

How to Set Up a Prayer Table

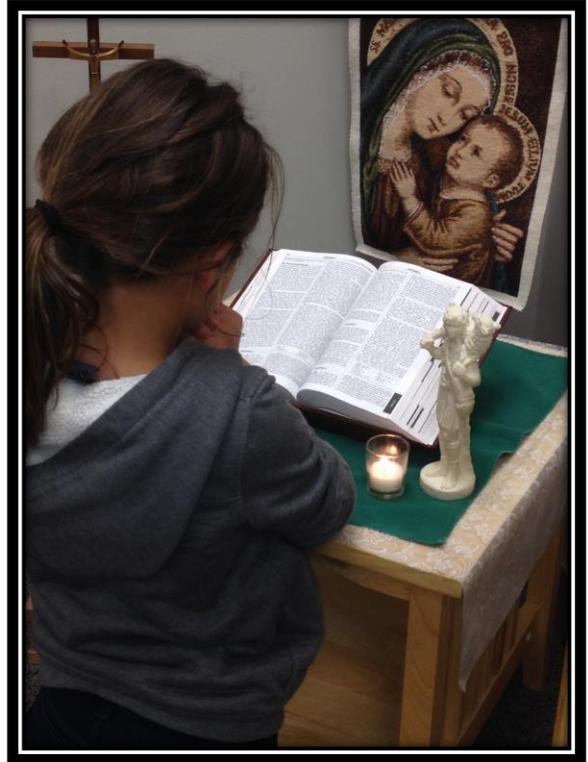
What are the items you would need to set up a prayer table in your home? You may have some or most of the items around your house!

Table

When choosing furniture that your child will use, look for sturdy, yet easy-to-move pieces. For the youngest child, you will want a low table that is no more than 13 to 15 inches in height. A low table will allow the child to prepare the prayer space, thus taking ownership of his or her environment.

You may have a table like this at home, or perhaps you would like to purchase something especially for this purpose. Your local resale shop may be a good source for a small end table or coffee table. Several of the vendors on our CGSUSA Source List offer tables for Montessori classrooms that may also serve as a prayer table:

- The Michael Olaf Montessori Company
- Montessori Services



www.michaelolaf.com

www.montessoriservices.com

Shelf for Prayer Table Articles

It is good to have a small bookcase or shelving unit near the prayer table, so the child can readily select the appropriate articles and art images when preparing the prayer table.

Prayer Cloths

In the Atrium, the first item we place on our table is a prayer cloth. The children will be familiar with prayer cloths used in the Atrium that represent the colors of our Liturgical Year: purple (or blue), green, red and white. You may find some lovely material to use for your prayer cloth, or purchase table runners or large cloth napkins.

Bible

If your family does not have a Bible, you may want to purchase one, but which translation? There are so many to choose from! Rather than purchasing a children's Bible that may paraphrase sacred Scripture, it is preferable that the child hear the same translation that they would hear at Sunday Liturgy.

For Roman Catholics, this would be the New American Bible.

For Episcopalians, this would be the New Revised Standard Version

A page for parents of children in the Atrium

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Bible Stand or Pillow

You may want a stand or small pillow to hold your Bible, which is a further expression of the preciousness of the Bible.

Statue or Sacred Art

One of the characteristics of the young child is that they are attracted to beauty. This includes the art that we place in our environment. Studies show that there are intellectual benefits of stimulating the brain through the fine arts. For younger children, it is recommended that the images be few and carefully selected to reflect the most essential biblical images for Jesus, the Blessed Mother, the Holy Family and the most important New Testament events.

We know the child is particularly drawn to the image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd. A statue of the Good Shepherd is available from Shepherd's Closet: <http://shop.shepherds closet.net/main.sc>
A small statue of a Madonna and Child may also be available for the child to place on the prayer table.

Prayer Cards

A lovely box or basket to hold one-word small prayer cards (approx. 5x7 in.) such as:

- Amen
- Hosanna
- Alleluia

A lovely box or basket to hold medium psalm/prayer phrase cards (approx. 8x10 in.) including among others, cards of:

- Psalm 23:1
- Psalm 23:1-3
- Psalm 23:1-4
- "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you."
- "Blessed are you among women; blessed is the fruit of your womb."

One or two small easels to hold pictures or prayer cards.

Small Kneeler or Cushion for a child to rest on in private prayer.

Candle and Candle Tray

In the Atrium, when we read Scripture, we light a candle, to recall that God's Word is a light for us. It is recommended that the candle holder be made of metal, as children enjoy polishing it. We keep a small tray, containing a candle, a candle snuffer or extinguisher and a container for spent matches near our prayer table. The matches should always be in a covered box, accessible only to the adult.