

Abby Sasscer

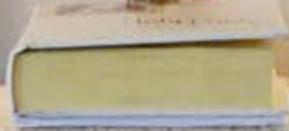
Simplifying Your Domestic Church



*A Spiritual Journal to Help Declutter,
Organize & Systemize the Home*

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Introduction

Imagine yourself walking inside a church...Christ-centered, uncluttered, and orderly. Wouldn't it be beautiful if we could recreate the same atmosphere in our own domestic churches? But aside from living out our vocations as wives and mothers, we have answered Our Lord's profound call to educate our children at home.

While home schooling has its indescribable rewards, it also comes with many challenges. One challenge, I believe, lies in how to provide a simple, holy, and orderly environment so our homes reflect a truly Christ-centered domestic church. My hope is that this journal will somehow help families simplify their own domestic churches.

Growing up in a small home in the Philippines, space was always a luxury. I distinctly remember having to share one tall-boy dresser with three of my siblings. All my clothes had to fit into one dresser drawer. Needless to say, space was very limited and had to be used wisely. We learned to live simply and keep only what was necessary. We owned some nice toys and collectibles but they never took over the entire house.

When I came to America, I began discerning my vocation to the religious life. Each time I visited convents, the simplicity and order of the religious sisters' lifestyle inspired me. I remember staying in a convent guestroom that consisted of a bed, a lamp, a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and a crucifix. I felt so light and not tied down by the things of this earth. The nuns followed a schedule and each had their assigned task written on a piece of paper posted in the kitchen. They experienced God in simplicity and order. After discerning that Our Lord wanted me to serve Him as a wife and mother, I so longed to parlay that same simplicity and order into my future home. I wanted to experience God where we spent most of our time, in our domestic church, our home.

Keep in mind that the goal of simplifying your life is to help you and your family become closer to Our Lord by practicing the virtues of unconditional love, simplicity, holy detachment, trust in Divine Providence, and true order within the home. If you find yourself losing peace in the middle of your simplification project, it's time to withdraw in prayer and reassess your goals and motives. Bear in mind that "order" does not always mean "orderliness".

One can live in an orderly home and still live a disordered life. We must always remember that true order lies in loving God first, then our spouse, then our children, then our home and finally, our community.

While it is a constant challenge to live simply and orderly, our family has discovered certain systems that make the challenge a little easier. Though simplifying your life may seem very overwhelming at first, remember to pray, pray, pray. Pray and offer your simplification project to our dear Lord. It may be a year-long project or it may be a lifetime project. However long it takes, He knows the desires of your heart. All you need to show Him is your consistent and honest effort and His angels will help you simplify even while you slumber!

A special thanks to all mothers who contributed to this journal: Zoe B., Hilerie C., Sylvia D., Ana Maria E., Isabelita F., Helena M., Lori M., Marcia M., Carla O., Maria O., Liz P., Margaret P., Donna R., Cynthia S., Mariefe S., Susan S., Diane S., Sue T., Grace V., Marivic V., and Aileen V. Specials thanks to Joe S., Dominic D., Greg O., Charlie M., Paul M., and Theresa J. I am also grateful to Mariefe S., Regina D., Jim S., and Elinor S. for your friendship and guidance. My gratitude goes out to Rev. Fr. L., Mary D., and Angie S. for your spiritual advice. Special thanks to Mimi, Didi, and family for your unconditional love and support. Most importantly, my deepest gratitude goes to Our Heavenly Father for sending four very precious souls into my life: Larry, Marissa, Ian, and Elisa.

About The Author

Abby Sasscer was born in the Philippines and came to the United States in 1986. She is a wife, home schooling mother, author, speaker, and founder of Project Nazareth. In 2004, Abby's family moved to a small house in the mountains in order to practice voluntary simplicity. In 2008, she founded Project Nazareth and continues to spread the message of simple living by writing and speaking for church groups. Abby hopes more families will learn to live simply and generously even if the world says otherwise. She wants families to truly discover that less is more and that a simple life is a happy life.

For more information, visit
www.projectnazareth.info



How to Use This Spiritual Journal

As you work through this journal, you will find most sections contain a short **Introduction, Practical Tips, Points to Consider, Sample Worksheets, and Meditation Matters.**

A meditation is assigned each day of the week with a section to write down your ideas and notes. For example, if you are inspired to declutter on a Saturday, thumb through the Declutter section and look under the Saturday meditation.

Underline words that speak to your soul and write down your thoughts on the lines provided. This section serves to inspire, motivate, and encourage you in your vocation and on your journey towards simple living.

You will also find Appendix of Blank Forms, Appendix of Category Labels, and a link for downloadable forms at the end of the journal.

May Our Lord be with you on your journey to simplicity!



Section One

The Virtues of Simplicity & Holy Detachment



Prayer of Detachment

Enlighten our minds, we beseech Thee, O Lord
And impress upon our hearts with the greatness of our loss
When we withdraw ourselves from Thee.
Grant that we may ever prefer Thee before all things else,
And choose rather to lose all worldly goods
Than relinquish but for one moment
Thy grace and love.
From henceforth, O Jesus, I desire to die to all things else
That I may live only for Thee
In time and eternity.
Amen.

Excerpt From *The Following of Christ* by Thomas A. Kempis

The Virtue of Simplicity

In the book entitled *The Life of Mary*, the author wrote that, upon the Magi's offer to build her family a palace, the Blessed Mother graciously declined and chose to live in a three-room home in Nazareth.

As you enter their humble abode, one room was designated for the Blessed Mother, another for Our Lord and Saint Joseph, and the last one served as an all-purpose room. It is humbling that the King of the Universe chose to live such a lifestyle in Nazareth in order to give us an example of simplicity.

As you embark on simplifying your lifestyle and decluttering your home, consider meditating on the following passages from Sacred Scripture and Saints' writings:

1

Be simple as doves.
Matthew 10:16

2

I know my God that thou provest hearts and lovest simplicity, wherefore, I also,
in the simplicity of my heart, have joyfully offered all these things.
1 Chronicles 29:17



Section Two

Decluttering Your Domestic Church



Daily Schedule/Routine

Time	Daily Schedule/Routine
7:00-8:30 AM	Wake Up, Wash, Mama's Quiet Time With Jesus
8:30-10:00 AM	Mass or Morning Prayer, Breakfast, Chores-Beds, Laundry, Defrost Dinner
10:00-12:00 PM	Homeschool - Classwork, Break, Seatwork
12:00-1:00 PM	Lunch, Chores - Sink, Quick Pick Up
1:00-3:00 PM	Finish Homeschool, Divine Mercy Chaplet, Quiet Time
3:00-5:00 PM	Free Time
5:00-6:00 PM	Prepare Dinner, Set Table
6:00-7:00 PM	Dinner, Sink, Quick Pick-Up
7:00-8:00 PM	Quality Time With Papa
8:00-8:30 PM	Bath Time, Brush Teeth
8:30-9:00 PM	Rosary, Bedtime
9:00-12:00 PM	Quality Time With Larry, Lesson Planning, Life Projects

Weekly Schedule At a Glance

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
HomeSchool	Religion Math Reading Writing Spelling English History	Religion Math Reading Writing Spelling English History	Art Music Science Geography	Religion Math Reading Writing Spelling English History	Religion Math Reading Writing Spelling English History	Home Economics & Field Trip
Chores	Open	Laundry	Open	Open	Laundry	Clean House Put Away Laundry Pay Bills
Activities	Mass	Open	Mass & Adoration	Dance	Open	Field Trip with Papa

Chore Schedule

Saints Mary & Martha, Pray for Us!

DAILY CHORES	
<i>Make Beds</i>	<i>Quick Pick Up After Each Meal</i>
<i>Cook Meals</i>	<i>Sweep Kitchen Floor</i>
<i>Wash Dishes</i>	<i>Laundry</i>
<i>Spray Kitchen Counters & Table</i>	<i>Sort Mail</i>
<i>Wipe Down Bathrooms</i>	<i>Take Out Trash</i>
WEEKLY CHORES	
<i>Clean Kitchen & Bathrooms</i>	Or you may choose to do these tasks in weekly cycles:
<i>Dust Furniture, Clean Mirrors & Glass</i>	<i>Week 1-Clean Bathrooms & Kitchen</i>
<i>Vacuum Carpets, Sweep & Mop Floors</i>	<i>Week 2-Dust Furniture & Clean Mirrors & Glass</i>
<i>Empty Trash in All Rooms</i>	<i>Week 3-Sweep, Mop & Vacuum</i>
<i>Change Bedsheets</i>	<i>Week 4-Pay Bills</i>
MONTHLY CHORES	
<i>Declutter & Organize</i>	<i>Balance Checkbook</i>
<i>Everything On Weekly Chores List</i>	<i>File Paid Bills & Paperwork</i>
<i>Change Air & Water Filters & Check Smoke</i>	
<i>Alarms</i>	
YEARLY CHORES	
<i>Declutter & Organize</i>	<i>Wash Windows, Curtains & Drapes</i>
<i>Everything On Weekly Chores List</i>	<i>Vacuum Radiators, Vents, Heat Ducts & Air</i>
<i>Shampoo Carpets or Clean Floors</i>	<i>Conditioners</i>

Chore Assignments

Jesus, Mary & Joseph, All for Love of You!

Chores	Assigned to	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Totals
Organize bedrooms	<i>Everyone</i>							
Prepare Breakfast	<i>Mama</i>							
Prepare Lunch	<i>Ashley</i>							
Prepare Dinner	<i>Mama & Ashley</i>							
Set Table	<i>Antonia</i>							
Clear Table	<i>Everyone</i>							
Empty Dishwasher	<i>Antonia</i>							
Wash Dishes	<i>Anna</i>							
Sort Laundry	<i>Angeline</i>							
Laundry	<i>Mama & Anna</i>							
Fold Laundry	<i>Mama</i>							
Put Away Laundry	<i>Everyone</i>							
Quick Pick-Up	<i>Everyone</i>							
Dust	<i>Anna</i>							
Vacuum	<i>Ashley</i>							
Clean Kitchen	<i>Mama</i>							
Clean Bathrooms	<i>Mama</i>							
Feed Pets	<i>Alex</i>							
Yard Work	<i>All</i>							
Take Out Trash	<i>Antonia</i>							

Notes



*a simple life
is a happy
life.*

Digital Blank
Forms Available

Download free. Print as needed!



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