

Acts of Kindness

Sacrificing some of our time, in order to be kind to others or to God's creation, can be an effective and family-friendly form of penance. Consider some of these options:

1. Take a meal to a relative or neighbor who is going through a tough time.
2. Offer to do yardwork, or to run errands, for someone who struggles with those tasks.
3. Go on a prayer walk around your neighborhood. Pray for each home and the people who live there.
4. Help to clean up a local park, waterway, or hiking trail.
5. Volunteer for, or participate in, a local fundraising 5K walk/run.
6. Go through your home and collect unused toys, clothes, books, etc., and donate them to those in need.
7. Take a trip to the grocery store and fill up a couple of bags to give to your local food pantry.

For many other ideas, do an internet search for "Family Acts of Kindness" or "Family Service Ideas".

Day of Atonement and Healing



OPTIONS FOR FAMILIES



Diocese of Scranton/Office for Parish Life

What is Atonement?

Atonement is doing something right, to help make up for a wrong. When Jesus died on the cross for us, his sacrifice made up for our sins. Jesus taught us that we too can help make up for what others have done wrong. We make this happen by doing positive and good things like praying, and by making sacrifices through fasting and taking time to help others.

These pages contain some ideas for gathering your family to observe our Diocesan Day of Atonement and Healing. Please choose as many, or as few, of these ideas as fit the needs of your family.

Friday evening:

- Gather as a family, set aside other activities, and make space for being together.
- Share a simple meal, consider abstaining from meat and skip the dessert. This type of meal can be a form of fasting.
- Engage in some form of family sharing. Explore these links for some guidance in how to address difficult topics:
 - <https://vibrantfaithathome.org/item/why-do-bad-things-happen>
 - <https://vibrantfaithathome.org/item/help-with-heavy>
- If it is appropriate for your family to discuss issues of abuse in the Church, consider doing so. This resource may help: www.d2l.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Talking-to-Kids-About-Event-in-the-News.pdf

- Share a night prayer and blessing, such as this one:
"Prayer for a Child Before Bed
[Say this as you make the sign of the cross on your child's forehead or heart.]
May God bless you. May God keep you safe. God be with you. God be in your heart. May God bless and protect you."

From Catholic Family Prayers, Paraclete Press, Brewster, MA

Saturday:

- Share a morning prayer, such as this one:
"A Short Morning Offering for Children
Thank you, God, for giving us this day; help us to be like Jesus in all we think, do, and say.
Amen."
From www.pbgrace.com
- Attend morning Mass together or attend other events offered by your parish (or neighboring parishes) today.
- Continue from Friday evening, or begin now, following the plan for simple meals as a form of fasting.
- Together, engage in one of the Acts of Kindness listed on the next page.

Saturday evening:

- End this period of prayer, fasting, and atonement with a favorite meal. Express gratitude for God's gifts of mercy, forgiveness, and unconditional love.