



Cathedral Parish Month of the Family “Dinner’s ready; Come to the table!”

Recipe Card

Recipe Title _____

Ingredients _____

Cooking Instructions _____



From the kitchen of : _____



“Month of the Family” – Cathedral Style

The purpose of Month of the Family is to promote and strengthen all families and the parish family. The parish celebration of Family Month is meant to include all ages and stages of family life – children; those not married; elderly; adolescents and young adults’ engaged and newly married; widowed and divorced; married for any number of years; grandparents; adoptive, natural and stepparents; clergy and religious; and those who live alone. These diverse families, and any we may not have mentioned, are all members of God’s family as we come together to worship and celebrate in our parish family/community. The Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, gives us the strength and graces to know that our family is sacred through ordinary life. **We are the Body of Christ, the Family of God.**

Look at the back cover of this booklet for a **RECIPE CARD**. Please fill in the sheet with your favorite family recipe and return it to the church. The recipe should enable our families to spend more time together strengthening family relationships around the table. Three ways to return your recipe: the basket in the Church Foyer, the collection basket, or bring to the Church Office. We will feature the recipes on our website and in the bulletin from time to time.

Remember our Family Chili Supper and Cook-off on Sunday, January 21, 2018, at 12 Noon in the Parish Hall. You can have a hot dog, a chili dog, Frito pie, or a cup or bowl of chili!!! If you would like to make a pot of chili, or register for the Chili Cook-off, please email me at dotstanford@sjbcathedral.org or call the Church Office 221-5296.



Dotye Sue Stanford
Family Life Coordinator



Dinner's ready; Come to the table!

Each of us can remember our mothers calling us to the table when meals were ready. At times, it felt like a major interruption, at others, we couldn't wait to get there. As we gathered in the dining room or kitchen area, we were assailed by the many good smells wafting from the many dishes prepared and ready for our enjoyment. How grand that was!

Once we arrived at the table it was all business, making sure we received a portion of all that was being offered. We couldn't wait. But, we did. We waited until all were served, and knew that we had to first give God thanks and to thank the "cook."

Then the serious focus was on eating. Oh, how good that was. Each dish had its own flavor and texture. Each mouthful gave us a new feeling of comfort and peace. It was good for us to be here.

As lagniappe, we found ourselves caught up in the midst of several conversations depending on how large our family was and if everyone had come to the table. In our home, it was just the four of us, but we all had to be there. Supper was the meal where we all shared our day, our excitements and disappointments. That meal also afforded us the chance to listen to our parents talk about what was going on in the world, their work place and items of discussion concerning our home. It was an opportunity to learn what was important, beliefs and values, relationships and, yes, even politics.

Those moments were precious to each of us, despite being ordinary. What appeared to be just a meal was actually family being formed and fashioned ~ serious business when one reflects on the impact such regular meals have on future generations. These simple moments define us as individuals and future families. As a result, history is affected for all time.

Welcome to our dinner table. This evening we will have a four-course meal for each of you to chew on, digest and put to good use in your family and world. Understand, we have the head Chef, Jesus Christ, doing the cooking and presenting. It should be a wonderful time for all of us. Bon appetite!

Conversation Starter:

How do you prepare for your family meals? What do you bring to the table?



Cathedral of St. John Berchmans

Blessing of Families

Heavenly Father, We give you thanks
for all you have bestowed on us, your people.
Thank you for allowing us to serve those people
you have sent into our lives.
Thank you for enabling us to learn your gifts of forgiveness,
compassion, patience, joy, peace and love from these precious souls
we call our family, as well as, from life's daily challenges.

We ask for your blessings today.
Empower us to represent you well.
Bear us up when we fall and forgive us when we falter.
Bless each of us to reflect your presence to the world
as we go through our daily lives.
Allow each of us to continue to bring your love to the world
through our personal touch.
We ask all this in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ.
Amen.

From: Deacon Dave Farinelli, Archdiocese of New Orleans



Gathering At The Table

Our coming to the table tends to be the most routine aspect of our meal. Most people would define that aspect as a “no brainer.” How else do families eat together if they are all not at the table? However, that is exactly the point of this first aspect. Eating together on a daily basis is not just something nice to do, it is imperative to forming an “intimate community of persons” as defined in *Familiaris Consortio*.

Each person has his/her own position, and the family defines over time how it will operate at the table. This may include the Dad taking the “head of the table” position with Mother being at the opposite end. It may mean food starts with Dad and moves around, or each starting with the food closest to them and begin the passing movements. Defining and instituting a type of “family etiquette” sets the tone of order and functionality for the family. It puts such ideas into the realm of “routine.”

Once all have been served, or just prior to serving, a “gathering prayer” or “Grace Before Meals” can be said led by one of the members of the family or designated to the Father/Mother of the house. This prayer can be fancy or simple depending on the person chosen to lead it.

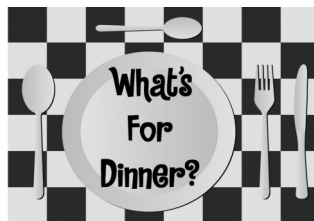
The important factor at this stage of the gathering is to teach by example that coming together daily is important to the well-being of the family. Praying in thanksgiving to God is necessary for each of us to appreciate daily all that God has given us, to model the concept that we are not “all important” – God is all important.

As a family regularly gathers for prayer and meals, the children grow up considering these gatherings as part of their family routine. They will remember and consider their family gatherings as the way things should be done.

An interesting piece to gathering and sitting at the same spots around the table is that this is the way memories are formed in our consciousness. We remember happenings based on our routine positions in the gathering. We are able to picture ourselves again in those recollections and remember the reactions of the others at the same time.

Conversation Starter:

Take turns leading “A Prayer Before Meals” and “A Prayer of Thanks After Meals”.



First Course – Entrée

The center of every meal is the main course. This usually is some form of meat, though in our day of “healthful eating” it may also mean fish or poultry. In essence, it is the heart of the meal and other dishes are chosen as complements to that main course.

Our main course is no different. As the main course, the family should look to explore substantive material as a family. These topics can range from the profound to the absurd. They don’t always have to be the “weight of the world” topics, but allow each person to hear family concerns or ideas.

These exchanges allow the children to form their own consciences concerning serious matters, sacred issues and silly perspectives. These exchanges enable the parents and children alike to witness how others think and arrive at conclusions. Where individuals within the gathering present issues in their thought processes, it provides a forum for correction and adjustment. It also allows all at the table to learn, to listen, to respond and to accept each other as each seeks to become their own person.

This “entrée” could possess a “thread” which permeates the entire conversation and, in fact, outlasts the formal gathering time. However long a family dwells on a topic is actually not all that important, as is simply having something of substance to discuss.

A word of caution, it is important for parents to listen to their children as they make their points, express their opinions and ideas and affirm them in the efforts they make. Correcting or adjusting the concepts enables the children to come away with the proper slant or perspective without feeling beaten down or demeaned. In no manner should the children, or for that matter either parent, be demeaned and diminished by others at the table because of what is said at the table. That is not what “table” is all about.

See this as a time to feed the minds and spirits as well as the bodies of each person coming to the meal. It is also at this time we, as family, begin to see the areas of each person that are most vulnerable. These are the elements we are to hold dear and closest to our hearts. These things form our families.

Conversation Starter: Introduce a topic or person who had the most significant impact on you during your day. This can be a person or topic from national, regional, or local news or someone with whom you go to school or work.

M E N U

Dinner’s ready; Come to the table!

Month of the Family

January 2018

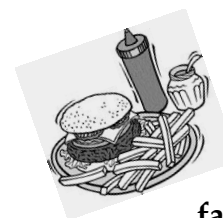
Our Family Dinner Menu

First Course

Second Course

Main Dish

Dessert



“Our Family Dinner Menu”

**After you decide on the date and menu
for your special “Family Dinner”,**

**post this menu in a highly visible area,
such as, the refrigerator or**

family bulletin board for every family member to see.



Daily Family Meal Prayers

OPENING PRAYER:

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Bless this meal in which we are about to partake.

We thank you for the gift of this food.

Open our ears to hear each other.

Open our hearts to love each other.

Thank you for all the ordinary things in our lives that you provide for us so freely.

And bless the cook who prepared this meal.

Amen.



DAILY INTENTIONS:

Sunday

Thank you, God, for the freedom to worship you as a family. Help us to be mindful of all our extended family members who are not with us at this time.

Monday

Thank you, God, for our parish church, where we share Eucharist with the community. Help us to better appreciate the sacrifice and mystery of Your real presence.

Tuesday

Thank you, God, for the ups and downs in our family life. Help us to better understand how they both bring this family closer together.

Wednesday

Thank you, God, for the blessing of employment. Help us to always respect co-workers and customers and to give 100% in the places we work.

Thursday

Thank you, God, for the many different vocations that are part of this family – the children, single adults, married couples, and those in religious life. Help us to respect and value the uniqueness and difference of each.

Friday

Thank you, God, that we realize that there are many people hurting for different reasons in our community – the hungry, the homeless, the childless, and all others. Help us to reach out as we can to those in need.

Saturday

Thank you, God, for the favor of our world as you created it. Help us to remember that your creation is a gift to all.

CLOSING PRAYER:

God of this family and of all families, we ask you to continue to strengthen us spiritually, physically, and emotionally as we grow closer to you and to each other. We offer this prayer in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit...

Amen.



veggie-tables - gotta have'em!

My mom used to tell my brother and me we had to eat our vegetables despite the fact that our dad never ate them. She would tell us vegetables balanced out the meal giving us the nutrients not contained in the main course.

Life, too, is not simply meat & potatoes. It is more than that. Soooo, ya' gotta have veggie-tables too.

Within your conversations and usual table talk, it is good to interject questions designed to raise awareness about a particular issue or to elicit a stance by those participating in the conversation. Additionally, these questions may also call us as family to investigate Church teachings through the use of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

These topics actually “beef” up the conversations and sharing by attaching teachings to the matter. This enriches and deepens the purpose of the conversation while at the same time, forming consciences. As each person realizes something can be learned from every conversation, deeper ideas and concepts can be added to the variety of conversations.

As with most vegetables, flavor is usually added in some fashion. So it is with our conversations. It is our responsibility to add the mix that flavors the tidbits we add to the main entrée.

You will notice, not all like the same vegetables at the same time. So it is with the kernels of teaching added to the conversations. For some, the kernels are just what were needed. They explained and clarified concepts and thoughts. For others, the teachings only muddled the ideas and thoughts and, maybe, turned the concepts upside down. It's okay if that happens. No two people come to the conclusions at the same time or even the same conclusions. There is a possibility that some part of or all of the conversation will have to be revisited for clarity later on. It is commonly accepted that some vegetables have to be offered over and over again before being accepted and enjoyed; so it is with ideas and thoughts. Consistency is the name of the game.



Conversation Starter: Ask each person to relate one event that happened to them today. Ask each to share how they think God was active in that event.



Starches or Stretches?

For my family, starches in our diet meant potatoes. In fact, little else was ever prepared aside from corn because that was what my dad ate. We learned to like and dislike what my father did by way of what we didn't eat.

Starches have their place in the grand scheme of meals if you are one who expects to see potatoes as the "perfect" complement to meat. Starches add bulk and fiber to the meal, thus allowing us to get up from the table fuller and enabling us to go longer between meals.

Our gatherings at the table should target the same goal of providing the kind of feelings which will stay with us throughout the day, week, or month. Stretching our ability to remain connected reinforces our feelings of "family" and removes any feelings of loneliness. Due to the hustle of our lives, we can become so distracted that we begin to feel isolated and alone. We get out of the habit of connecting with those around us and eventually begin to believe we have to manage on our own.

Starches such as pasta are also termed "comfort foods." I'm wondering if we don't have a better disposition while eating those comfort foods and enjoying each other's company. In our family, it seemed that we stayed around the table longer and did a lot more laughing and cutting up. Because of these moments, memories were formed and stories developed which would tend to be shared over and over at other family gatherings.

As with any food, extremes do exist and tend to cause trouble. Balance is the word of the day and in this instance, starches and stretches don't have to be abundant. One night of hilarity, or serious talk, or a combination of the two will enrich the entire family and allow the family to grow closer together.

Conversation Starter: Share a feeling you experienced today at work or school and tell what you did with that feeling.

Take Time to Sip!

A Sip implies barely admitting liquids into one's mouth, savoring the flavor and tasting the moistness of the liquid. It connotes a time of enjoyment. It is at these moments we tend to reflect on and appreciate the company and meal in its entirety.

And thus it should be for all of us at each meal. Meals play a two-fold role of nourishing our bodies as well as our familial relationships. They can also allow us the time and space to appreciate what we have at that moment.

Sit back and sip from your glass, look around at your family as they exchange various types of information. Look at the expressions on their faces, observe their body language and listen to the various topics being discussed. Do you feel the wonder? Aren't you amazed at how your family has grown and developed?

Besides this moment of amazement, we have the opportunity to affirm and nurture each other around shared food and drink. Too often, we have not affirmed each other enough. Years ago, a daughter was heard to say to her dad that every person needed ten hugs a day; she then proceeded to hug everyone in the family. It's not certain we all need ten hugs a day, but we do need affirmation on a regular basis, especially from those we live with and interact with daily.

Develop a routine, possibly each evening when the family sits for dinner together, to say something positive about another person at the table. Take turns until each person has received at least one affirmation from another. Initially, it will feel strange, but eventually it will become a normal thing to do and each of you will begin to feel better about self and family.

Savor the laughter each of you shares. Allow those light moments to fill the time when you and your family are sharing your meal. Attempt to turn those more difficult moments of a meal toward a lighter side. This is important as in many cases the difficult moments tend to paralyze the family, while the lighter side will allow time for the family to think out solutions to resolve the difficulties. This is much the same thing drink does for us while eating.

Conversation Starter:

Share a joke or funny story from your day's experiences with your family.

Affirm at least one person at your table telling that person how much you appreciate him or her.

