Teaching Children to Pray

How can we form our children to become Prayer Warriors?

Elder Porphyrios approaches the subject by saying, "The children should learn to pray. And in order for children to pray they must have in them the blood of praying parents... It is not sufficient for the parents to be devout. They mustn't oppress the children to make them good by force. We may repel our children from Christ when we pursue the things of our religion with egotism... The secret is to be good and saintly and to inspire and radiate. The life of the children seems to be affected by the radiation of their parents."

I've found these 3 things can make a big difference:
1. Be consistent with prayer times
2. Get the kids involved
3. Show them first, then allow them to imitate you.

Also, a project that can be very meaningful is to try a “Family Prayer List” which will offer the children the opportunity to pray for others. This could be as simple as a piece of paper, or you could enjoy decorating and creating something more elaborate with small icons and symbols. Each evening ask the children to add first names only of the people they want to pray for. As Orthodox, you can even include the souls who have reposed on a separate list.

Through this small gesture, we allow God the room to work in their hearts so that our kids come to understand the importance of praying for others more than for themselves—and to become prayer warriors!

www.orthodoxeducation.blogspot.com
At that time, Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. After he had dismissed the crowds, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but the boat by this time was many furlongs distant from the land, beaten by the waves; for the wind was against them. And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out for fear. But immediately he spoke to them, saying, “Take heart, it is I; have no fear.” And Peter answered him, “Lord, if it is you, bid me come to you on the water.” He said, “Come.” So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus; but when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, “Lord, save me.” Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, “O man of little faith, why did you doubt?”

Your work is not finished, but you save yourself, just as through fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If any one destroys God's temple, God will destroy him, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire. For you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If any one destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and that temple you are.

Ephesians 1 Cor. 3:9-17

Brethren, we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder, I laid a foundation, and another man is building upon it. Let each man take care how he builds upon it. For no other foundation can any one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any one builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—each man's work will become manifest; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work which any man has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire. Do not you know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If any one destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and that temple you are.

Gospel Mt. 14:22-34

At this time, Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but the boat by this time was many furlongs distant from the land, beaten by the waves; for the wind was against them. And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out for fear. But immediately he spoke to them, saying, “Take heart, it is I; have no fear.” And Peter answered him, “Lord, if it is you, bid me come to you on the water.” He said, “Come.” So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus; but when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, “Lord, save me.” Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, “O man of little faith, why did you doubt?” And when they entered the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.” And when they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret.

The Church's Life (Fourth Mode)

For You descended from on high, O compassionate One, and condescended to be buried for three days, so that from the passions You might set us free. Our life and resurrection, O Lord, glory be to You.

Today is the beginning of our salvation, and the revelation of the mystery of ages. The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin and Gabriel proclaims this gift from God. Together with him we cry out to You, O Theotokos: “Hail thou full of grace, the Lord is with you.”

Do also in us, sinners though we may be, to be buried for three days, so that from the passions You might set us free. Our life and resurrection, O Lord, glory be to You.

Your work is not finished, but you save yourself, just as through fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If any one destroys God's temple, God will destroy him, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire. For you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If any one destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and that temple you are.

1. APOLOYTIKION METAMORPHOSEOS (Grave Mode)

You were transfigured upon the mountain, O Christ our God, showing to Your disciples Your glory as much as they could bear. Do also in us, sinners though we may be, shine Your everlasting light, by the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Giver of light. Glory to You.

2. RESURRECTIONAL APOLOYTIKION (Mode pl. 4)

You descended from on high, O compassionate One, and condescended to be buried for three days, so that from the passions You might set us free. Our life and resurrection, O Lord, glory be to You.

3. HYMN OF OUR CHURCH (Fourth Mode)

Today is the beginning of our salvation, and the revelation of the mystery of ages. The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin and Gabriel proclaims this gift from God. Together with him we cry out to You, O Theotokos: “Hail thou full of grace, the Lord is with you.”

4. KONTAKION METAMORPHOSEOS (Grave Mode)

Upon the mountain were You transfigured, and Your disciples beheld Your glory as far as they were able, O Christ our God; so that when they would see You crucified they might understand that Your Passion was deliberate, and declare to the world that in truth You are the Father's radiance.

Brethren, we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder, I laid a foundation, and another man is building upon it. Let each man take care how he builds upon it. For no other foundation can any one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any one builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—each man's work will become manifest; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work which any man has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire. Do not you know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If any one destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and that temple you are.

1. APOLOYTIKION METAMORPHOSEOS (Grave Mode)

You were transfigured upon the mountain, O Christ our God, showing to Your disciples Your glory as much as they could bear. Do also in us, sinners though we may be, shine Your everlasting light, by the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Giver of light. Glory to You.

2. APOLOYTIKION ANASTASIMON (Mode pl. 4)

You descended from on high, O compassionate One, and condescended to be buried for three days, so that from the passions You might set us free. Our life and resurrection, O Lord, glory be to You.

3. HYMN OF OUR CHURCH (Fourth Mode)

Today is the beginning of our salvation, and the revelation of the mystery of ages. The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin and Gabriel proclaims this gift from God. Together with him we cry out to You, O Theotokos: “Hail thou full of grace, the Lord is with you.”

4. KONTAKION METAMORPHOSEOS (Grave Mode)

Upon the mountain were You transfigured, and Your disciples beheld Your glory as far as they were able, O Christ our God; so that when they would see You crucified they might understand that Your Passion was deliberate, and declare to the world that in truth You are the Father's radiance.

Brethren, we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder, I laid a foundation, and another man is building upon it. Let each man take care how he builds upon it. For no other foundation can any one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any one builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—each man's work will become manifest; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work which any man has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire. Do not you know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If any one destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and that temple you are.

1. ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ ΜΕΤΑΜΟΡΦΟΦΟΣΕΩΣ (Grave Mode)

You were transfigured upon the mountain, O Christ our God, showing to Your disciples Your glory as much as they could bear. Do also in us, sinners though we may be, shine Your everlasting light, by the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Giver of light. Glory to You.

2. ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΙΜΟΝ (Mode pl. 4)

You descended from on high, O compassionate One, and condescended to be buried for three days, so that from the passions You might set us free. Our life and resurrection, O Lord, glory be to You.

3. ΗΓΚΩΝ ΠΛ. Δ’

Εξ ὲσωματικῆς καθήλους ὁ οὐκ ἔσται ποιμήν τῶν ποιμάνων. Ἡ ζωή καὶ ἡ ἀνάστασις ἡμῶν, Κύριε δόξα σοι.

4. ΚΟΝΤΑΚΙΟΝ ΜΕΤΑΜΟΡΦΟΦΟΣΕΩΣ (Grave Mode)

Upon the mountain were You transfigured, and Your disciples beheld Your glory as far as they were able, O Christ our God; so that when they would see You crucified they might understand that Your Passion was deliberate, and declare to the world that in truth You are the Father's radiance.