



Parent Pages

Preparing the environment of the Domestic Church*

* The term "Domestic Church" refers to the family, the smallest body of gathered believers in Christ. Though recovered only recently, the term dates back to the first century AD. The Greek word *ecclesiola* referred to "little church." The early Church understood that the home was fertile ground for discipleship, sanctification, and holiness.

Enthronement of 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 enthrone the Bible in your home, so that there is a special place where this particular way in which God comes to be with us is honored in your midst.

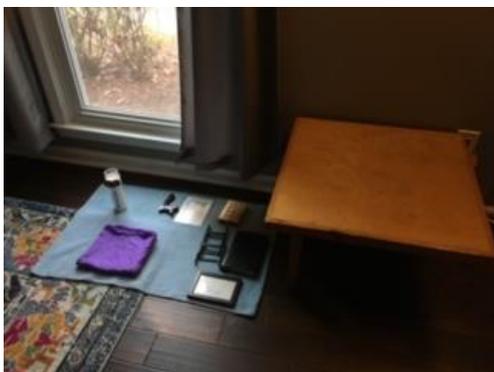
What does this mean?

At this time when we are unable to go to Church and encounter the Risen Jesus there 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 own homes, and not just on Sundays, but on other days throughout the week as well.

How do we do this with the Children?

If you have a family Bible you might want to take time to present your children with this special book which we call The Holy Bible. You can discuss with them why this book is holy and what makes it so precious to us. First of all, it is God speaking to us and is God's Word. It is a

Book which contains mysteries which God wants to share with us. We remember that when we speak about the word "mystery", we are referring to something that is partially hidden and partially revealed. What has God revealed to us in the Bible? There are several scriptures that refer to the mystery of the Kingdom of God that are found in the Bible. It is important to remember that God wants everyone to discover and reflect upon these mysteries; to know about the Kingdom of God and how to live in this Kingdom.



Enthronement of the Bible: (above) preparing for the Enthronement, (middle) carrying the Bible in procession to the Prayer Table, (right) the Bible is placed on the Prayer Table

Perhaps you could consider with your child some of what we already know about the mystery of God, and how God reveals himself to us. They may know

- 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

Let the child(ren) tell you what they know.

The word 'enthronement' is used to describe the action of placing the Bible in a special place. As a family, you might have a procession carrying this Holy Bible to your prayer table. (A possible song to sing as you carry the Bible would be "Thy Word is a Lamp Unto My Feet")

In the procession they might also other things to decorate the prayer table

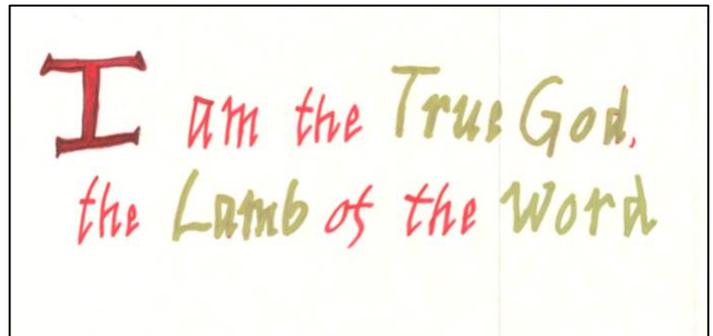
- a purple cloth (this could be a scarf, a pillowcase, a table napkin)
- candles to be lit once you place them on the table
- a statue or picture of the Good Shepherd (the children can draw something)
- a prayer card that the children have chosen or made
- flowers
- A Candle Snuffer and tray (if available)

Processions are loved especially by the youngest children who will love to lead them but readily engaged in by the older children especially if they are involved in setting it up and getting it ready.

Let the children be as creative as they want. Celebrations in the atrium especially with the older children are very fluid and follow the child and their ideas and interests. The structure here is simply to give some basic ideas for you as parents but let this just be a springboard to see where the children might take you or what they might discover.

Questions you could ask might as you prepare for the procession:

- How can we honor the Bible here in our home?
- What can you think of that you would want to carry 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?



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.

If the children are uncertain about what scripture to proclaim when you enthrone the Bible, you may consider using 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

There are many different types of celebrations that you can have around your prayer table, both seasonal and familial. The prayer table, whether it is on your kitchen table, an end table, a shelf, or you are using an empty box overturned, will be important for your family as we near Holy Week. We encourage you to begin this ritual of gathering at the prayer table each day.