

Spiritual Practices for Children

1. As You See God

Using clay, play dough, or Model Magic™ create something that shows what you think God is like. Whatever that looks like or feels like to you. Can you represent God's love? Can you make God's peace? Use your clay. Create something that represents God as you see God.

2. Good Morning Body Prayer

When you wake up in the morning start your day with God by praying with your whole body. Stand next to your bed and reach for the sky. Say "good morning" to God. Now stretch your arms out wide and thank God for your blessings. Then hug your arms into yourself and ask God to be present within you today. Repeat two or three times. What other actions and words could you add to your morning body prayer?

3. Prayer Time

Make a prayer schedule using a printed calendar or one you created. Set a time for a peace prayer each day. Write the names of people you know or know of who do not get along well (you might include yourself) and pray for them. Pray for people who struggle and fight; for people who are not free; for people in charge of businesses, schools, villages, countries, and churches; and for people who are hurt and bullied. Imagine yourself sharing the peace of Jesus Christ with all these people. What difference would that make?

4. Point, Learn, and Pray

Using a globe or world map, close your eyes, turn around, and point to a place to learn about and pray for the people, animals, and environment there. Learn more about the place you chose by researching it online or at a library. What have you learned about that place? Do this each week to learn about a new place, new people, new animals, and plants that you can keep in your heart and pray for each day.

5. Prayer of Blessing for All People Everywhere

Hug a soft Earth ball or pillow in your arms, and say a prayer of blessing for all the people of the Earth.

6. A Chalice Prayer

There are many stories in the news of people and places that are hurting. Form your hands into a bowl shape. Imagine holding those people or a difficult circumstance in your hands. As you say a prayer hold your hands up to God. This form of prayer is called a chalice prayer (“chalice” means cup).

7. See the Light of God

Think back through your day. What made you happy, or where did you see the light of God? Share that moment with your family. What made you sad, or where did you feel distant from God (maybe something you wish you could do differently)? Share that moment. Allow each member of the family to share. Once you have shared, consider what God might be inviting you to do tomorrow. Now offer a prayer thanking God for this time of sharing and ask for guidance as you start the new day.

8. Practice Time with God

Do you have a skill that you are learning that requires practice? Do you play the piano or other musical instrument? Paint? Dance? Play sports? Each time you get ready to practice think of that time as personal time with God. Celebrate your talent by sharing every facet with God. Talk to God about how you are feeling whether you are excited, frustrated, happy, sad, or even bored. Tell God all about it. Think of your practice time as a time with God. You are in this together!

9. Learn to Pray

Talk about prayer with your family. What is prayer? When do you usually pray? What are special times for prayer? When can you first remember prayer being a part of your life or how can you make prayer part of your life? What is your most memorable experience with prayer? Create three kinds of prayers: one about Jesus; one that shows you think of others; and one about peace. Pray with your family using one of the new prayers, or combine all three into one prayer!

10. Held in the Light of God

As you pray hold a battery-operated tea light candle and name the person or people you are praying for. Imagine holding the light of that person up to God. Now imagine God’s light filling that person as you pray. Your prayer might sound something like this, “Loving God tonight I hold the light of [Grandma] up to you. [She] is special to me because []. I know God that you are with [Grandma] every day. Let her feel your light filling every part of her life. Amen.” Use any words that come from your heart.

11. Thank You!

God’s love flows not only when you give, but also when you receive. Encourage your child to say “thank you” regularly. Take time to help your child write a thank you note to someone. Have your child draw a picture and then ask them what they want to say to the person. Write their words as they say them. You

may want to add your own message as well. Your thank you could be for a gift received, but also consider writing a thank you note to someone who is important to your child. Talk with your child about how and why this person is special and then thank them for the gift of themselves.

12. Nature Walk

As a family go for a walk in nature. As you walk notice the beauty of all of God's creation. Name the beauty you see for your child. Get down on the ground together and look at the tiniest pieces of creation. Ask your child what is beautiful to them. Comment on the things you see, hear, smell, and the way things feel. Model the words for your child to describe God's bounty. As you walk, take deep breaths and ask your child to do the same. Each time you take a deep breath say aloud, "God's beauty is everywhere!" Every few minutes stop, take a deep breath and repeat, "God's beauty is everywhere!"

13. Mindfulness Meal

Bring a piece of bread to your prayer place. Think about all the people and steps it took to make this bread. Tear the bread into several small pieces. As you slowly chew each piece, pay attention to its taste, smell, and feel. Offer a prayer of thanksgiving and blessing for those who created this bread. Ask God to help you find ways to help those who are hungry.

14. Be Still and Know that I Am God

Repeating or writing a verse of scripture can focus your mind on God. Use the scripture Psalm 45:10: "Be still and know that I am God." In your journal, write each of the following phrases slowly and prayerfully:

Be still and know that I am God...

Be still and know that I am...

Be still and know...

Be still...

Be.

Now write the scripture in reverse order:

Be...

Be still...

Be still and know...

Be still and know that I am...

Be still and know that I am God.

Amen.