



Blessing the Crib at Home

The Crib: Background

The custom of displaying figures, depicting the birth of Jesus, owes its origin to Saint Francis of Assisi who made the Christmas crèche or manger for Christmas Eve in 1223. The blessing of the Christmas manger may take place on the vigil of Christmas or at another suitable time. When the manger is set up at home, it is appropriate that it is blessed by a parent or another family member.

Make the sign of the Cross... In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Introduction:

Parent/Family Member: We are at the beginning of the Christmas season. During these weeks we will look on these images of sheep and cattle, of shepherds, of Mary and Joseph and Jesus. We will also wait for the visit of the Wise Men.

Let us listen to the story of the Birth of Jesus. As we listen, we place the different figures in the Crib

(Luke: 2:1-7-the scripture passage can be found in your family bible or at www.universalis.com)

A member of the family sprinkles Holy Water over the Crib and each person blesses themselves. Take a time to be silent, to thank God for the miracle of Christmas, the gift of his Son Jesus to the world.

Prayers read by a family member

Let us ask for God's blessing on this Christmas Crib and upon ourselves as we reflect on the great gift of the God coming as one of us into the world. We pray to the Lord

Response: Come, Lord, dwell with us.

For the Church, that as we remember the circumstances surrounding the birth of Jesus, we will reach out to those in need of shelter and always proclaim his gift of new life for all people. We pray to the Lord

Response: Come, Lord, dwell with us.

For our families and our homes, that Christ who was laid in the manger may dwell with us always. We pray to the Lord

Response: Come, Lord, dwell with us.

For those who are searching for meaning in life, may they take comfort from the faith of the Wise Men, who travelled across many lands to see the Christ child. We pray to the Lord

Response: Come, Lord, dwell with us.

(If anyone has a prayer, they wish to offer out loud or in the silence of their hearts, they can do this now)

Together, as a family, we say the prayer Jesus himself gave us.

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, Amen.

Pray now for God's blessing, as we look again on these figures in the Crib.

After a short silence, a family member says:

God of every nation and people,
from the very beginning of creation
you have shown us your love:
when our need for a Saviour was great
you sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary.
To our lives he brings joy and peace,
justice, mercy, and love.

Lord, bless all who look upon this manger;
may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus,
and raise-up our thoughts to him,
who is God-with-us, Emmanuel and Saviour of all,
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Amen.

Catholic Household Blessings and Prayer

