

(Column 7 of 8 in Diocesan Newspaper Series on the Liturgy of Domestic Church Life)

How Healthy is Your Domestic Church?

Dr. Gregory Popcak

For the last several weeks, this column has been exploring, the *Liturgy of Domestic Church Life*, a model of family spirituality that helps families encounter Christ more meaningfully at home.

To briefly recap, the *Liturgy of Domestic Church Life* enables Christian families to bring Eucharistic grace home, be transformed by it, and carry it out to the world. This liturgy of family life is made up of three rites—the Rite of Christian Relationships, the Rite of Family Rituals, and the Rite of Reaching Out--each of which is tied to our baptismal call to live as priests, prophets, and royals, respectively. Finally, each rite recommends four practices that families are encouraged to live out in a way that works best for them but, when taken together, help them experience all the blessings and benefits that come from creating an authentically Christian household.

Although it's a simple model, it can be a lot to take in all at once. In response to reader's requests for a simple resource to help them learn to celebrate the *Liturgy of Domestic Church Life*, I've developed a little "quiz" that reviews the highpoints, and can help you determine your family's strengths and areas of growth.

How well is your family living the three rites that make up the *Liturgy of Domestic Church Life*? Take the following quiz to find out! Rate your family on a scale of 1 ("We don't do this at all") to 5 ("This describes us perfectly!").

1. The Rite of Christian Relationships helps families live the priestly mission of baptism. When we work to overcome the selfish, sinful ways we treat each other, imitate Christ's generous, incarnate love and consecrate the things we do all day to Christ, family life becomes a "little way of holiness."

__ a. We prioritize family time. Because we can only form godly kids if we spend meaningful time together every day, we don't let outside activities compete with our efforts to create a close-knit, family team.

__ b. We are extravagantly affectionate. Christ's love is generous and incarnate. As a Christian household, we imitate Christ by being generously and appropriately affectionate, affirming and supportive of one another.

__ c. Pope St. John Paul II said that Christian relationships are characterized by "mutual self-giving." We work hard to respond to each other's needs (parents and kids), promptly, generously, consistently and cheerfully.

__d. We practice Discipleship Discipline in our home. As St. John Bosco taught, we reject harsh punishments and focus on teaching, supporting and encouraging godly behavior through “reason, religion and loving-kindness.”

2. The Rite of Family Rituals equips families to live the prophetic mission of baptism. When families work, play, talk and pray together every day, they witness to the ways Christians relate to work, leisure, others and faith.

__a. Work rituals. Each day, instead of dividing and conquering, we make time to do at least some household chores together. We don’t think of chores as just “things that have to get done.” We know they are opportunities to learn to be a team and take good care of each other.

__b. Play rituals. Every day, we make a point to play together, enjoy each other’s company and model healthy ways to celebrate our life together.

__c. Talk rituals. Several times a week, we have meaningful conversations (not lectures) about faith, values, how God is showing up for us and how we can take better care of each other.

__d. Prayer rituals. We pray together as a family throughout each day. We relate to Jesus as another member of our family. We regularly praise him and ask for his help.

3. The Rite of Reaching Out equips families to live the royal mission of baptism. We reign with Christ by serving with him.

__a. We take good care of each other at home. Authentic Christian service begins with caring generously for the people under our roof.

__b. We think about others even when we’re home. As a family, we donate our gently-used items, look for ways to help our neighbors and make our home a place where others can enjoy godly fun and fellowship.

__c. We are kind, thoughtful and use good manners in and outside our home. As a family, we’re conscious of leaving people happier than we found them.

__d. We regularly engage in charitable service together as a family.

How'd you do? Every family has strengths and areas for growth. To discover more ways the Liturgy of Domestic Church Life can bless your family, visit our Facebook discussion group, CatholicHOM (Households on Mission)— Family Discipleship.

Dr. Greg Popcak, the Executive Director of the Peyton Institute for Domestic Church Life is the author of many books, including Discovering God Together. Learn more at PeytonFamilyInstitute.org