



Diocese of Austin



## YEAR OF THE DOMESTIC CHURCH BULLETIN TEXT

**December 2020** The Domestic Church

**January 2021** Vocations

**February 2021** Prayer at Home

**March 2021** Lent in the Domestic Church

**April 2021** Love Your Neighbors

**May 2021** Celebrating Parents

**June 2021** The Gift of Young People

**July 2021** We are God's Children

**August 2021** Eucharistic People

**September 2021** Family of Families

**October 2021** The Witness of Marriage

**November 2021** Season of Stewardship

**December 2021** Hail Mary, Full of Grace

### **MARCH 2021:**

This month we experience the season of Lent. A time in which we, like Christ, will spend 40 days in the desert for a time of prayer and sacrifice. Our prayers and sacrifices help us grow in relationship with Christ. They unite us more closely to him as we journey with him to the cross and celebrate his resurrection at Easter.

During this Year of the Domestic Church, we are reminded of the sacrifices and prayer that we offer for our families. Each member in a household has a unique role that contributes to the household and requires sacrifice. Often, we pray for members of our family during challenging times, or offer prayers of gratitude for each other when things go well, but does your family pray *together*?

As we enter the Lenten season and consider what personal sacrifice that we would like to "give up," consider a way in which you can add, or increase prayer in the life of your family. Does your household pray together? Parents, do you pray with your spouse and set an example of prayer for your family? Does your family attend Mass together? Do you pray together daily or share prayer traditions? Maybe you don't pray together and would like to start. Wherever you are in your prayer life, consider increasing the time that you spend together with the Lord. As we grow in relationship with him in our own families, or domestic Church, God's family, the Church, grows together.

### **FEBRUARY 2020:**

Prayer is integral for a life of faith. It is through prayer that we are able to approach the Lord with whatever gratitude, burdens or petitions are on our hearts.

Christ himself taught us how to pray. In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus teaches us to call God “father,” and in Luke 11: 2-4, we see the familiar prayer that we say at Mass: the “Our Father.”

In prayer, we approach the living God, our father, who calls us into relationship with him. As his children, our relationship with God grows and changes as we do. For this reason, from the time children are small, we teach them to pray with simple prayers and petitions. As people grow, their prayer life changes and deepens as their relationship with the Lord deepens.

Children look to their parents and loved ones as examples of how to live and express their faith. Praying together as a family teaches children to seek God in prayer, and be confident in his loving response. Praying together as a family also strengthens the relationships within the family and allows the family to grow in faith together.

Does your family pray together? What is one simple way that you can increase the prayer time with your family or those living in your household?

### **JANUARY 2020:**

Throughout history, God has spoken to man. He spoke through Abraham, Moses and the prophets. God’s Word became flesh in Jesus, and he continues to speak to us today through Scripture and the Tradition of the Church. God also speaks to each person through his or her vocation in life.

Each person has a vocational calling. A person’s vocation is the way in which he or she grows in holiness through service of God. Some people are called to marriage while others are called to the priesthood or religious life. Some people serve God in their single state of life. Regardless of a person’s vocational calling, all of the faithful are called to serve God in charity and faithfulness.

In his apostolic exhortation *Ecclesia in America*, Pope John Paul II said: “The word of God, faithfully read in the family, gradually builds it up as a domestic church and makes it fruitful in human and Christian virtues; it is there that the source of vocations is to be found.”

By remaining close to God’s word in the Scriptures, families are able help each other discern God’s voice in their own lives. In this way, families can support and nurture the vocation of its members as they help each other lead holy lives.

What is a way that your family can share the Scriptures with each other? How can you support each family member’s vocation?

### **DECEMBER 2020:**

This Christmas season bring us the opportunity to reflect on the Incarnation of God when, in his infinite love and mercy, became man. We see this in a tangible way when we reflect upon the manger. The creator of heaven and Earth lay helpless as a baby, surrounded by his parents, Mary and Joseph.

The Holy Family serves as an example for all of our families of what it means to live faithfully. It is in the home that we receive faith from our families. It is also in the home that our faith grows and is nourished so that we can then take our faith into the world. For this reason, the family is known as the “Domestic Church.”



At this unique time when many people are spending more time at home than usual, we have an opportunity to strengthen faith in our families, whether they have one or many people in them.

Starting on December 27, 2020, the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, we observe the “Year of the Domestic Church,” inaugurated by the Most Reverend Joe S. Vásquez.

For the next year, we have the opportunity to focus on faith in our home and family life. In what ways does the Holy Family serve as an example of living faithfully for our own families? In what ways does our family share faith with each other?

