

Forming Intentional Families  
CCE Parent Night  
September 10/11, 2019

**Pray together as a family every day.**



Try the Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet: they are excellent family prayers. Definitely get into the habit of praying a Morning Offering!

# 7 Habits for Catholic Families

**Use Catholic media.**

More than an antidote, it's a whole different culture—and we need it now more than ever!



**Go to Confession as a family, regularly and frequently.**

It's the washing machine for the soul, and there is no better feeling than walking out of the confessional, absolved and clean!



**Attend Mass as a family every Sunday and all Holy Days of Obligation.**

This is the **greatest gift** God has given the Church, and to each of us.

**Have an ongoing family charity effort.**



You could set up a piggy bank to which everyone contributes each week: for vocations, the hungry, or whatever cause is close to your family. Regular volunteering is great too!



**Get sacred art into your home.**

Beauty draws our souls toward God. Use Catholic paintings, music, and statues to add richness to your family's days and devotions.

**Celebrate!**



Saints' Days, Church Seasons, Sundays, Baptismal Days ...have dessert, special decorations, and prayers.

*We become what we celebrate.—Matthew Kelly*



**The St. Catherine  
Catholic Culture Center**

*Restoring Christian Culture  
through the Domestic Church*

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## Resources

### **Educational:**

<http://www.usccb.org/> (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops main website)

<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catechism/catechism-of-the-catholic-church/epub/index.cfm> (The Catechism of the Catholic Church, on-line version)

*On Marriage and Family:*

<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/marriage/follow-the-way-of-love.cfm>

(*Follow the Way of Love*, A Pastoral Message of the U.S. Catholic Bishops to Families On the Occasion of the United Nations 1994 International Year of the Family)

[http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_const\\_19641121\\_lumen-gentium\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html) (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, November 21, 1964)

### **Quotes (from Church documents):**

“...Christian spouses, in virtue of the sacrament of Matrimony, whereby they signify and partake of the mystery of that unity and fruitful love which exists between Christ and His Church, help each other to attain to holiness in their married life and in the rearing and education of their children. By reason of their state and rank in life they have their own special gift among the people of God. From the wedlock of Christians there comes the family, in which new citizens of human society are born, who by the grace of the Holy Spirit received in baptism are made children of God, thus perpetuating the people of God through the centuries. **The family is, so to speak, the domestic church. In it parents should, by their word and example, be the first preachers of the faith to their children; they should encourage them in the vocation which is proper to each of them,** fostering with special care vocation to a sacred state.” (*Lumen Gentium* 11).

“In connection with the prophetic function is that state of life which is sanctified by a special sacrament obviously of great importance, namely, married and family life. For where Christianity pervades the entire mode of family life, and gradually transforms it, one will find there both the practice and an excellent school of the lay apostolate. **In such a home husbands and wives find their proper vocation in being witnesses of the faith and love of Christ to one another and to their children. The Christian family loudly proclaims both the present virtues of the Kingdom of God and the hope of a blessed life to come.** Thus by its example and its witness it accuses the world of sin and enlightens those who seek the truth.” (*Lumen Gentium* 35).

*From the Catechism of the Catholic Church. . .*

**1655** Christ chose to be born and grow up in the bosom of the holy family of Joseph and Mary. The Church is nothing other than “the family of God.” From the beginning, the core of the Church was often constituted by those who had become believers “together with all [their] household.” When they were converted, they desired that “their whole household” should also be saved. These families who became believers were islands of Christian life in an unbelieving world. (759)

**1656** In our own time, in a world often alien and even hostile to faith, believing families are of primary importance as centers of living, radiant faith. For this reason the Second Vatican Council, using an ancient

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expression, calls the family the *Ecclesia domestica*. It is in the bosom of the family that parents are “by word and example... the first heralds of the faith with regard to their children. They should encourage them in the vocation which is proper to each child, fostering with special care any religious vocation.” (2204)

**1657** It is here that the father of the family, the mother, children, and all members of the family exercise the *priesthood of the baptized* in a privileged way “by the reception of the sacraments, prayer and thanksgiving, the witness of a holy life, and self-denial and active charity.” Thus **the home is the first school of Christian life and “a school for human enrichment.”** Here one learns endurance and the joy of work, fraternal love, generous—even repeated—forgiveness, and above all divine worship in prayer and the offering of one’s life. (1268, 2214-2231, 2685)

**2225** Through the grace of the sacrament of marriage, parents receive the responsibility and privilege of *evangelizing their children*. **Parents should initiate their children at an early age into the mysteries of the faith of which they are the “first heralds” for their children.** They should associate them from their tenderest years with the life of the Church. A wholesome family life can foster interior dispositions that are a genuine preparation for a living faith and remain a support for it throughout one’s life. (1656)

**2226** *Education in the faith* by the parents should begin in the child’s earliest years. This already happens when family members help one another to grow in faith by the witness of a Christian life in keeping with the Gospel. **Family catechesis precedes, accompanies, and enriches other forms of instruction in the faith. Parents have the mission of teaching their children to pray and to discover their vocation as children of God. The parish is the Eucharistic community and the heart of the liturgical life of Christian families;** it is a privileged place for the catechesis of children and parents. (2179)

**2227** Children in turn contribute to the growth in holiness of their parents. Each and everyone should be generous and tireless in forgiving one another for offenses, quarrels, injustices, and neglect. Mutual affection suggests this. The charity of Christ demands it. (2013)

## Scripture Regarding Parenthood:

### *To instruct children in righteousness:*

Deuteronomy 11:18-21

Psalms 78:5-7

Proverbs 22:6

Isaiah 38:19

Joel 1:3

### *To reflect God’s love in their love:*

Psalms 103:13-18

Isaiah 66:13

Luke 11:11

### *To set a good example and govern with kindness:*

Genesis 18:19

Exodus 13:8-9

Ephesians 6:4

Colossians 3:21

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**Prayers:**

**A Father's Prayer**

Father,  
I thank you for the gift of my family  
for whom I now pray  
and upon whom I now ask you  
to shower your blessings.  
With St. Joseph as my guide,  
may I always be ready  
to spend my life for them.

Bless my wife whom you have given to me as my spouse,  
sharing in your wondrous work of creation.  
May I see her as my equal  
and treat her with the love of Christ for his Church.  
May Mary be her guide  
and help her to find your peace and your grace.

Bless my children with your life and presence.  
May the example of your son  
be the foundation upon which  
their lives are built,  
that the Gospel may always  
be their hope and support.

I ask you, Father, to protect and bless my family.  
Watch over it so that in the strength of your love  
its members may enjoy prosperity,  
possess the gift of your peace and,  
as the Church alive in this home, always bear witness to your glory in the world.

Amen.  
(From: <http://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=510>)

**A Mother's Prayer**

Holy Mother Mary,  
Who by virtue of your divine motherhood,  
Has become mother of us all  
I place the charge which God has given me,  
under your loving protection.

Be a Protecting Mother to my children.  
Guard their bodies and  
keep them in health and strength.  
Guard their minds and keep their thoughts ever holy  
in the sight of their Creator and God.

Guard their hearts and keep them pure and strong and  
happy in the love of God.  
Guard always their souls and ever preserve in them,  
faithfully, the glorious image of God

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whom they received in Holy Baptism.

Always Mother, protect them and keep them  
under your Mothering care.  
Supply in your all-wise motherhood,  
for my poor human deficiencies  
and protect them from all evil.

Amen.

Queen of the Most Holy Family,  
Pray for us.  
(From: <http://www.family-prayer.org/mothers-prayer.html>)

**A Prayer for Your Spouse**

Lord, bless this dear person whom you have chosen to be my spouse. May his/her life be long and blessed. May I also become a great blessing to him/her, a sharer in all his/her sufferings and sorrows.

Make me lovable forever in his/her eyes and forever dear to him/her. Keep me from all unreasonableness of passion and humor. Make me humble and giving, strong, dedicated, appreciative, prudent, and understanding.

May we ever take delight in each other, according to your Blessed Word, both sharing in your divine love.  
Amen.

(From: <http://lordcalls.com/prayers-for-different-people/prayer-for-your-spouse-or-life-partner>)

**A Prayer of Parents for their Children**

O Lord God, who have called us to the state of Holy Matrimony and made our love fruitful, we ardently commend to your holy protection our dear children.

Preserve them; make them grow as Jesus did, in grace before God and people. Implant in their hearts so great a love for You that they would prefer death to grievous sin. Teach them to put all their trust in You and to walk warily amidst the temptations of youth. Give them a filial devotion to your Holy Mother that she may keep them free from sin.

We consecrate to you, O Lord, the children You have given us. If it pleases to call them to follow you more closely, give us enough faith to make the sacrifice of them with our whole hearts. Grant that our sins may not be visited upon them. Look upon our prayers and sacrifices on their behalf, and bless them all their days, so that together with them we may be gathered round your throne in heaven for all eternity.

Amen.  
(From: <http://www.lordcalls.com/prayers-for-different-people/prayer-of-parents>)

**Inspirational:**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DtIJqNrNKsI> (The Story Behind: Lead Me)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yLr6G8Xy5uc> (Lead Me by Sanctus Real)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d3YLJCOKOzM> (Steven Curtis Chapman: Do Everything)

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**Practical Tips for Strengthening Your Catholic Family:**

- **PRAY.** Pray alone, as a couple and as a family. Make prayer an integral part of your daily family routine. Include spontaneous prayers from the heart in addition to traditional Catholic prayers. Pray prayers of thanksgiving, praise and intercession. Spend time in prayerful contemplation together such as in praying the Rosary.
- **ATTEND MASS TOGETHER regularly** as a family participating especially in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharistic. Follow along in the book and engage in active participation, encouraging your children to do the same. In this way, you will re-familiarize yourself with some of the fundamentals of the faith & sacramental life of the Church.
- **READ THE BIBLE regularly.** As a family, check the upcoming lectionary readings in the weekly bulletin and read them together before Mass. Find a book in the Bible that intrigues you and spend time daily or weekly reading and discussing the passages as a family.
- **CREATE A QUIET ‘HOLY’ SPACE AT HOME** devoted to personal and/or family prayer time and reflection. Furnish the area with a small table covered with a colored cloth reflective of the Church’s liturgical calendar. Include a Bible, crucifix, rosary beads or other inspiring devotionals on the table. Provide a small tape player with some favorite inspirational music for quiet reflection time.
- **SHARE A MEAL TOGETHER.** Breaking bread together is the most common and ancient way of spending time together as Christians. Use the time to discuss current events or the day’s activities, bringing a Catholic perspective to the discussions and happenings. Great teachable moments for families.
- **CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE IN YOUR HOME.** Spend time being intentional about creating an environment of Gospel virtues in your home, including unconditional love, kindness, mercy, compassion, forgiveness, etc.
- **CONSIDER ELIMINATING ONE EXTRA NON-RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY** as a family either weekly or monthly and give your family a bit more time for shared faith development or just time to enjoy an activity together.
- **LISTEN TO CHRISTIAN MUSIC IN THE CAR TOGETHER.** As you immerse yourself more in God’s Word you will begin to recognize scripture in Christian music. This is a beautiful way to reinforce Gospel teachings in an engaging way and can also be used as a time of prayerful contemplation.
- **SIGN UP FOR A FAITH FORMATION CLASS OR PROGRAM FOR YOURSELF** and attend it regularly. Take notes, ask questions and do the “homework.” You will GROW! Bring the discussion home to your families and share what you are learning.
- **WHEN YOU GET HOME – TURN OFF THE CELL PHONE AND CLOSE THE LAPTOP.** Give your undivided attention to your children, read them a story from Sacred Scripture or the Saints and close the night in prayer.
- **FINALLY,** tell your spouse how much you love and appreciate who he/she is & what he/she does for you and your family.