Good News

Marian Consecration Prayer

My Queen, my Mother, I give myself to you. And to show my devotion to you I consecrate to you this day my eyes, my ears, my mouth, my heart. My entire self without reserve. As I am your own, my good Mother, guard and defend me as your property and possession. Amen

Prayer before a Crucifix

Behold, O kind and most sweet Jesus, I cast myself on my knees in thy sight, and with the most fervent desire of my soul, I pray and beseech Thee that thou wouldst impress upon my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope, and charity, with a true repentance for my sins, and a firm desire of amendment, while with deep affection and grief of soul I ponder within myself and mentally contemplate Thy five most precious wounds; having before my eyes that which David spoke in prophecy of thee, o good Jesus: 'They pierced My hands and My feet; they have numbered all My bones.

Hail, Holy Queen

Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy; hail, our life, our sweetness, and our hope! To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us; and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

(When recited at the end of the Rosary, the following prayer may be said.)

(V) Pray for us, O holy Mother of God. (R) That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ. Let us pray. O God, whose

only-begotten Son, by His life, death and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life; grant, we beseech Thee, that meditating, on these Mysteries, in the most holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may both imitate what they contain, and obtain what they promise, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen

Prayers for the Way of the Cross

At the beginning of each Station

We adore you O Christ, and we praise you because by thy holy Cross Thou hast redeemed the world.

The Fourteen Stations

- I. Jesus is condemned to death.
- II. Jesus receives the Cross
- III. Jesus falls the first time under His Cross
- IV. Jesus is met by His Blessed Mother.
- V. Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry His Cross.
- VI. Veronica wipes the ace of Jesus.
- VII. Jesus falls for the second time.
- VIII. The women of Jerusalem mourn for Jesus.
- IX. Jesus falls the third time.
- X. Jesus is stripped of His garments.
- XI. Jesus is nailed to the Cross.
- XII. Jesus dies on the Cross.
- XIII. Jesus is taken down from the Cross.
- XIV. Jesus is laid in the tomb.

Prayer at each Station

I love you Jesus, my love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended thee. Never permit me to separate myself from thee again. Grant that I may love you always and then do with me what thou wilt.

Pilgrimage Prayer 2014

Dear Mother and Mother of our Lord!
With great joy we start out on our pilgrimage to your shrine.

Father Kentenich's faith inspired you
to set up your home in Schoenstatt.
In the shadow of this shrine
a family was born,
a new spiritual way within the Church,
a charisma in the midst of our time.

Today we want to fill the jars with our gifts,
with our gratitude and repentance,
with our surrender and longing.
With every step we take on our pilgrim way we ask you:
Enkindle in us anew the fire of love for you,
for our father and for our family.
Mother, give us the strength to spread a covenant culture in our world
today
and educate us to be your true missionaries for this century.

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