



FAMILY FORMATION: LIVING THE FAITH AT HOME

GRADES 7-12: PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION

This document contains suggested activities to incorporate the Catholic Faith into your home and instill children with a deep love for the Faith. If these activities do not last or suit your family, perhaps take time to ask your children what their interests and needs are or get their suggestions to reignite the activities.

- Model the faith. Children look to their parents' example of how to live, how to worship, how to pray, and how to relate to God in every day life.
- Attend mass as a family. Kneel together after mass to thank the Lord for his sacrifice and the gift of the Eucharist, pray the St. Michael Prayer, or simply pause in silent reverence.
 - Being an example of praise to God and taking time to slow down and be in his presence is a good simple example to your children.
- Pray family Rosaries and start simple. If you've never done this, use time where you will all be together anyways, like a long car ride.
- Talk openly to your older children about moral teachings of the faith to help them see how the Church is not like the modern world. The Church members are called to be witnesses to others.
 - Share an example of a time you were a witness to another person. Ask your child to share, as well.
- Explain personal or family decisions in terms of the Faith and moral values. Bring your children into the decision-making discussion.
- Spend time with your children! Simply being present with no technology or distractions builds a bond and allows them to know the love of a parent. With this example, they can more readily see God, the Father and Mary as loving spiritual parents.

- Pray with your child every night before bed. Also, pray for your child in your personal prayers.
- Support your child in faith-based extra curriculars like small groups, student masses, parent penance services, etc.

CELEBRATE THE LITURGICAL CALENDAR

Advent:

- Have your children make an Advent wreath as a craft. Before each dinner during Advent, say a prayer and light an Advent candle.
- Start a Jesse Tree: children of all ages can make ornaments and older children can read the Scripture passages aloud. (Many Jesse Tree traditions and crafts can be found online.)
- Celebrate the Feast of St. Nicholas on December 6th by putting shoes out the eve of his feast. Place small holy gifts in your children's shoes: book, saint movie, rosary, etc. or chocolate coins relating to the Tradition of St. Nicholas. Read this Saint's story on the feast.

Lent:

- As a family, purge or "give up" possessions each Sunday of Lent. At the end of the season, donate it to a family or organization in need.
- Go to confession at least once as a family.
- Have your older children help cook a meatless meal each Friday of Lent.
- Wash your children's feet on Holy Thursday.
- On Good Friday, have an hour of silence at your home from 3-4 (because Jesus died at 3). Encourage your children to read spiritual books during this hour of silence.

Celebrate Baptism “birthdays” (as this was the entrance or “birth” into the Church as adopted sons/daughters of God)

- Light your child's baptismal candle.
- Call or invite your child's Godparents over.
- Cook your child's favorite meal.
- Watch a video of your child's baptism.
- Get a small holy gift for your child.
- Explain what Baptism into the Church means, or have your child explain what baptism means in his/her faith.

Celebrate Feasts of your child's namesake Saint

- Teach about the Saint.
- Tell your child how/why you chose the name.
- Cook a meal from the part of the world the Saint is from.
- Have your child “research” the Saint and tell you his/her favorite discovered fact.

CHURCH TEACHING

“Parents have the unique responsibility for the education of their children; they are the first educators or catechists. They teach by their witness of the faith through their values and attitudes, by their Christian example of love of Christ and His Church. When children are baptized, parents accept the responsibility to raise their children in the practice of the faith.”

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