Family Wellness Ministry Reflection
Preparing a Sacred Space for Prayer

"A Sacred space is a distinguishing characteristic of the Orthodox home. It becomes the spiritual heart of the home and is a constant reminder to pray. It is an intersection between your living family and the church family of saints who have gone before us. It is a sanctuary, a rest and renewal in the midst of the distractions and noise of the world."
– Sarah Wright (theorthodoxmama.com)

Not until about five years ago did we have a sacred space set aside in our home. Before then, we had icons in our bedroom on our nightstands and in the kids' rooms. But I never felt fully content with our practice of prayer and gratitude throughout the day. A few Christmases ago, everyone in our family was gifted an icon. This is when the, "Light-bulb" came on. Our Prayer Corner was created. I must say, I am more aware of God's blessings and am taking the time to pray more often than before. Our Prayer Corner was set up in the middle of the upstairs living room. It is the first thing you see when you walk in the door. Every time I pass by it, I am reminded of my love of God and to ask for His mercy. I am reminded to thank Him, to light candles and pray for those suffering and less fortunate. Before any surgery or any anguish, time of trouble for family or friends, it is the place our family can pause and send our love and prayers. Since the kids are still a little young to sit quietly for too long, our routine is to all say the Lord's Prayer, then thank God and pray for friends and family.

A Sacred Space can go anywhere in your home. Traditionally, it is placed facing East in a conspicuous area. But anyplace in your home that is suitable to you is the best place. Most important is that it is in a visible, accessible place for the family.

Putting your Prayer Corner together is easy:
- Hammer, nails, shelving or a table
- Start with an icon of Jesus, the Theotokos, and add your family saints and great feasts.
- Candles or oil lamp
- A prayer book, bible, and your family prayer list

Other items that you might find in someone's sacred space: Holy Oil, Holy water, incense, Palm leaves, Palm crosses, and prayer ropes.

This Lenten season, if you don't already have a space that you can go to and give all your cares away to God take time to prepare a special place for prayer and the ongoing connection with Christ. It can begin with one icon and the rest can follow. *~ by Alice Leckie Hopkins*

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