

Praying in Nature

By Stacia McDermott



With the sounds, smells, and sights of summer, experience prayer through a nature walk with your family. Pick a place you've never been or a family favorite nature site. Bring a picnic lunch along to enjoy afterwards.

For
Teen Family

Season
Summer

Needed

Walking Meditation Guide – one copy per person (see last page)

Activity Plan

1. Say this prayer aloud to begin.

Creator God, we are in awe with the beauty of your creation. Fill our senses with your love as we take time as a family to be aware of your presence in nature. Help us to be fully present during this time with you and our family. Amen.

2. Pass out the walking meditation guide. Take at least 10-20 minutes for each person to complete the meditation. Agree on a time and place to reconvene.
3. After re-gathering as a family, share with each what struck you the most during your walking meditation.
4. Before eating, invite someone to pray this prayer aloud:

Creator God, thank you for the ability to experience you through creation. As we share in this meal together, help me to experience you through the goodness of what we are about to eat. Let me delight in the different flavors and textures and be aware of the nourishment that this food is bringing my body. We are grateful for all the people that have worked to put this food before us; from the farmer to the picker to the transporter to the grocery store worker. Help us to be truly thankful. Amen.

5. Invite family members to spend the first two minutes of eating in silence to dwell on the tastes and goodness of the food.

Walking Meditation Guide

SEE. As you begin your walk, look around you. What do you see that pleases the eye? Is it the bright colors of trees and flowers? Or the bright blue sky or clear, flowing water? What sights draw you to them? Let yourself be amazed by the intricacies all around you. Take a moment to absorb the beauty of creation.

Pause for as long as you like.

Thank you God for my ability to experience You through sight.

HEAR. What do you hear as you walk along? Are the birds singing? Do you hear movement of animals nearby? Are leaves crunching beneath your feet; a sign of an autumn that has passed? Does a song come to mind as you walk along? What sounds stand out for you and have you pausing to hear more? Take a moment to listen to life that is present all around you.

Pause for as long as you like.

Thank you God for my ability to experience You through hearing.

SMELL. Take a deep breath in through your nose. What do you smell? Are flowers in bloom around you? Can you smell the remains of a recent fire or the clean smell of morning dew? Or do you simply smell the pureness of air, fresh and untainted? Take a moment to breathe deeply and slowly, letting your sense of smell be filled by your surroundings.

Pause for as long as you like.

Thank you God for my ability to experience You through my sense of smell.

TOUCH. As you walk along how do your legs feel supported by the ground below? Is it soft and springy or concrete and hard? Take a moment to touch the smoothness of a leaf or the delicateness of a blossom. What are some words that come to mind as you touch these different signs of life?

Pause for as long as you like.

Thank you God for my ability to experience You through touch.

BE. Take time now to just “BE” as you walk along.

