

Grandparents

Pray, Play and Proclaim



Rich
& Hazel
Bimler

Simple
Ways to Live
and Share
Your Faith

Introduction

We grandparents are God's special gifts to grandchildren, to our adult children and to the world. We believe that the Lord is providing additional years of life to us grandparents in order for us to heap hope and encouragement on our loved ones. We are called to mentor, model and minister to people of all ages and in all stages of life, especially those in our families.

This booklet of prayers and suggested activities for living out your faith is intended to assist you in loving and living, sharing and growing in faith in the midst of your family as you PRAY, PLAY and PROCLAIM with them. The five parts of this prayer book focus on GRATITUDE, REJOICE, ATTITUDE, NOW and DECLARE. Notice that this spells out GRAND, as in GRAND-parents!

Enjoy and celebrate GRANDparenting as you pray, share and ponder these prayers and suggestions from and for grandparents. May God bless and empower you as you live out God's promise with your grandchildren and their parents.

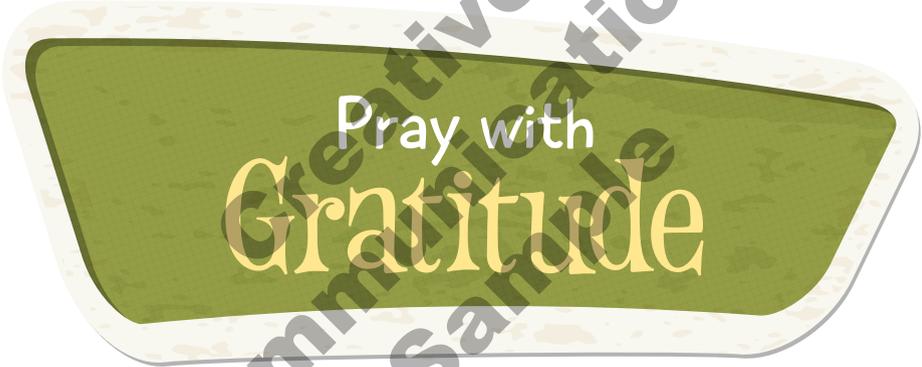
—Rich and Hazel Bimler
(grandparents of seven; parents of three)

Part 1:
Gratitude



I thank my God for Jesus Christ for all of you ...
Romans 1:8

G is for GRATITUDE. What better word summarizes the relationship between children, parents and grandparents? Even in the midst of conflict, confusion and miscommunications, we can thank the Lord through faith that we are blessed to be a family. A plaque on our wall says it well, “Remember, as far as anyone knows, we are a normal family.” Perhaps we should have another sign which would read: “We are a dysfunctional family—just like everyone else!” There’s no need to hide the fact that we all fall short of living as the Lord intended. Instead, we are empowered in Christ to share and show our gratitude to God each day by forgiving and listening, giving thanks for our family members, warts and all!



Pray with
Gratitude

For Grace

God of grace and God of glory, help us to be grace-filled as we live and interact with our family. As you have gifted us with your grace, enable us to look at our children and their children through grace-filled eyes. Help us see in others the grace that you have given to us. As we try to recall how we acted as children and young adults and how we too failed and flubbed in our lives, give us the patience and persistence of your grace to share and to show forgiveness and understanding to our family members as they

stumble and struggle through their life choices. Let them know, Lord, through us, that you have already chosen them as grace-filled people, continually loved and forgiven in you. Amen.

For Growth

Lord, you have allowed our family to grow and expand through these years. As we grow older, help us all to realize that aging is the only way to live. Regardless of our years, help each of us to celebrate your gift of aging each day. May we grandparents model the gifts of aging as we continue to serve and celebrate life. May our children model what it means to become “empty-nesters” and deal with the challenges of finances, health issues and changes that surround them. May our grandchildren see their future, not through fearful and unfocused ways, but rather through hopeful and encouraging eyes. And may we all grow in our faith in you, even though we may differ on ways to worship, priorities of the Church, and issues of life that can break and bend family togetherness. Through it all, Lord, help us to grow, not by attempting to “fix” everything that is wrong with us and them, but rather by growing closer to you, the Lord and giver of growth. Amen.

For Giving

You give life to us, Lord, so that we can give life to others. Life is for giving, and we are glad. Help our family realize that all of life is *forgiving*, also! Without the gift of forgiveness which you give to us each day through your death and resurrection, we would really have nothing to give to others in our family, or even in this world. When we worry about the mistakes and muddles and messes which family members create, including us, please

forgive us. When we think that we are “in charge” of how our grandchildren should be “growing up,” forgive us. When we become discouraged when our expectations of others are not met, forgive us. When we focus too much on wanting our own needs to be accepted and remembered, forgive us. When we become fearful of the “world” out there which our grandchildren are entering, forgive us. Turn our hassles to hope, our cautions to creative living, and our worries to “wows,” because life is for giving, in you. Amen.

For Giggles

Lord of laughter and smiles, help us and all family members see that every day is a day to celebrate. Thanks for the special celebrations throughout the years, for birthdays, anniversaries, confirmations and graduations, and keep them coming. Family celebrations are ways that you force families to see that all people are gifted, different and unique. As sorrows and disappointments continue to try to break up our celebrations, make it clear to each of us that “This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it!” Help us, Lord, not only to giggle but also to be present to cry and to wipe the tears of others when disappointments hit and when hopes and dreams dissolve. Lord, thanks for showing us each day that after every Good Friday in our lives, there is always an Easter. Amen.

Suggested Ways To Play and Proclaim with **Gratitude**

- ❁ **Call** or visit a grandchild and ask to play a game, grandchild's choice. (Make sure you both win and both lose some of the games!)
- ❁ **Take** a grandchild and a parent (or parents) to a sporting event or a movie, and then go out for ice cream to “just talk” to them and enjoy their company.
- ❁ **Make** a special card for each grandchild for special events like birthdays, getting a drivers license, moving on to 5th grade or getting a job. (Adding money in the envelope will be appreciated also!)
- ❁ **Make** a habit of sharing a “joke of the week” with each grandchild. (Their parents might need a laugh as well!) Develop a special handshake, knuckle bump or a saying that is a “secret” just between you and each grandchild.
- ❁ **Tell** stories of family baptisms and say, “I am baptized!” to family members as often as you can. Send baptism anniversary cards to your grandchildren each year—and add some special spending money as well!

- ❁ **Choose** a family member to be prayer leader whenever you gather. Choose a time when most of the family is together to pray.
- ❁ **As** often as you can, ask each other, “Where did you see the Lord at work recently?” Spend some relaxing time recalling the Lord’s presence in your lives.
- ❁ **When** you are able, ask family members to ask themselves, “How did I share God’s love recently?” Remind each family member of God’s actions through each person, regardless of age. Suggest other ways that family members can share God’s love and forgiveness throughout each day.

Creative
Communications
Sample

Grandparents

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Simple
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Your Faith

Grandparents play a vital role in their families and in passing on the faith to future generations. In this unique book, grandparents Rich and Hazel Bimler provide prayers and weave faith-full “play” and “proclaim” activities into daily family life.



Rich and Hazel Bimler live in Bloomingdale, Illinois, and have ministered locally, nationally and throughout the world in their 54 years together. Now retired, Rich continues to serve as a consultant to Lutheran Life Communities as their Ambassador of Health, Hope and

Aging. The couple currently contribute to Hope-Full Living, a daily devotional for Christian seniors. They have three grown children and seven grandchildren.



This book,
along with many
other Creative
Communications for
the Parish products,
is available on
amazonkindle and
nook

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