

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC
ARCHDIOCESE OF ATLANTA



*Creating a Culture
of
Family Faith
Formation*



Parents as Primary Educators!

Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children.

They bear witness to this responsibility first by *creating a home* where tenderness, forgiveness, respect, fidelity, and disinterested service are the rule.

The home is well suited for *education in the virtues*.

This requires an apprenticeship in self-denial, sound judgment, and self-mastery — the preconditions of all true freedom.

Parents should teach their children to subordinate the "material and instinctual dimensions to interior and spiritual ones."³¹

Parents have a grave responsibility to give good example to their children. By knowing how to acknowledge their own failings to their children, parents will be better able to guide and correct them. CCC 2223

Sources:

Holy Bible

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Familiaris Consortio a post-synodal apostolic exhortation written by Saint John Paul II and promulgated on 22 November 1981.

The Peyton Institute for Domestic Church Life, Celebrating the Liturgy of Domestic Church Life, by Dr. Greg and Lisa Popcak (2022).

FIVE KEYS FOR PRACTICING FAITH AND LIVING AS THE DOMESTIC CHURCH
https://www.evangelizationatl.com/_files/ugd/65ea86_c9400ba718b74ec8a816cc7de4cab4d3.pdf
Faith Formation 20/20: Designing the Future of Faith Formation, by John Roberto, Lifelong Faith Associates, 2010, pg. 135-136.

“Today, there are many marriages in crisis, young people tempted, the elderly forgotten, children suffering,” he (Pope Francis) said.

“We often see that the nature of the
family is under attack

by various ideologies, which shake the foundations that support the personality of the human being and, in general, society as a whole.”

<https://catholicreview.org/family-under-attack-by-ideologies-pope-says/>



Recent data shows Catholic marriages and infant baptisms on the decline



- Most parents today are Millennials (Generation Z) and Generation X (becoming grandparents).
- Research shows that these age groups have been increasingly leaving the Church and are referred to as “lost generations”.
- Those that are leaving are taking their children with them.
- **Family Faith Formation is essential *because* Adult Faith Formation is essential**, not supplemental or peripheral!

Baptisms of 7 to 17 year olds are on the rise! (Pew)

“Diocesan reports reveal a striking rise in U.S. Catholic converts, with increases of 30% to 87% at Easter 2024.” (The Rio Times)

Parishes are reporting increase in young adult converts!
Young adult converts = Young families!!!



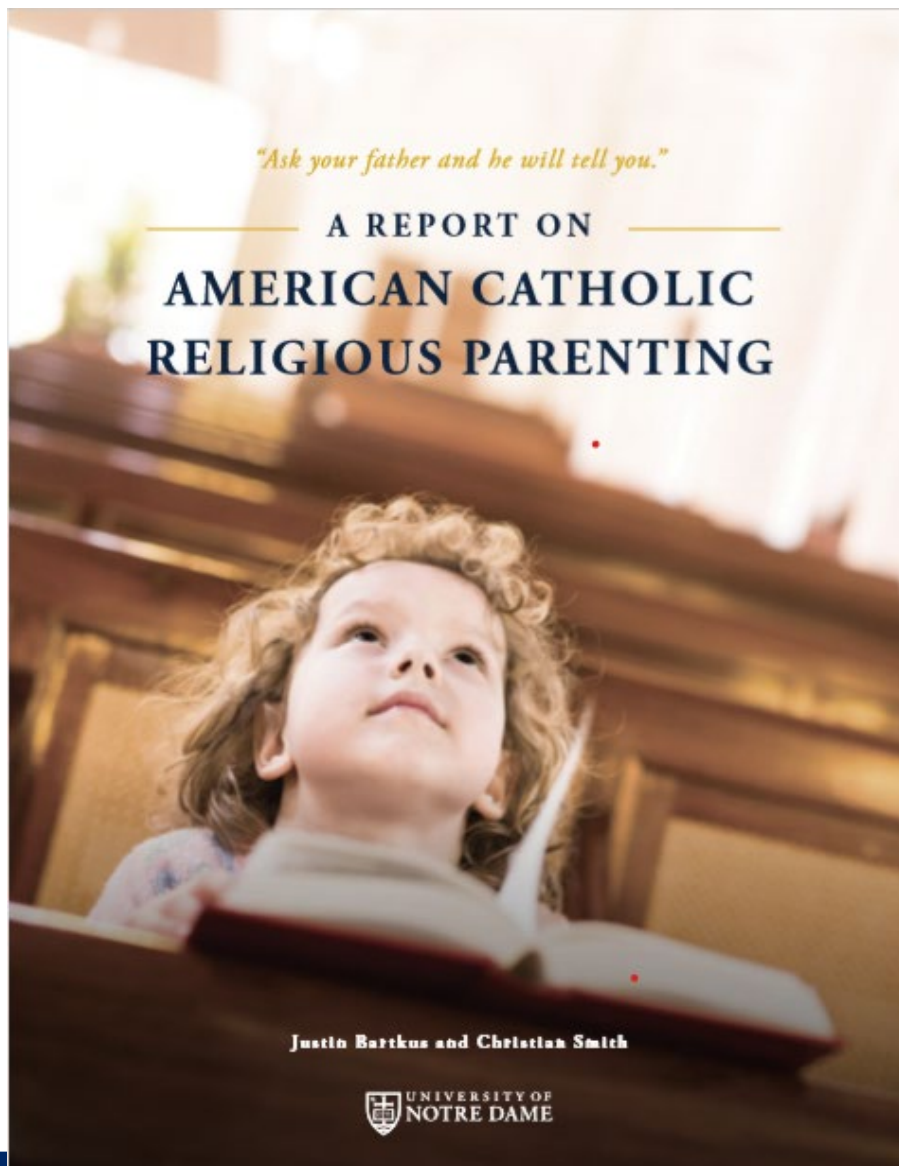
WANT MORE?

The Church is a family of families!

The Data *still* shows that **young people faithfully “mirror”** the religious lives of their parents.

Family Renewal is *a key* to Parish Renewal





The crucial location where youth's religious outcomes are largely decided is not the congregation or the parish, but the home. (2017)

What parents ***Don't*** want:

To volunteer
More homework

What parents ***Do*** want:

Help strengthening the
relationships within their
families

Liturgy of the Domestic Church

Liturgy = “Sacred Work”

Today we will explore:

***HOW CAN PARISH MINISTRIES EDUCATE,
INSPIRE AND SUPPORT FAMILIES IN FULFILLING THEIR
MISSION TO BE THE DOMESTIC CHURCH?***

The Liturgy of Domestic Church Life has three rites:



The Rite of Christian Relationship
The Rite of Family Rituals
The Rite of Reaching Out

“Each of these rites is rooted in the **priestly, prophetic, and royal missions of baptism, respectively**. These rites are also supported, on a natural level, by decades of social science research identifying practices associated with healthy, high-functioning families around the world.”

2.1 The Peyton Institute for Domestic Church Life, Celebrating the Liturgy of Domestic Church Life, by Dr. Greg and Lisa Popcak (2022).

Baptism

❖ **In Baptism we receive the grace to live out our vocation, which is one's particular path to God and that often begins in a family.**

❖ **Making family life holy!**

❖ **Making our homes places where faith must be the “source of warmth and extravagant affection”!**

The Peyton Institute for Domestic Church Life, Celebrating the Liturgy of Domestic Church Life, by Dr. Greg and Lisa Popcak (2022).

God lives in the midst of the family!

“The Rite of Christian Relationship helps families live out the **priestly mission of baptism**. It suggests simple, daily practices that enable families to consecrate their daily lives and relationships to God by infusing all their interactions with **Christ’s sacrificial love.**”

The Peyton Institute for Domestic Church Life, *Celebrating the Liturgy of Domestic Church Life*, by Dr. Greg and Lisa Popcak (2022).



“The Rite of Family Rituals encourages simple, daily practices that equip families to live out the **prophetic mission of baptism.**”

Through their words and actions, prophets call people to live godly lives.”

The Peyton Institute for Domestic Church Life, Celebrating the Liturgy of Domestic Church Life, by Dr. Greg and Lisa Popcak (2022).



The Rite of Reaching Out

“This rite suggests **simple daily practices** that help families discover how, specifically, they are **called to serve and bless each other and the world.**”

Through consistent practice and prayer, these practices can also help every domestic church discern their **specific family mission and charism.**”

The Peyton Institute for Domestic Church Life, Celebrating the Liturgy of Domestic Church Life, by Dr. Greg and Lisa Popcak (2022).

How can we encourage families to live
the Liturgy of the Domestic Church
by offering opportunities to
practice its Four Pillars at their parish?

How does/can your parish create opportunities that nurture the
4 Pillars of the Domestic Church
where families...

(You're probably already doing some of these!)

Pray

Pray together and live the liturgical life of the church both at the church and within their homes?

Listen/Learn/

Have Caring Conversations

Learn more about God and having caring conversations with one another?

Work/Serve

Serve together as a family both in their homes and in the world?

Play

Gather for wholesome recreation and fun that nurture the parish as a family of families?

I. Family Devotions and Prayer

“The Catholic faith shapes the whole of our lives and involves a lifetime of study, reflection, and prayer.

Family devotions provide a way to learn more about the Bible and Christian traditions as a family and apply the teaching to daily life as a follower of Jesus Christ.

This understanding of devotional life includes, but is not limited to, **public worship (liturgy),, bedtime prayers, Bible reading and study (e.g., lectio divina), grace before meals evening and morning prayers, devotionals such as the Rosary or the Divine Mercy Chaplet, and praying together at any time of the day or night.”**

“Christian families are called to make **God abundantly welcome in their homes, regarding him as the most important member of their family and relating to him as the person who knows them best and loves them most.**

By creating regular times throughout the day to pray together and reflect on God’s call in their lives, families discover the specific ways he is asking them to love, serve, and cherish each other more generously.”

The Peyton Institute for Domestic Church Life, Celebrating the Liturgy of Domestic Church Life, by Dr. Greg and Lisa Popcak (2022).

Faith Formation 20/20: Designing the Future of Faith Formation, by John Roberto, Lifelong Faith Associates, 2010, pg. 135-136.

What does/can your parish do to nurture family devotions and prayer?

1. Start by getting families to pray together as a family at church which will make them more comfortable, inspired and likely to pray together at home.
2. Liturgical Calendar Gatherings for Families throughout the year.
***FFD Year 1 has a complete year of easy Liturgical Calendar family activities.**
<https://www.evangelizationatl.com/ffd-year-one>
3. Home altar – Through the year encourage families to pray together at their home altars.
4. Traveling Mary, Saint or Liturgical Kits for families to bring home.
5. Bring families together to share about their own prayer experiences and the power of prayer in their lives.
6. Family Show ‘n Tell- Create Opportunities for families to bring in pictures or sacramentals from their homes, such as a picture of a loved one to pray for during All Souls’ Day or a special baptismal sacramental at the Epiphany of Our Lord, etc...

II. Families Learning Together and Having Caring Conversations

“Catholic values and faith are passed on to the next generation through supportive conversations.”

Listening and responding to the daily concerns of children and youth makes it easier to have meaningful conversations regarding the love of God and Christian discipleship and are ways to express God’s love to others.

Hearing their parents’ “faith stories” is one of the most important influences on the faith of children and teenagers.”

“Catholic families must **make intentional, daily time to have conversations** involving more than what items need to be purchased at the store or what child needs to be driven where.

When families carve out a little time each day to discuss topics like the highs and lows in each other’s day, **the ways God has been present throughout the day, and how they might do a better job being a team and taking care of each other that day, they create communion through communication.”**

Faith Formation 20/20: Designing the Future of Faith Formation, by John Roberto, Lifelong Faith Associates, 2010.

The Peyton Institute for Domestic Church Life, Celebrating the Liturgy of Domestic Church Life, by Dr. Greg and Lisa Popcak (2022).

What does/can your parish do to nurture caring conversations?

Create small groups of families for fellowship or in-person sessions with parents and youth together, ask non-threatening family faith tradition questions such as:

Who in your family most impacted your faith? why?
Who is the most generous person you know and why?
Who is your favorite saint & why?
What is your favorite bible story & why?
Do you remember the first prayer you learned or said?
What was it?
Did someone teach it to you? Who?
What is your favorite/liturgical season or church celebration?
Do you remember your First Holy Communion or your Confirmation?
Why do you want your young person to receive the Sacraments of the Catholic Church?
What are you hoping for him/her?

Lectio Divina

Consider leading families through praying with scripture and sharing their reflections.

If families do not come into the church for parent/youth sessions, catechists can encourage conversation at home by sending such questions home in a journal to bring back and share.

III. Families Working and Serving Together

“Engaging in service with one’s family is a powerful opportunity for growing in faith. Both youth and adults are more likely to have a growing strong faith when their family serves others together; in the home, in the congregation, in the community and world.”

Faith Formation 20/20: Designing the Future of Faith Formation, by John Roberto, Lifelong Faith Associates, 2010.

“Regularly choosing to do certain household chores together enables families to practice solidarity (i.e., teamwork) and stewardship. Families face a constant temptation to see the simple tasks of daily life as merely drudgery to be endured or completed as quickly as possible. **Regularly choosing to do certain household chores together enables families to practice solidarity (i.e., teamwork) and stewardship.**

By contrast, done well and animated by a genuine spirit of fellowship, family work rituals help families learn to experience the activities of daily family life as an opportunity to create strong, intimate bonds.

Families should resist the temptation to let parish and community service become one more thing that divides them.

To the degree it is possible, families should engage in parish ministry and community service together, bearing witness to their life as a domestic church.

When family members serve the world side-by-side, they bless others through their specific service but, even more importantly, through their shared witness of love.”

The Peyton Institute for Domestic Church Life, Celebrating the Liturgy of Domestic Church Life, by Dr. Greg and Lisa Popcak (2022).

What does/can your parish do to nurture family service at home, in the parish and in the world?

#1 Identify & Encourage the Service That Takes Place *Within the Home!*

#2 Support for Service at the Parish

- Beautification
- VBS
- Knights of Columbus Activities
- Prime Timers Events & Home Needs
- Fundraising/Bake Sales for the Homeless or other organizations
- Clothing Drives

#3 Service Outside the Parish

- Soup Kitchen
- Nursing Home Visits
- Community Beautification



IV. Families Playing Together

“In a world that often equates leisure and fun with sinful and self-destructive behavior, family play rituals (e.g., game nights, movie nights, family days, outings, celebrations, etc.) teach family members healthy, godly ways to enjoy themselves.

Family play rituals remind families to celebrate life in their domestic church by doing what they can to fill their homes with joy and laughter.”

The Peyton Institute for Domestic Church Life, *Celebrating the Liturgy of Domestic Church Life*, by Dr. Greg and Lisa Popcak (2022).

What does/can your parish do to nurture family play/recreation?

Gather Families for Fun Activities!

Movie & popcorn night (FORMED)

Trivia Night

BINGO Night

Take families to sporting events

Cookouts

Camps

Fishing

Gather Married Couples for Social and Spiritual Events

Valentine's Day mass, dinner & dancing

Date nights

Retreats

Couples' Bible Studies

New Moms' Groups

Dad's Groups

Sessions on parenting and topics that will educate and support parents in today's challenging environment.



What is your ministry
already doing to help
create strong family
relationships
within the home of the
youth to whom you
minister?

How can you build on
that?



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