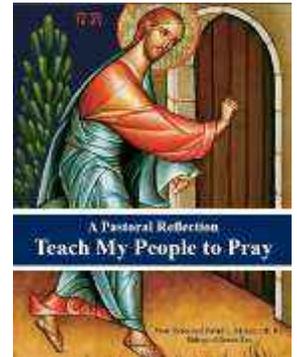


Teach My People to Pray:

Ideas for Religious Education & Youth Ministry

- Tell a 5 minute story about the saint of the day for each class highlighting his/her relationship with the Lord. Pray for the intercession of that saint.
- Pray with the saints (Prayer Booklets available on our resource website)
- Introduce prayer using icons and sacred images
- Have students write down a prayer intention on a slip of paper as they enter the classroom. Read the intentions out loud (or have a student read them aloud) as the class begins in prayer
- Hold a candlelight Mass for particular grades (middle school/high school)
- End every class with 5 minutes of quiet in front of the tabernacle in your parish
- Host grade-level retreats each year
- Do a series on understanding the Mass - the greatest prayer we have as Catholics. Concentrate on one part of the Mass each week and have the students focus in on that part of the Mass for that week in a specific way.
- Pray with students using lectio divina, decades of the Rosary, Divine Mercy chaplet, spontaneous prayer during each class
- Invite religious communities to teach their ways of prayer in religious education classrooms
- Visit convents and monasteries to learn different prayer forms
- Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help or the National Shrine of St. Joseph
- Invite your pastor in to do a walk-through of the Mass
- Introduce the Angelus at 6pm. Ring a bell during classes to stop and pray as an entire program
- Do a lesson on St. Michael and the battle at the beginning of time. Teach the St. Michael prayer
- For All Saints Day (or the nearest Wednesday to that day), have the younger students dress up as saints and bring in a prayer that is attributed to him/her
- For Advent, light candles on an advent wreath and pray the "O Antiphons"
- Teach praise and worship songs to teens. Invite a song leader or band to teach prayer through song.
- Expose Jesus in the monstrance for a time period of quiet prayer and reflection during a Wednesday night class allowing classes to come in at their leisure
- Attend Youth Jam, High School Youth Conference, CYE expeditions, Steubenville Youth Conferences, St. John Bosco Youth Day, etc for spiritual encounters with the Lord
- Hold a May crowning in May by placing a crown of flowers on top of a Mary statue while praying Marian prayers
- For homework, assign to the high school students a lectio divina lesson for the middle school students for next Sunday's Gospel
- Have various prayers for memorization for the elementary school children. Hole punch a hole in the top of each prayer (¼ of a page), and connect them with a fastener or binder ring. Use them during every class to teach prayer.
- Lead the stations of the cross during lent allowing students to reflect upon Christ's passion



- Introduce your students to your parish's patron saint. Pray for their intercession and at the end of each prayer that is said at the parish, end with "St. _____...PRAY FOR US!"
- Form faith sharing groups for seniors in high school to continue on in their faith throughout the remainder of high school and beyond
- Pray a Hail Mary or Our Father over each chair in your classroom as a catechist. Sprinkle blessed salt by the door and ask the Lord to bless your class every week.
- Consider asking those in your parish to pray for each catechist and class. Have them adopt a particular class in prayer.
- Host a vocations night where the boys have a father and a priest talk to them whereas the girls have a mother and a religious sister talk with them about marriage and religious life.
- Consider having some of the students write prayers that can be included in the weekly bulletin
- Have a Family Prayer candle (send a candle or other symbol home to one or two families each week as family reminder to pray for school/parish program during the week; publish family names in a monthly calendar to announce who is specifically praying for the needs of the school and families during that week
- Create a "wall of gratitude" and then pray for those things you are most grateful for in the large group
- Look at your parish religious education calendar and see where on Sundays activities can be lessened so that the focus of Sunday can be rest and family
- Distribute an examination of conscience (a high school examination of conscience is available by contacting youthministry@qbdio.org) and allow the students to pray with it. Offer confessions at some point following that deeper time of examination of conscience.
- Read "The Parish as the School of Prayer: Foundations of the New Evangelization" by Fr. Scott Traynor or a similar booklet/book with all the catechists of your parish
- Do a "Pack the Chap" where students are invited to pack the chapel or church and then have ice cream or pizza after the 30 minutes - hour of prayer together! Great for youth groups or core teams of high school students.
- Form small gender groups of high school students who meet to study and pray together.
- Child leads a prayer. (The child can say a memorized prayer, prayer that their family shares together, or they can say a spontaneous prayer)
- Advent: Read a passage from Luke 1-2 (Annunciation, Visitation) discuss what happened in this passage. Say a prayer asking Mary to help you to bring Christ to other people.
- Lent: take one station a day. Discuss the application in Jesus' life, then ask the child/children to apply it their life (Example: How have you been a Simon of Cyrene today? How have you been a Veronica to someone? How did you handle a difficult situation today?)
- Create a prayer space at home/classroom (crucifix, statue, flower, etc). Gather around it, pause to realize that God is present, ask for prayer intentions, then pray a Hail Mary, Our Father, Memorare, etc.)
- Throughout the day, help the children to just pause and say a short (one line prayer). "Jesus, I trust in you." "Lord, help me to be your voice to others." "Jesus, I love you." "Jesus, help me be a gentle person." etc.
- Intercessory prayers: Help children to be aware of others needs and to pray for them.
- Create a Prayer Box

