

# FAMILY COLLATIO

## Family Prayer After Dinner

Here is an idea on how to pray together as a family. You may have heard of Lectio divina prayer (Latin for divine reading). We call this similar prayer method a "Collatio" (pronounced "Coh-lah'-tsee-oh"), a Latin word for a shared meal, to which everyone contributes and in which we all share.

1. After dinner, before dishes are cleared away (or any preferable time), select a short passage from the bible, e.g. Mark's gospel, 4:35-40. Usually Dad is reader; others can be.
2. Dad first invites those present to listen carefully to God's Word and reminds them of Jesus' assurance: "Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there, too." He begins with a short prayer such as "Speak to us, Lord. Help us listen carefully to Your word."
3. Then he reads the passage aloud very slowly, distinctly, with pauses, so that each phrase can sink into the listeners.
4. After the reading each in turn shares what it said to him personally: "I felt this ..." "I heard this..." "This struck me..." "To me it said or meant..." Keep contributions very short, personal (say "I" not "we"), honest, simple, not preachy, not applying lessons to others. *Be careful not to make this a discussion.* That will kill the prayer experience. Peacefully, humbly, sensitively listen to God's word and simply share what it said and meant to you personally.
5. Do not feel uneasy during silent gaps between readings or comments. These silent moments are golden and afford rare opportunities of letting God's message resonate and slowly deepen in us. Relax. Savor His words during the silences.
6. After the first round of sharing, Dad again reads the same passage slowly. It is a richer listening experience this time because the remarks each one shared have enriched the passage for the others. God speaks to all through each other, too.
7. A second round of sharing, usually richer than the first, follows the second reading.
8. The same passage is read slowly a third and last time.
9. After the third reading, only spontaneous prayers are spoken directly to God the Father or to Jesus or to the Holy Spirit or to our Blessed Mother - e.g., "Thank you, Jesus, for speaking to us. Help me be more aware of your presence in me and in others."
10. After everyone who wishes to has spontaneously prayed, Dad concludes the prayer time by thanking God, then a favorite hymn can be sung and the clean-up in the kitchen begins (or whatever else follows).

It is hard because minutes fly by, but try to limit the prayer time to a half-hour.

God's presence becomes very real, especially during the prayers. While one prays aloud, the others are not mere listeners, but join in spirit and make that prayer their own.

Excerpt of article [http://www.manresa-canada.ca/articlesonprayer/articlesonprayer\\_personal\\_response.shtml](http://www.manresa-canada.ca/articlesonprayer/articlesonprayer_personal_response.shtml)