

Dear parents,

Welcome to "CrossBox"! Thank you for being part of our very first attempt at this new approach to Christian education. I pray it serves you well!

As we begin a new year, many people are making resolutions to be more intentional about pursuing goals in their life - to eat healthier, exercise more, learn a new skill, express more gratitude, and so on. We often focus our goals on bettering ourselves physically and emotionally... but what about spiritually? As Christians, taking care of ourselves spiritually is just as important as taking care of our physical and emotional health.

One way to enhance and improve your spiritual health is through **prayer**. But, just like building better eating habits or creating an exercise routine, integrating prayer into your lifestyle can be difficult and can take a lot of time, practice, and intentionality. Set yourself up for success by establishing a clear, simple routine that you enjoy doing and try to keep with it for at least two weeks (though the average amount of time it takes to solidify a new habit is *66 days* -- so be gracious with yourself if it doesn't stick right away!)

The primary objective of this first CrossBox is to help you **set up a solid prayer routine (or routines) for your family**. Why is it important to pray as a family? Well, first, you promised it at your child's baptism. You and/or their sponsors professed that you would "*pray for them, support them in their ongoing instruction and nurture in the Christian faith...[and] be examples to them of the holy life of faith in Christ*" (Lutheran Service Book, page 269). Prayer is one of the strongest, surest forms of protection you can place around your family, and with all of the chaos and turmoil in our world today, it is more important than ever to turn to our Lord for our every need. Plus, with the uncertain and ever-changing nature of our schedules right now, it may be helpful to establish some sense of normalcy by creating simple "liturgies" (routines) in your daily life... and prayer is a great place to start! If you already have a prayer routine, challenge yourself to add to it or try something new.

You may feel overwhelmed by all of the resources in this box - and that's okay. That's all they are: resources! You can use as many or as few as you like. Maybe try a few different ones to see what you like best, then settle into using one or two of your favorite resources consistently. Remember, if you're just starting a new habit for the first time, *keep it simple*.

Overall, my hope for you is that something - even the smallest thing - in this box might be helpful to you. At the very least, even if you decide not to use any of the materials, please know that you have a team of individuals here at Holy Cross who are praying for your family by name! *You are loved -- by us, and even more by God!*

Your sister in Christ,

PRAYER CrossBox Content Guide

- **Parent Letter/Content Guide**
 - This is what you're reading right now!
- **"Our Family Prayer Routine"/"What Is Prayer?"**
 - Your main Project/Challenge for the next two weeks! Once you go through all the materials in the box, pick a few to explore further and sit down as a family to build a Prayer Routine that serves you best. Write in pencil... if you need to change it up after a few days, that's okay! (*You can also print off more copies - see note below.*)
- **Memory Verse Challenge Card**
 - Collect a new Verse card in every CrossBox. See if you can memorize the first one before your next box arrives!
- **Laminated Prayer Cards**
 - Card 1: Luther's Morning and Evening Prayers
 - Card 2: "The Lord's Prayer" and "A Prayer For Our Family"
- **Meal Prayer Cards**
 - 13 different blessings to pray before you eat!
- **Portals of Prayer**
 - A daily devotional/prayer booklet - new ones are available every quarter for free in the church office and in the Welcome Center.
- **"Dig Deeper" Resources**
 - Each box contains a different set of books, based on the age of your child(ren).
- **Upcoming Events/Announcements**
 - See what's on the calendar this month for Holy Cross.
- **Comment Card**
 - Your feedback/constructive criticisms/suggestions will help us fine-tune our CrossBox content to make it as effective and exciting as possible for your family!
- **...and some activity sheets & fun treats!**

Need another copy of a specific resource?

Go to www.hcross.com/crossbox and click on the "Prayer" section to request it/print one at home!



Watch the LIVE Unboxing Video at 4:30pm on Wednesday* to chat with Dana and get a personal shout-out, answer trivia questions, and learn more about all of your box contents!

Scan the code to the left, or visit hcross.com/crossbox and click the "Unboxing Videos" links to watch on Facebook or YouTube.

**** Can't catch the live feed? No worries! The videos will be posted afterwards to watch whenever you are able.***