

CLOW at Home: 5-Part Festive or Sabbath Meal

With Covid 19 Restrictions leaving many of our youngest children without an experience of family church-going, we have an opportunity to create a celebratory meal with God's love at the Center. Try to involve your child (and older children as well) with the preparations. This is a meal to bring your family together in a spirit of love, creativity, remembrance of God's goodness, thankfulness, praise and sharing.



The 5-Part Festive meal:

1. **Preparation:** Gather necessary objects. Set the dinner table and include the candle, cross, Bible or prayer book
2. **Call the family** to be seated. Light the Candle and choose someone to read the **Opening Prayer, Grace** and Remembrances (optional).
3. **Read a short story** appropriate to the youngest child. The story could be from the gospel or favorite storybook that lends itself to insight about something good. Invite conversation after the reading through questions or sharing.
4. **Closing Prayer/Grace.** Offer thankful expressions. Snuff or blow out Candle.
5. **Stay in God's togetherness!** Let child and family members choose an activity that all have an equal chance of enjoying. This

could be a game, puzzle or a viewing of a film that has a good message for your little one.

Following is a “script” for your Sabbath or Festive dinner.

Feel free to use this as is, or as a jumping off point to design one with your own feeling or imagination. Keep it simple for yourself and enjoyable for your child. You can do this as simply as opening and closing prayer and a candle-lighting.

✚ Preparing your PreK child for the meal:

Let your child/children know in advance that you are planning this festive meal. Tell them why. (For example, since we haven't been able to go to Church together, we thought we might make a date to celebrate God here at home. We'll need you to help us make it special. Is there anything special you think we should do?)

✚ Items for setting the table:

- A candle (a white candle of any size either wax or a plastic LED)
- A tablecloth or runner (if you don't have one, get a few pieces of paper or construction paper and lay them in a row in the center of the table)
- Your usual place settings
- Something special either made by your child or selected by your child for the table. It could be something they already made, or have. You could also ask them to draw or color something on a piece of paper folded in half (so it can stand up easily)

OPTIONAL ITEMS

- A Bible or Prayer Book at the leader's place at the head of the table. (You can make your own prayer book by folding a piece of construction paper in half, drawing a cross or pasting on a

cross on the cover, and inserting folded white paper inside with the prayers—some suggestions for short prayers are below)

- A cross if you have one.
- A plate with bread (any kind is fine)

✚ **Order of the Meal and Prayers.** You may choose your own prayers. Some simple ones are provided. If your child knows a song (“This Little Light of Mine”) or a refrain from Mass such as “Alleluia” you could sing it before or after the meal or at an appropriate time. Feel free to further simplify the suggestions below.

- **Gathering at the dinner table:**

[leader] Opens with the sign of the cross.

Prayer #1 : As we gather around this table, O God, we celebrate this special day and the blessings you give us each and every day, through your Son, Jesus, our brother and friend. Amen.

- **Lighting the candle and Praying**

[leader] (The child may light the candle)

Prayer # 2 As we light this candle, Jesus, we invite you to bring your light and love into our hearts and home tonight.

(**Optional: Leader repeats above**, and Waves the candle **inward** 3 times to represent more of Jesus’ light in the life of the family. Leader repeats above 3 more times, Waving the candle **outward** to represent spreading the light of Jesus into the neighborhood, community and the world.

Grace before meal – Prayer # 3

We thank you, God, for all the gifts you give us: for this good food, for our home, our family and friends, for our teachers and all the people around us who help us everyday. We ask you to help everyone who is without enough food, or who doesn’t

have a home. Send good health to those who are sick. And if a person is sad, we ask that you send them your love and a friend to cheer them up.

[leader] In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

○ **Everyone eats! Share stories, conversations.**

○ **Closing Prayer, Blowing out of candle.**

Prayer # 4

We thank you, God, for this good food that we have eaten, and we ask that you fill us with your love and bring peace and happiness to the world, through Jesus Christ, your son. Amen.

[leader or child appointed] Blow or snuff out the candle.

[leader] This Blessing meal is ended.

[leader] *Let's all say the sign of the cross together:]* In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.