

This is a good time to set up a Catholic Prayer Table (Home Altar)!

A home prayer table gives your family a designated area for prayer, meditation and other forms of worship. By creating a special area for worship, you can block out worldly concerns and focus entirely on God during your prayer time. Although some pictures of prayer tables make them look like they must be expensive, full of icons and statuary, they do not have to be elaborate.

Your Catholic prayer table can be as ornate or as simple as you choose.

Things You'll Need

- Small table
- Crucifix or other image of Christ
- Green, white and purple tablecloths
- Bible
- Prayer book
- Rosary
- Miscellaneous religious objects



Locate an area in your house that is easily accessible but isn't surrounded by potential distractions. Avoid areas such as your kitchen or home office, as you may become distracted by thoughts of work or by family members doing chores. If possible, use an eastern wall of the house to mirror the placement of altars in Catholic churches.

Place a small table, desk or similar item in your prayer area. The item you use should be tall enough that any objects you place on it will be at eye level when you kneel.

Gather any religious items which you already have in your home. These might include Bibles, prayer books, rosaries, icons, statues, crucifixes, needlepoint prayers, votive candles, holy cards and any other items of a sacred nature. This will help you determine what you already have so you do not buy unnecessary items for your prayer table.

Cover the table with a green tablecloth if it is ordinary time, a purple tablecloth if it is Advent or Lent or a white tablecloth if it is Christmas or Easter. The tablecloth will remind you of the liturgical year so that you may frame your worship accordingly.

Place a crucifix or other representation of Christ at the center of the table. This will help you keep Christ in the center of your thoughts while praying.

Place a Bible, a prayer book and a rosary on the table. This will allow you to read Scripture and recite liturgical prayers while at your prayer table.

Arrange any icons, statues, holy cards, candles and other items you wish to feature on your table. To mirror the setup of church altars, place the most sacred items and images, such as icons of the

Blessed Mother, on the left side of the table, as this will be at the right hand of Christ on the crucifix.

Vary your altar setup depending on the time of the liturgical year. For instance, in Advent, set up an Advent wreath and a Nativity scene with an empty crib. In Lent, set up a crown of thorns and copies of penitential prayers.

Email a photo of your prayer table (home altar) to BrendaManzo@stthereseeparish.ws. We will post it on our St. Therese of Lisieux website!