

CFM Family Nights



A Family Enrichment Resource
of Christian Family Movement
www.cfm.org

Families are busy! We know we need to spend more time together as a family, to reconnect and enjoy each other's company. Our schedules fill up and before we know it, we have forgotten to plan for the time we crave. While dinner time is the ideal time to gather and pay attention to one another, many families today need extra ideas for spending time together and nourishing their relationships. [CFM Family Nights](#) give you something to do in your time together.

You can put your dream into action. **Add a CFM Family Night to your home calendar each month.** Having a definite time each week for a [CFM Family Night](#) helps everyone to plan and prepare to be together.

CFM Family Night is also a great way to add members to CFM! Family Nights plans also work for groups! [CFM Family Nights](#) could be used by small groups of families, meeting together to pray, learn and grow in community and friendship. Your CFM Action Group probably meets monthly; consider also occasionally inviting a new family to join you for a Family Night as a way of inviting them into CFM. Your CFM group could also use [CFM Family Nights](#) to put on a large group program for the parish. Share the gift of CFM with new families and keep our Movement vital!

CFM Family Nights is a resource for families of all ages, stages, and shapes. The outlines are quite simple: opening prayer, something to think about, activity ideas, snack time, entertainment, sharing and closing prayer. Activities are suggested for Young Families, Middle Years Families, and Adult Families.

These outlines are just jumping off points for your own creativity. As you develop your own style of Family Nights, you will discover new ways to be together. Learning to have a [CFM Family Night](#) is learning to pause one night a week as a family and to be refreshed together.

Our prayer is that the bonds of love and trust within your families will be strengthened as you become accustomed to an open and intentional way of being family and being CFM.

*The Christian Family Movement
USA*

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Hope and Lent

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Opening Prayer

Lord, as we gather for Family Night, help us to be a family with hope. We have often forgotten to appreciate the good in one another. Empower us to be positive and help us also seek and see the goodness in one another. Bless us, dear Jesus, through this whole week. We place our faith in you.

Think about This

From the Bible, read 1 Corinthians 13:13. Hope is one of the three powerful virtues. Christians hope in Christ. Hope means “to want and expect.” It is a feeling that what is wanted will happen. Lent is our greatest season of hope because it awaits the great mystery of Jesus resurrection on Easter morning.

Share the Gift of CFM

You might want to invite some friends to join you for this CFM Family Night. Then invite them to join your CFM action group! Share the gift of CFM with your friends.

Activity Ideas

Young Families

Prayer Treasure Chest – Materials: shoe box or other box with a lid, old magazines, scissors, glue, stickers, colorful paper. Cut out pictures that remind you of hope and love, and glue them on the box. Have each member write (or help little ones write) three prayers on separate slips of paper. Place the prayers in the Treasure Chest and draw out a prayer to read before dinner or at the beginning of Family night. Add new prayers and prayer intentions often.

Middle Years Families

Rice Bowl of Hope – Materials: bowl, paper, and pen. Or use Operation Rice Bowl box and activity ideas from Catholic Relief Services

<http://orb.crs.org> One way of sharing hope with others is by giving alms. Plan to conserve one meal a week and use the money for the Rice Bowl. At the end of Lent, give the money to your local poor or to Catholic Relief Services.

Adult Families

Read John 17:20-26 and Philippians 3:7-17. Share your thoughts, especially about the connections between faith and hope. Decide on a concrete action that will bring hope to someone in your family or community.

Snack Time

Make some popcorn and discuss how the kernels change and become transformed. Share ideas on how we can be compared to popcorn in our own lives.

Entertainment

“Who Am I – Bible version” -- Each person take a turn and choose a person from the Bible. In ten questions or less, the family tries to guess the Bible personality. Only yes and no answers permitted.

Sharing

- Each share a story about a hope he or she had and how things worked out.
- Someone share a funny story about him or herself.
- Share a time you felt especially cared for by another family member.

Closing Prayer

Each write a prayer of hope for a family member or for the community or world. Read your prayers to close the evening. Save your prayers in a “Prayer Treasure Chest.”

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Signs of Love -- Lent

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Opening Prayer

Jesus, we love you and we are grateful for your presence with us now. Thank you for loving us so much and showing your love in your life and death on the Cross. Help us see how we may be more loving and giving to one another. Amen.

Think about This

From the Bible, read John 15: 9-12. Christ's great love for us is captured in the simplicity of bread and wine that become his Body and Blood; in the wood and nails by which he suffered pain and death that we might live. He asks only that we follow him by living lives of love.

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Activity Ideas

Young and Middle Years Families

Signs of Love – Materials: pencils and paper, hammer and nails, bread and wine or grape juice. Have everyone draw a picture of the hammer and nails and the bread and wine. Both these symbols may be used as centerpieces during Lent. Share thoughts with each other on the reasons these symbols are such great signs of God's love.

Adult Families

Read Luke 22: 14-20 and Mark 14: 22-25 for the bread and wine, then Mark 15: 21-41, the Crucifixion. Share thoughts about bread and wine and the hammer and nails being symbols of God's love. Each person

think of someone for whose intention you will receive Holy Communion or pray before the Crucifix this week.

Snack Time

Grapes. Try to keep the snack simple during Lent.

Entertainment

“This Reminds Me of the Time”: Collect, in a bag or box, items from around the house: shoes, apron, coffee pot, vitamins, car keys, back pack, a food item. Each person take out an item, then invent an explanation of how that item reminds them of a story about how your family or one of its members showed love or did something kind. The story can be serious or funny. Write a silly song or poem that tells about this “symbol.”

Sharing

- Share a story about a meal or a food that was extra special to you, and why.
- Try to recall when your faith was tested. What was it like and how did things turn out?
- Share a time when you felt extremely sad. How could it be compared to Jesus’ crown of thorns?

Closing Prayer

Father, as Lent continues, help us to see your love in the events and experiences of everyday life. May we persevere in our Lenten promises. Thank you for sending your son, Jesus, and thank you for his gifts to us. Amen.

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Reconciliation

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Opening Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Think about This

From the Bible, read Mark 14:10-11 and John 19: 23-25. How often do we put things before people or betray one another like Judas did Christ for a few coins? How often have we been unaware or indifferent to another's sufferings, like the soldiers who rolled dice for Jesus cloak? How often have we been hurt by someone else's thoughtlessness? How often have we hurt others with our words or actions?

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Activity Ideas

Young and Middle Years Families

Penance Sharing – Materials: Bible, candle, matches, large heat-proof glass bowl, small pieces of paper (idea: magician's flash paper burns brightly and quickly in the flame of the candle), pencils. Light the candle and gather around it with all the other room lights off. Read aloud, Matthew 5: 23-24. Pause and have each person reflect on the particular ways he or she may have offended or hurt another family member. Have each person write the offense on a slip of paper. Then reflect on some ways you have been hurt by someone else. Write these down also. Each family member, taking a turn, folds his or her paper and burns it in the bowl. Encourage family members to seek

forgiveness, later in the evening, of whomever they have hurt. Add some dice and a purse with coins to other symbols of Lent in your family dining area.

Adult Families

Read aloud Luke 6:27-38, then Matthew 27: 35-39, and lastly Matthew 5:23-24. Discuss each passage. Share what it is like to try to be reconciled with someone who refuses you. Describe how the experience feels. What do you do when this happens? Make an overture of reconciliation with a person in your family, or extended family, with whom you are distant.

Snack Time

Crackers, cheese, and grape juice.

Entertainment

Play Yahtzee, a simple dice game for all ages.

Sharing

- The thing I like best about this family is.... Why?
- Share a time someone felt left out or excluded at school or in the family
- Recall a time your family extended hospitality to others.

Closing Prayer

Thank you, Lord, for this Family Night. Teach us to be more aware of one another's needs and help us to become better listeners. Thank you, Lord, for our family. Amen.

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