# Checklist for Parents of Older Children/Ages 6-12

## HOW PARENTS NURTURE FAITH

### Helping Children Experience Faith

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1. Establish a family atmosphere that is encouraging, affirming, understanding and forgiving.
2. Adjust parenting styles and discipline to the child's developing ability and needs.
3. Use family meetings to discuss and decide important family decisions and issues.
4. Strive to balance time between family, work, school, sports, church and other responsibilities.
5. Spend time individually with your child on a regular basis.
6. Identify and invite other adults to serve as mentors for your child.
7. Set expectations for children's behavior that encourage cooperation, not competition; use mistakes and failure as opportunities to learn, not punish.
8. Participate in parish activities for children and families.
9. Participate in parenting education and enrichment opportunities.
10. When necessary, get professional counseling for special needs, family or marriage problems.

### Helping Children Learn Faith

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1. Enroll children in a formal religious education program (Catholic school, CCD, etc.)
2. Provide access to children's bibles, books and videos with stories about Christian values and Christian heroes.
3. Discuss the content of TV and other media in terms of Catholic faith and Christian values.
4. Identify and explain basic concepts of Catholic faith and Catholic practice.
5. Share your personal thoughts and convictions about God, faith, and church.
6. Explain personal and family decisions in terms of your faith and moral values.
7. Discuss Catholic/Christian values related to sexuality, money, time, death, and social justice.
8. Participate in preparation for sacraments (First Reconciliation, First Communion)
9. Participate in adult education and family education opportunities in the parish.

### Helping Children Express Faith

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1. Use meals and bedtime as occasions for family and individual prayer.
2. Help children learn traditional prayers and devotions by praying them regularly.
3. Invite children to participate in developing prayers and rituals for special occasions such as birthdays, anniversaries, first and last-time events, life-changes, and family crises.
4. Participate as a family in Sunday Eucharist and the other sacraments.
5. Celebrate religious seasons and feast days, especially Advent/Christmas and Lent/Easter.
6. Attend the Easter Triduum (Holy Week) services as a family.
7. Participate in parish retreats or spiritual renewal programs.
8. Adapt and practice some of your family's religious customs and traditions.
9. Identify and practice healthy ways to express powerful emotions like anger, fear, grief and
10. Participate in liturgical ministries, when possible and age-appropriate.

### Helping Children Act with Faith

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1. Teach children how to be good stewards of their time, friendship, possessions and money.
2. Teach children to respect human life and the environment.
3. Help children identify ways they can use their personal talents to help others and protect nature.
4. Participate as a family in service or social justice programs at school, in the parish or community.
5. Give children opportunities to meet and appreciate people from other cultures, races, economic means and handicapped persons.
6. Compare the values and lifestyles depicted on TV, in other media, and in real life with your values and lifestyle as a Catholic Christian.

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