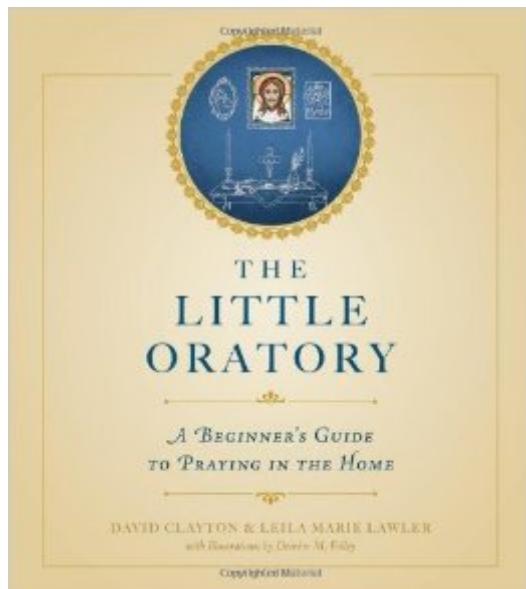


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# The Little Oratory: A Beginner's Guide To Praying In The Home



## Synopsis

Includes 8 full-color icons! Keeping a faithful prayer life with your family isn't easy. From herding distracted children to managing the seemingly endless litany of prayers and devotions, our spiritual life all too often feels frantic and burdensome. This isn't the way it should be. Our prayer life, our family life, and our work life should--and can!--be in harmony. When they are, our family is a powerhouse of grace, and Our Lord transforms our home into a little Eden--a little bit of heaven on earth. With simplicity and holy wisdom, authors David Clayton and Leila Marie Lawler show you how to bring peace to your home by integrating your family into the calm, truly joyful way of Mother Church. Her feasts and seasons, prayers and devotions are gifts that draw us closer to God and unfold before us His marvelous plan of salvation. To help you live the Liturgical Life of the Church more fully, David and Leila reclaim here an almost lost tradition that families used for centuries to build a beautiful bridge between home and church: the little oratory. Consisting of a modest table and icons, the little oratory is a visible sign of spiritual awareness and devotion. It extends the Eucharistic worship of the Mass into the heart of your home, spiritually nourishing your family and preparing them to transform the world through prayer and charity. Building your own little oratory is simple, and in these pages you'll discover just how easy it is. In fact, you likely have most of the pieces in your home already except, perhaps, the sacred art. That's why we've included here seven full-colored icons that are ready for framing, enabling you to get started right away! By following the wise advice in this book, you'll discover the peace and love that flows from a home that is focused on Christ. You'll also learn . . . How to use sacred art to strengthen your prayer life. How to extend Catholic beliefs and devotions into every room of the house. Why the Liturgy of the Hours is important and how it can make your family holy. How to pray the Rosary with children and keep the rowdiest of them calm and reverent. The active role children can and should play in the prayer life of the family. What to do when only one parent takes the spiritual life seriously. How to overcome the feeling that you're too busy to pray. Practical ways to extend the liturgical life into your workplace. And countless other tips to help you practice your faith in the heart of your home.

## Book Information

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## **Customer Reviews**

There is not one among us who couldn't stand to pray more and pray better. That is why thousands of books have been written on the subject of prayer. The Little Oratory is one of the latest ones to be released, and it is billed as a beginners guide to prayer in the home. But what exactly is an oratory? If it wasn't for the definition in the first chapter, I would have Googled the word to know that it means a sacred space for prayer and private worship. Before telling us how to build this little oratory, the book first expounds on the Christian life and the importance of family life in the home. The authors then give advice on how to order and organize the house, room by room. For example, the master bedroom is meant to be ordered and neat. It is okay to have a crib in it, but all the items for the baby including diapers and toys must be in a certain place, and not strewn about. That's nice in a magazine, but not always practical. I do agree with the authors when they say that the living room or den need not be centered around the television, and I also agree that shelves provide great assistance no matter what room of the house. We then begin the chapter of making and placing the home altar. Included in the chapter on "Making the Little Oratory at Home" is tips for linens, candles, prayerbooks, etc. All of these tips are fine, but I disagree with their section on iconography. The author's equate iconography to just another form of art and put it on equal ground with Western art, like Michaelangelo. Iconography is more than art, and it is not even about creating "beautiful art." Icons are prayer and designed to aid in worship. That is why they have specific rules when being written. They should also never be framed, as suggested by the authors.

I have been hoping for a book like this for such a long time! Not only is it groundbreaking, but every Catholic should read and refer to it often. The authors provide principles and guidance to establish prayer in the home in union with the Church's Liturgy. And as the authors are both converts, they adroitly sift through the myriad of Catholic devotions to show clearly how to lay the foundation of the family prayer life. Their central focus is on the oratory in the home, which can be an icon corner or prayer table, home altar or dining room table. The book provides guidelines of beauty,

order and simplicity to set up, maintain, and use the oratory regularly for individual and family prayer. After establishing the prayer space, the authors continue with ways to pray with the Universal Church through the Liturgy of the Hours. They also discuss other devotions, such as the liturgical year, rosary, dedication of days and months and more. Each author brings their expertise and their combined thoughts are wonderful. David Clayton shares aspects from the Byzantine or Eastern tradition. As an icon painter, he shares the spirituality and symbolism of icons and how they relate to prayer. The book contains several of his beautiful color icons to frame and use, or line drawings that can be colored. Leila Lawler shares her experience as a wife, mother of seven and grandmother living her Faith with her practical "kitchen sink philosophy." Her daughter, Deirdre Folley, has wonderful line drawings throughout which really relate a peaceful domesticity. This does not need to be read straight through, but each chapter can stand alone.

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