


Sunday Fun for Faith Filled Families ✨

*Ideas, Prayers, and Activities
to Celebrate the Lord's Day*

KATIE CASSADY

The pandemic seems to have warped our sense of time. Days run together like watercolor paints on paper, blending and pooling. Even our weekly rhythm of Mass has been so distorted by the implementation of online Masses that it can be even more difficult to recognize Sunday as a day of rest. With all non-essential events cancelled or only partially reopened, most of us are left to redefine summer and sabbath rest for ourselves.



As we move into summer, I've put together a series of ten at-home activities to creatively incorporate the practice of sabbath. They are not intended to be done in any kind of order; each is a springboard for creating a time set apart from the monotonous blending of other days.

You can use these ideas as a follow-up to your parish online Mass to add some depth of reflection to your family time. My hope is that these activities will allow you to be nourished by intentionally incorporating rest and recognizing the tremendous gift of sabbath time.

1 ✨ Go to the Water

This is a natural inclination in the summer months. When it's hot, we seek the refreshment of water. Water itself is a rich image in Scripture and in sacrament. In fact, we might be surprised to see just how prevalent it is in our daily lives. This could mean being aware of the gift of water as we take a shower or water our houseplants. It could mean making a big pitcher of ice water with lemon and enjoying it in the shade. Maybe it means the joy of running through the sprinkler, sitting by a stream, or wading/swimming in a lake. Water is all things nourishing, cleansing, and purifying. Is there any wonder water is the primary symbol used in baptism?

In Scripture, water is often used as a metaphor for the work of God, who nourishes, cleanses, and purifies each of us.

SCRIPTURE CONNECTIONS

Jesus answered and said to her, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again; but whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

JOHN 4:13-14

As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.

PSALM 42:1

For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants.

ISAIAH 44:3

SABBATH IN ACTION

For Adults

- Throughout the day as you fill your water bottle, shower, or prepare a meal, notice how frequently and absentmindedly you reach for water. How does your daily dependence on water speak to your relationship to God?
- Have you thought of this connection before? How might that add to your prayer life?
- How do you steward this gift?
- Think of those for whom access to clean water is not a guarantee. What ability, prayerful or otherwise, can you use to help ensure that clean water is available for all?

For Kids

- What's your favorite way to enjoy water in the summertime? Have you ever thought of it as a gift?
- Think of one way we can save water in our house this week.

WATER PRAYER

*Nourishing God, you make water spring forth
from the rock. We come to you hot and thirsty.*

*We praise you for the many ways we are refreshed,
body and soul, by the gift of water. The rush of running
through a sprinkler or wading ankle-deep in
a mountain stream are a delight to the senses!*

*In baptism we were immersed in water, claimed
and called by you; our thirst is quenched by this same
water. Like the woman at the well in the heat of the day,
inspire us to turn to you, Living Water, each time our
daily lives bring us back to draw water again. In Jesus'
name we pray. Amen.*

2 ✨ Grow

In the summer months, there is very little more gratifying than witnessing the wonder of growth—because it happens so quickly. I am still astounded that God has invited humanity to take part in creation in this way! Maybe you're a gardener too, and this thrills you. Even if you're not, you likely still appreciate the work of those who love to cultivate, whether cut flower beds, fruits and veggies, or beautiful landscapes. Choose a summer Sunday and allow yourself to glory in the gift of living things. Make a socially distant trip to a farmers market, or park your car next to a wide-open prairie, a neighbor's garden, or an arboretum, and stand in awe at the wild, creative, and living work of God.

SCRIPTURE CONNECTIONS

Then he said, “What is the kingdom of God like? To what can I compare it? It is like a mustard seed that a person took and planted in the garden. When it was fully grown, it became a large bush and ‘the birds of the sky dwelt in its branches.’”

LUKE 13:18-19

The one who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed and increase the harvest of your righteousness.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:10

Therefore, neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who causes the growth.

1 CORINTHIANS 3:7

SABBATH IN ACTION

For Adults

- Shop for your weekly meals at a farmer's market. Maybe even look for something you've never tried before as a way to sample the tremendous variety of garden veggies alone. Allow yourself to eat slowly, and marvel at the visual array of produce and its flavors.
- Schedule a time to walk around an arboretum or in the shade beneath old trees at a park and pay attention to the details around you (sounds, scents, etc); what do you notice?
- Chances are these living organisms have weathered more physical storms than we—how might they inspire your prayer life?

For Kids

- Ask an adult to measure your height against the wall on a piece of paper or a doorframe. Mark it with the date and compare it to your height at the end of the summer (or compare it to the last time you checked, if you've done it before).

- Get your hands dirty planting seeds or potted flowers on your back stoop—take charge of watering it over the summer and notice how it grows. Think about how it feels when you get to share the fruit/display the flower that you have cared for.

PRAYER FOR GROWTH

Creator God, you spoke and the earth teemed with life.

We praise you for the gift of living, growing things—especially in this summer season of abundance.

It is such a gift to be co-creators with you and bear witness to creation and its growth. We ask that we too would find ourselves growing nearer and more like you, the Author of Life. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.