



QUEST

Leader Guide



Faith and Family Life
Catholic Ministries

AN INVITATION

You have been invited to accompany your families as they learn to pray. *Quest* is a family experience about the adventure of prayer. Families will be introduced to various forms and expressions of prayer, learning how to pray together. A living relationship with God is a beautiful gift. The content for this resource is drawn from the fourth part of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. As part of this resource families will also be playing a board game. The term “quest” is used to represent our lives and the journeys we are each on. As we progress through life we seek heaven (the summit) as our final destination. Prayer nourishes and sustains us along the way.

Prayer is first of all a gift from God; in fact, in every one of the baptized “the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words” (Rom 8:26). Catechesis has the task of educating the believer for prayer and in prayer, developing the contemplative dimension of Christian experience. It is necessary to teach him to pray with Jesus Christ and like him: “To learn to pray with Jesus is to pray with the same sentiments with which he turned to the Father: adoration, praise, thanksgiving, filial confidence, supplication and awe for his glory. All of these sentiments are reflected in the Our Father, the prayer which Jesus taught his disciples and which is the model of all Christian prayer [. . .] When catechesis is permeated by a climate of prayer, the assimilation of the entire Christian life reaches its summit.” (Directory for Catechesis 86)

This task implies the teaching of both personal prayer and liturgical and community prayer, initiating the believer into the permanent forms of prayer: blessing and adoration, petition, intercession, thanksgiving, and praise.³⁹ There are several well-established means for achieving these ends: the prayerful reading of sacred scripture, in particular through the liturgy of the hours and lectio divina; the prayer of the heart called the Jesus prayer,⁴⁰ the veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary through practices of piety like the holy Rosary, supplications, processions, etc. (Directory for Catechesis 87)

A FEW TIPS

- By reading and experiencing the content yourself, you will be best equipped to accompany this program. We recommend first becoming familiar with the material before implementing it.
- Families can be placed in small groups of 3-4 families to share this journey with. Families can learn from each other as they recount their Family Meeting experiences. Companions and catechists can weave together these individual families into a small church community.
- *Quest* is designed to be led at-home, and can be accompanied by the At-Church Content. The At-Church Content include 2 Sessions for parents and children. If

you are introducing families to ongoing formation resources for the first time, be sure to begin with the Blend Session.

- Check in with families regularly using our Family Follow Through system available on Martha or as a PDF. This helps with accountability. Share photos from the Family Follow Throughs in your bulletin, newsletter, emails, or bulletin boards.

AT-HOME CONTENT

Over 9 Family Meetings, families will grow in their relationship with God as they go on an adventure of prayer through modeling, practice, and meaningful conversations. They will apply what they learn by playing a board game together. Each meeting is designed to take an average of 20-40 minutes.

For the gathering ritual, families will practice a time of sacred silence for 30 seconds. They will imagine a special space they would like to go to with Jesus. A place they would each like to sit and visit with Jesus, somewhere they love to be where they can also be quiet. Afterwards they will share their experience from the time in silence. This ritual will help develop a habit of prayer and spending time in silence with God. This gathering ritual will help provide a regular rhythm to begin your Family Meetings. The check-in is meant to get the conversation started between family members. The question is loosely based on the session's theme, and is one that is easy to answer.

In each Family Meeting, families will learn about an aspect of prayer, have it modeled, discuss how it relates to their lives, and practice it as they play the board game. To end each Family Meeting, a prayer is included for families to pray together. It is usually drawn from a traditional prayer that relates to the Family Meeting.

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

Family Meeting	Theme	Activity	Values Taught
1	Prayer	Color and decorate player peg dolls	-Prayer is a relationship -Prayer comes from the heart -God can always hear our prayers
2	How To Pray	Open starter deck and play a round of Quest on the first game board together	-People in the Bible are examples of prayer -Jesus teaches us the Our Father -Vocal Prayer
3	Blessing and Adoration	Open Blessing & Adoration expansion pack, play a round of Quest together	-The Holy Spirit is our guide in prayer -Blessing and Adoration
4	Prayer of Petition	Open Petition expansion pack and attach second game board, play a round of Quest together	-Petitions -Act of Contrition
5	Prayer of Intercession	Open Intercession expansion pack, play a round of Quest together	-Intercessions -Prayer helps others -Prayers of the Faithful
6	Prayer of Thanksgiving	Open Thanksgiving expansion pack, add third game board, Play a round of Quest together	-Thanksgivings -Eucharist means thanksgiving -The Magnificat -Introductory Prayers
7	Prayer of Praise	Open Praise expansion pack, play a round of Quest together	-The Goodness of God -Praise -Singing at Mass

8	Meditation	Open Meditation expansion pack, add fourth game board, play a round of Quest together	-Meditation -The Rosary
9	Contemplation	Open Contemplation expansion pack, add circle game board, play a round of Quest together	-Contemplation -Prayer is a gift -Silent prayer

AT-CHURCH CONTENT

It is important to have parents gathered periodically throughout the Quest process. The goal of gathering is to:

- Find out what is going well and what families are struggling with in the Family Meetings.
- To encourage, deepen, and support their experience of the Family Meetings with any tips, inspiration, or information.
- To meet and hear from other families on a similar journey. There is wisdom in any room of families, especially parents!
- To give children a positive and meaningful experience at-church.
- To pray together - for each other and for the entire community.

This resource has been provided to support you in facilitating family Sessions held at-church throughout the Quest experience. The Sessions are designed to have parents and children together. There is plenty of content to fill a 1-1.5 hour time frame in the Sessions. Session 1 is designed to be used between Family Meeting 5 and 6. Session 2 is designed to be used after Family Meeting 9. If you are introducing families to ongoing formation resources for the first time, be sure to begin with the Blend Session available before Session 1.

There are supplies that need to be pulled together to help bring these Sessions to life. We have given you supply lists. We have also suggested ways to set a mood in the room; candles, music, dimming the lights etc. We feel it is critical to set holy spaces to lead families into deeper intimacy with Christ and themselves. We cannot overemphasize the impact of simple but beautiful decor, great hospitality, and intimate prayerful spaces. Your attention to detail tells everyone this is important, we prepared for you!

We realize families are in different places and stages in their own faith journeys. We have written sessions we feel best take into account today's families. It is our hope that these Sessions meet them where they are at and slowly lead them into something more. Feel free to scale the material up or down. It is most important that families leave with a positive experience of Church and community, feeling like they have a place in it. The content for the following Sessions has been drawn from the General Instruction to the Roman Missal, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and the USCCB website.

ACCOMPANIMENT TEAM NEEDS

We realize each of our directors have different gifts; some are wonderful teachers, some are storytellers, others are better facilitating small groups, some are gifted in finding others to present material. Use your strengths to lead your family Sessions, and look for others who can take the pieces you are not as confident in. It takes a team!

Facilitator:

- Choosing a facilitator to lead your Sessions as an MC from the front is an important decision. There will be other voices like witnesses, but it is necessary to have a central person to be the stabilizing and guiding voice in the group. They will introduce and weave together the content for each Session. This person should be warm, engaging, confident, and it helps if they have a good sense of humor. This person needs to be open and non-judgmental. It will be their voice that will help the group grow together.

Companion Families:

- We recommend placing 1 companion family in each small group of 10 families, if possible. This will help provide a relatable connection to the parish community. Companion families will focus on building relationships and supporting the facilitator in guiding the at-church Sessions. Make sure companion families feel comfortable with the flow of each Session. Leave time at the end of each Session with the companion families to evaluate the experience. To make this a great experience for all, we must be checking in regularly and making any needed changes as soon as possible. Invest in time with your companion families. Having a strong team of people committed to the same mission helps everyone. Offer time to get to know one another, provide skills training, and spend time in prayer together. We want our families to feel like they are being invited into a group that has been preparing for them and enjoys each other.

Hospitality:

- Hospitality is about much more than setting out cookies and water bottles. Great hospitality is the root for the growing that will take place. Having a team that interacts well together, and welcomes you into their community, will help the families get comfortable almost immediately. This will produce greater engagement in the Sessions. This type of hospitality requires the facilitator and companions to become friendly with the families before they ever begin. It includes being “real” through sharing, vulnerability, and laughter from the minute your families arrive.

- How the room “feels” is also an important part of the hospitality recipe. Covered tables, simple centerpieces, and the glow of a few candles will encourage the families to lean into the conversation, like a great dinner party. Take the time to set the room in advance, so that families walk into a space that feels prepared for them. A prayer table up front with changing images each Session can also be a small voice speaking into the room. Find creative people in your community who have a heart for families and let them loose to work their magic.

Intercessors:

- Having intentional intercessors who are praying for your families and your ministry is an important step to staying on mission. Prayer always needs to be integral to the work we do. People in your parish community who take the time to talk with Jesus often and who understand the struggles and difficulties facing families are perfect to help in this role. These prayer warriors can be organized as a group, or can individually come before God for the needs of the parish families each day. Prayer can be specially centered around this time of growing as disciples.



FAMILY FOLLOW THROUGHS

Time with family is precious. Following through with this family experience tells your child this is important. With your child, please complete the following tasks after each meeting to turn in.

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Family Meeting 1: Email a picture of your family's peg doll game pieces.

Family Meeting 2: Share a list of all of the traditional prayers you know by heart. Email a short response.

Family Meeting 3: Share what it felt like to spend time with Jesus in silence as you begin your Family Meetings. Email a short response.

Family Meeting 4: Email a picture of your current game board with the peg dolls at the final space.

Family Meeting 5: Share some of the needs of your church from the Check-In. Email a short response.

Family Meeting 6: Share 3 things you are grateful for as a family. Email a short response.

Family Meeting 7: Email a picture of your current game board with the peg dolls at the final space.

Family Meeting 8: Share one thing you wanted to say to baby Jesus during the Closing Prayer. Email a short response.

Family Meeting 9: Email a picture of your current game board with the peg dolls at the final space.