

Enthroning the Bible in your home

If you are setting up a prayer table in your home for the first time or if you have not gathered in this space as a family for a while, you may want to take the time to 'enthroned' the Bible, so that there is a special place where this particular way in which God comes to be with us is honoured in your midst.



What does this mean?

The term 'enthroning the Bible' is used to describe the act of reverencing and placing the Bible in a special place of focus. At this time when we are unable to go to Mass to encounter Jesus in the Eucharistic, we can turn our focus to another most important way in which God comes to be with us, through His Word. We encounter Jesus powerfully with us when we proclaim His Word. We can do this in our homes and not just on Sundays, but on other days throughout the week.

How do we do this with the children?

If you have a family Bible you might want to take time to carefully explore this special book, we call the Holy Bible, with your children. Present it and open the pages to look at it together. You can discuss with them why this book is holy and what makes it so precious to us.

- The Holy Bible is God's Word through which God is speaking to us.
- It as a Book which contains precious mysteries which God wants to share with us. These mysteries are something God wants to share with everyone.

Depending on the age of your children they may already know some of these mysteries. For instance, they know about:

- Jesus coming to be with us as a tiny baby
- Jesus dying and rising from the dead
- Jesus is the Light of the Word, the Good Shepherd, the True Vine
- Something about the Kingdom of God and how to live in His Kingdom

Try to let the children tell you what they already know. You might be surprised.

Placing the Bible on your prayer table

After this, you might choose to have a procession, carrying this Holy Bible to your prayer space. You may have a favourite song to sing as you process. A suggestion could be *"God's Word is a lamp unto My Feet"*.

If your prayer table is not already set, you could prepare the prayer table at the same time.



Each family member could carry something as you prepare the prayer table.

- A coloured cloth - this could be a scarf, pillowcase or table napkin
- The Holy Bible
- A stand or cushion to rest the Holy Bible on
- Candles to be lit during prayer time
- A statue or picture of the Good Shepherd
- A prayer card that the children have chosen or made
- Flowers
- Candle snuffer and tray - if available

Processions are loved especially by the youngest children but readily engaged in by the older children, especially if they are involved in setting it up and getting it ready. Let them be as creative as they want.



The structure suggested here is simply to give some basic ideas. Let this be a springboard to see what your children come up with.

Preparing As you prepare, some questions you could ask might be:

- How can we honour the Bible here in our home?
- What can you think of that you would want to bring in the procession?
- Where will we start our procession?
- What part of the Bible should we read when we get there?
- What other songs would you like to sing?

Prayer Once you have reached the prayer table and decorated it, light the candles and read a little from the Bible. If the children are uncertain about what scripture to proclaim, you may consider using one of the following:

- Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light for my path. -Psalm 119:105
- Serve the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful song. -Psalm 100:2
- The Lord is my Shepherd, there is nothing I lack. -Psalm 23:1

Then spend some time reflecting together on what God is trying to tell us with these words. Invite your children to pray - Ask them if they would like to say something to Jesus. Wait and let them take their time. Join them by saying your own prayer to Jesus. Conclude with a song. Don't forget to snuff the candles!

Further Reflection Afterwards or the next day they might want to draw or paint or write in a journal of their own or make some song cards or prayer cards.

There are many different types of celebrations that you can have around your family prayer table. We encourage you to begin this ritual of gathering at the prayer table each day and develop your own family prayer traditions.