



## HOLY HOUR PRAYING FOR EUCHARISTIC RENEWAL INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY PRAYER RESOURCE

The Diocese of Des Moines has invited all parishes to host a weekly Holy Hour to pray for Eucharistic Renewal in our Diocese. In the current pandemic some parishioners will be unable to attend Holy Hours in person, and this prayer resource is meant to help individuals and families unite their prayers to the intentions of the whole parish and Diocesan community.

### Preparing for Prayer

- In addition to your daily prayers, set aside a particular time each week to pray for the intention of Eucharistic Renewal in your parish, and in the Diocese of Des Moines. Many parishes will designate a specific time for their Holy Hour, and some parishes will stream certain devotions from their Holy Hour. You could pray at the same time as your parish, or join virtually if that is an option. If you have small children, know that the *amount of time* is not as important as the intentional effort (of any length) of prayer.
- Beyond a time, set aside a space in your house for prayer. We pray with our bodies, and so creating a visual space for prayer can assist in drawing our hearts into prayer. This can include adding certain things (such as a sacred image, a lit candle, a crucifix, etc...) or removing distractions. Consider [setting up a home altar](#) as a designated place for prayer.
- For children, changing the environment during prayer can help draw them into sacred time. This can be done by changing the lighting, having “prayer pillows” for children to sit or kneel on, or having a “prayer bag” with special books, prayer cards, or other items that can help draw children into prayer. [Here](#) are some ideas for an “adoration bag” for small children.
- If you have children, include age appropriate activities that can draw your children into prayer by engaging them at their level. Some ideas might be [Catholic coloring pages](#), [children’s books](#), or [saint dolls](#).

## DEVOTIONS FOR EUCHARISTIC RENEWAL

This time of prayer is meant to ask for an outpouring of grace in our Diocese, specifically to draw us deeper into communion with Jesus, fully present in the Eucharist, and to inspire our missionary efforts to invite others into communion with Jesus. Since prayer is about relationship, the most important aspect of this effort is not what you do, but it is the time you spend with Jesus. The Diocese is encouraging two specific ways to pray in unity with prayers throughout the Diocese:

### Evening Prayer (Vespers)

The Diocese has encouraged parishes to pray Evening Prayer, a part of the Liturgy of the Hours, as a particular way to focus our efforts. The Liturgy of the Hours, which is “intended to become the prayer of the whole People of God” (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1175) is an authentic liturgy of the Church that is accessible to all people at any time. Resources are listed below to help individuals and families learn how to pray Evening Prayer:

- Ebreviary.com offers a digital subscription to Evening Prayer and the entire Liturgy of the Hours for \$29.95 a year.
- Magnificat.net offers a simplified Evening Prayer, along with other devotions and prayer resources for \$47.00 a year.
- Evening Prayer, and the entire Liturgy of the Hours can be prayed with either [four volume](#) or [one volume](#) books. An [abbreviated version](#) of Morning and Evening Prayer is also available.
- You can also use your smart TV or computer to pray Evening Prayer as a family. Digital guides can be found at [ebreviary.com](#), [ibreviary.com](#) or [magnificat.net](#).
- Evening Prayer is always best prayed in community, and the easiest way to learn is to pray with others. St. Ambrose Cathedral will be streaming Evening Prayer every Monday night at 5 PM at <https://www.facebook.com/dmdiocese/>
- It always helps to have someone who can answer your questions. Find a priest or deacon, or someone with experience with the Liturgy of the Hours and ask them to teach you. [Here](#) is a good introductory video for how the Liturgy of the Hours is prayed.



## **Eucharistic Renewal Reflections**

Included with this packet are four Eucharistic Renewal reflections written by Bishop Joensen. These reflections can be used as a way to help unite your prayer time to the intentions of the parish and Diocese. It is recommended to use one reflection, with reflection questions and petitionary prayers during each time of prayer.

## **Additional devotions**

As was said above, since prayer is about relationship, the most important aspect of this effort is not what you do, but it is the time you spend with Jesus. Below are some suggestions for other devotions that might enrich your time of prayer.

**Silence**—While many devotions can help draw us into deeper prayer, it is also important to take time in silence, to listen to what God says to us. [Ignatianspirituality.com](http://Ignatianspirituality.com) has many articles on the importance of silence, and suggestions for how to grow in silence.

**Singing**—Singing is a powerful way to be drawn into prayer, and simple repeatable songs are easy to learn and a great way to engage children. For a deeper reflection on the power of song, and ideas for where to get started visit [this link](#). To learn simple songs to sing with small children, check out Catechesis of the Good Shepherd's songbooks and CD's which can be found [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

**Lectio Divina**—Lectio Divina is simply prayerful reading of scripture. One excellent way to get started is to pray with the daily Mass readings, or to focus on the readings for the upcoming Sunday. [Here](#) is an introduction to how to pray with scripture, and [Catholicmom.com](http://Catholicmom.com) offers a link to each Sunday's reading, coloring pages, and worksheets to help children reflect on the gospel.

**Petitionary Prayer and Praise**—simple conversational prayer is a way to enter into true dialogue with God, and to share the things that are on your own heart. If praying as a family, consider passing a crucifix, holy card, or other object and every person can pray particular intentions, or prayers of gratitude when they receive the object. These prayers can be prayed silently or aloud. Young children are often drawn to offer prayers of praise rather than petitionary prayers. You can encourage praise of God's works, gifts, and people as a beautiful way to nurture prayer in the youngest ones.

**Rosary or Divine Mercy Chaplet**—Meditative prayers like the Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet are ways to turn our hearts to God and bring our petitions to him. To learn more about the power of the family rosary visit [Holy Cross Family Ministries](http://HolyCrossFamilyMinistries) which promotes this devotion internationally.

However you pray, thank you for joining with your parish and our Diocese is praying for Eucharistic Renewal, both now and as we emerge from this pandemic.

