



Family Prayer at Our House

By Luc and Sabine Ceysens

Families tend to grow and shrink, and ours has been no exception. With the kids coming and moving on, so also “family prayers” have seen different formats and time zones over the years.

Growing up in a warm Christian family taught me the values of often going to Mass together and praying the rosary together. But through our Alleluia life, and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, our family prayer life has grown through different kinds of getting together as a family to pray, although we admit that saying the family rosary on Sunday night and going to Mass as a family is still a part of our life and seems to remain the constant generational source of strength to

our family.

When our first children were younger, we typically had family prayer just before bedtime. Reading some children’s Bible stories, singing songs and always closing with a promise/agreement; Papa would count to three and whoever was in bed at the count of three would get two pieces of apple to enjoy as they fell asleep. Many times we found a piece of unfinished apple laying on a pillow a few hours later when we would go in their rooms to give the kids a kiss and make the sign of the cross over them.

When the children grew older, family prayer time moved to the morning, before breakfast. For a season, Nick Almeter moved into our home and introduced us to the Roman Liturgy of the Hours, and so we read together the Liturgy of the Hours. There was also a season when we used to say the Chaplet of Mercy when the kids walked home from school.

Today we again do our family prayers in the morning, although the Liturgy of the Hours has been replaced with the Daily Mass Readings out of the *Magnificat*, and an opportunity for everyone to speak out their petitions and prayer

requests. To make sure everybody stays awake, we go around and let everybody (now only three of us) do some part of the Mass readings. When Luc is out of town and Noah is the only man in the house, I (Sabine) let him lead the prayers. Alice Alger had shared that she did that and so I started doing it too. Sometimes we do not get up in time, and we end up at the breakfast table doing morning prayers. If that doesn’t work out, then we end up blessing Noah before he leaves the house. And when driving to school, we ask the Lord’s blessing for the day and His protection.

One tradition has remained a constant over the years and has brought a lot of peace: at the end of the Lord’s Day, we pray a family rosary. It brings to an end the Sunday and focuses us on the beginning new week. We come together as a family and quite often with other brothers and sisters, sitting close and sharing intentions and things that happened and pray. And it all brings peace to the start of the new week.

God is good all the time, and we cannot spend enough time at His feet. Thank you, Jesus, for teaching us the power and grace of prayer and in particular, family prayer.



Ceysens Family’s Grandchildren Party

In-Reach Ministry to Present New Teaching Series

The In-Reach Ministry is launching a new teaching series called **Aging Gracefully**. The Ministry is moving to bring more knowledge and understanding into the area of aging. The series will present topics that will cover such issues as what is normal aging, how can I be safer in my home, fall prevention techniques and many more.

The Series will be held in the ACS Auditorium one Saturday of each month from 10-11 a.m. The first topics are:

- January 24, 2015: **Normal Aging Changes** – How do I cooperate with these physical changes that I cannot control?

- February 14, 2015: **I have fallen and I can get up** – Empowering ourselves to be ready for the falls in life.

- March 14, 2015: **Updated wish lists for presents** – What gifts can my family give me that will support my living as independently as possible?

- April 11, 2015: **What gets me admitted to an Assisted Living Facility or a Nursing Home?** What roles can these places play in

my life? Is this a permanent decision?

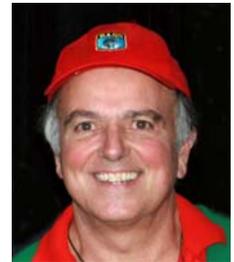
- May 2, 2015: **Sometimes I get confused with my medication** - How can I keep up with my medicines and medical issues in a better way?

Who would benefit from attending? Anyone who wants to know more about aging, either for themselves or their loved ones.

An invitation for your input: if you have a topic about which you would like to hear, if there is a speaker we should invite, or how we can as Alleluia do “it” better, please contact Luc Ceyskens or Cathy Green.

God is Going to Change Our Embouchure

By Richard Valiquette



When I was in the 7th Grade my dad bought me a trumpet. I thought that if I learned how to play songs by Herb Alpert my band director/trumpet teacher would let me get on stage and perform. Unfortunately, my trumpet teacher’s major instrument was saxophone, not trumpet. After a year or so he told my dad that I had potential, but that if I wanted to be a really good trumpeter I needed a better teacher.

Dad wanted me to improve so he enrolled me in a music academy and soon an outstanding trumpeter and member of the Nashville Symphony, Joe Jones, became my teacher. The first thing he told me was that I was going to have to put away my Herb Alpert and the Tijuana Brass trumpet book and change my embouchure. The way a trumpeter holds his mouth while playing is called his embouchure. Mr. Jones told me I would not be able to continue to improve unless I could break the bad habit of holding my

lip muscles incorrectly. I trusted him but I didn’t like what came next.

Mr. Jones put me on a rigid drill of breaking old embouchure habits so that I could develop proper techniques of trumpet playing. Instead of playing popular tunes, he had me playing boring lip slurs while I watched in the mirror to make sure the corners of my mouth were not smiling and my chin was flat. I suffered through about two or three months of doing only that! Mr. Jones didn’t permit me to play anything that I liked to play until I got it!

Occasionally he would let me play songs I liked, but if I went back to my bad habits he ordered me again to only practice slurs and scales in front of the bathroom mirror. Not only did I hate it, but with eight brothers and sisters – and two parents – all who needed the bathrooms, the whole family found it inconvenient at times. In fact, my bad embouchure caused my whole family to suffer!

Eventually, all of this suffering paid off and my technique improved. Not only did I win some trumpet scholarships, but now I am able to play some difficult high notes and can really enjoy jamming out (when appropriate) with the Alleluia music ministry.

I believe that the Lord is going to make, or is already making, some changes in the Alleluia Community that are similar to my change of embouchure. They aren’t going to be simple, one-time prayers or efforts. Have you heard the expression “One and Done”? In most instances this won’t be the case. The Lord is calling us through our Elders to make some specific changes both spiritually and physically. Our flesh will not like these changes, but we will be able to thrive through difficult days ahead because we love Jesus and

Alleluia Support Groups and Families Celebrate Christmas

From Advent to Epiphany, Alleluia families celebrate the anniversary of the coming of our savior, Jesus Christ, in many and diverse ways. Making Christmas cards, baking and decorating cookies with children, having dinners and gift exchanges, cutting the king's cake to find baby Jesus, caroling, dancing, praying, and attending church services – all have a place in our lives. Here are scenes from just a few of our families.



Christmas card making at GLC



Routhier Support Group Christmas Dinner



Change

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are His obedient disciples.

St. Paul said in Hebrews 12:11, “No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.” Because we love Jesus we do not disdain His discipline when He calls us to grow in holiness and virtue. The Bible tells us that He disciplines us because He loves us. Jesus also wants to better equip us as evangelists so that when we go to heaven, we can bring along a bunch of others with us. For some this may take breaking some bad old habits and learning some new ones, like with my embouchure, but, even if it does, it will all be worth the effort.



Hoyt SG Epiphany Party



Platte Family Square Dance Fundraiser for the Gym Air Conditioning Fund

Richard Valiquette is a 4th Grade teacher in the Alleluia Community School and serves on the Provident & Resourceful Team, Intercessory Prayer Team and the Music Ministry for Alleluia Community. He and his wife, Evelyn, have been Full Covenant members of Alleluia since 1994. They have two adult children and five grandchildren and attend St. Joseph Catholic Church in Augusta, Georgia.



Alleluia Community's Christmas Celebration

The Community's Christmas program included performances by the kindergarten bell choir, elementary grades, middle school Orff bands, and high school chorus plus a flute arrangement by Kathryn Garner and piano puzzles to pique everyone's interest. Even the audience was included in the caroling. The evening concluded with warm beverages and cookies.



Kindergarten Bell Choir



Kathryn Garner on the Flute



Eric Sterett leading singing



7th grade Orff Band



6th grade Orff Band



8th grade Orff Band



High School Chorus



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