

SPF50

SCRIPTURE ■ PRAYER ■ FAMILY



COMMON QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ABOUT SPF50

Do we have to count the minutes we read and pray?

No. The length of the selected Scripture readings and the length of the selected prayers will, on average, take 50 minutes per month. This is mentioned in the name, not to set a time limit, but to encourage participation. 50 minutes per month is an achievable target for even the busiest of families. SPF50's goal is not to set a stop-watch, but to help us love to pray and read Holy Scripture as a family.

Do we have to pray and read Scripture every day?

No. Your commitment is 50 minutes of prayer AND Scripture reading each month. That might mean 20 minutes praying and 30 minutes reading Scripture during the entire month, although not necessarily every day. Eventually, the hope is that prayer and Scripture reading will become a daily part of your family's life.

How do we choose when to read or pray?

Decide it as a family! What works for your family? A weekday evening? A weekend morning? Sunday after church? What is most important is that you set a day and time that you've agreed upon and then remain faithful to it and hold each other accountable to it.

Do we have to pray and read the Bible on the same day?

See what works best for your family's schedule. For some, it will be better to have two separate days and times. For others, having one period will be easier.

I don't know a lot about the Bible. How am I supposed to teach my children about it?

The beautiful thing about the Scripture component of SPF50 is that it centers on engaging with the Bible, plain and simple. This is not a Church School class. This is a family praying together, a family reading God's Word together, and a family through prayer and reading drawing closer to God together. Parents do not assume the role of teacher—Christ is the Teacher. Parents and children alike read the Bible and learn from it. You do not have to discuss the Scripture readings or explain the prayers. However, for those who wish, additional resources for discussion and explanation will be made available online.

My spouse isn't Orthodox. Can he/she join in?

Yes! Both parents are meant to participate.

What happens if we miss our day(s) and time(s) to pray and read?

Either find a different day/time that week or wait until the following week to pick up again with praying and reading.

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Where should we read together?

Wherever you feel comfortable: Living Room, Kitchen table, even when you are headed to bed.

Who should read?

Each family member should take a turn reading aloud. This is important. If one family member cannot read yet, they can listen. Younger children who are learning to read should be encouraged to read even a line or two, in order to gain familiarity with the practice.

What Bible should we use?

We recommend using the Orthodox Study Bible (with the Old and New Testaments) although any New King James Version (NKJV) or the Revised Standard Version (RSV) will be fine. (While there are MANY different translations of the Bible out there, some are—at best—poor translations and—at worst—completely unfaithful to the original texts. We recommend these two versions because of their faithfulness to the original texts.)

When should we pray together and where?

Again, decide together as a family. Both the “when” and “where” are different for each family. You might consider mornings together. Some may consider only evenings. It all depends on your family’s schedule. The MOST IMPORTANT part of this is that you decide together as a family and follow through with your commitment.

Do I have to send pictures in of our family?

No, but doing so is a form of support for others and encouragement to others to commit to SPF50.

Can we do more than the 50 minutes per month?

Of course, but let whatever you do be keep-able by your family. It may be that one week you read and pray for 20 minutes and the next week you read and pray for 10 minutes, the next 15 minutes and the next 5 minutes. That is absolutely fine. The next month you might read and pray for 75 minutes all in one week. Again, the goal is to help us learn to love prayer and reading together, not simply to reach a time goal.

We are not members of the American Carpatho-Russian Diocese. Can we participate?

The materials for SPF50 are posted online and are freely available to all. You are welcome to use the materials if you feel that they will help you and your family grow closer to Christ. However, the commitment cards, monthly get-togethers, etc. are geared only toward members of ACROD parishes. If you are in another jurisdiction and would like to have something like this in your parish, speak to your Priest.

Our kids have grown up/in college. OR I don't have kids. Can I participate?

Praying at home and reading the Scriptures are activities for all Orthodox Christians! You can use the materials available online as you see fit. However, the particulars of SPF50—its commitment card, meetings for support, etc.—are limited to families with children at home.

We're very busy already. How are we supposed to add another meeting to our month?

The format, day, time, and length of the monthly get-together with families at your church are determined by the parish Priest and SPF participants. Flexibility is built into this program. Don't see this as an inconvenience—see it as an investment in your family.

If you need help with anything, start by asking your parish Priest.
If something else is needed, please email the **SPF50 Ministry Team** at spf@acrod.org.