



Helping Your Child Grow Up Catholic

in today's busy world

What Are Your Hopes and Dreams?

- ▶ When you think of your family or the families you serve, what do you hope or pray for?



Compelling Evidence

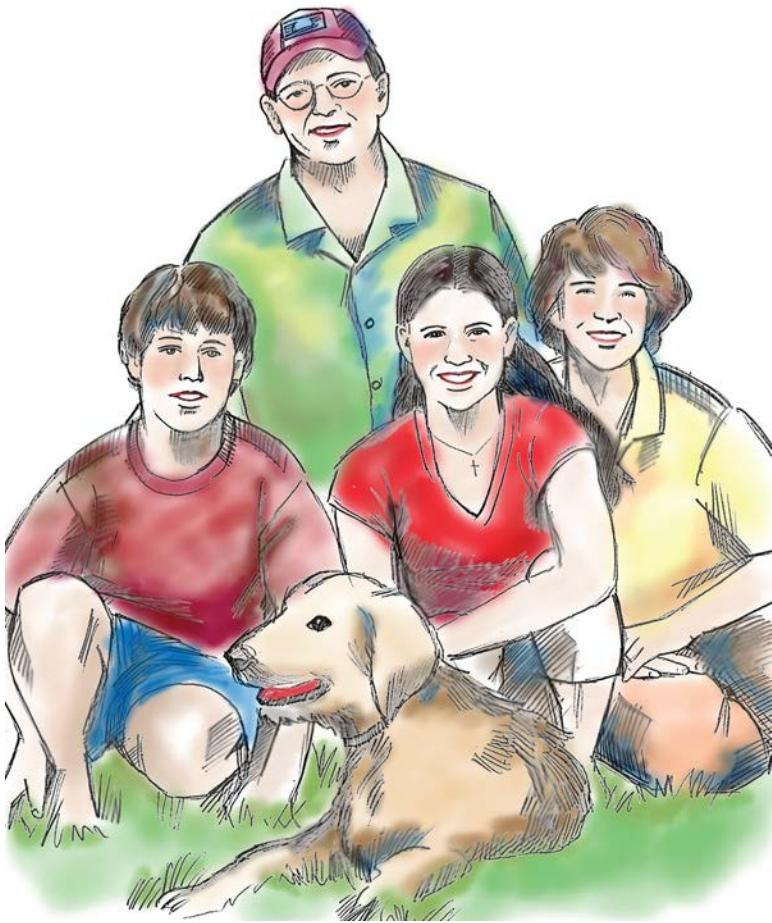
- ▶ Those who regularly participate in church services:
 - Live Longer (7.6 years on average);
 - Experience less depression, drug use and abuse, and suicide;
 - Experience a greater sense of well-being, hope and optimism, purpose and meaning, and self-esteem;
 - Have a greater sense of satisfaction within their families, with closer parent-child relationships;
 - Children exhibit higher performance in school and attain higher levels of education
 - “It may be that religion provides the strongest force available to reverse the powerful trends that are breaking fathers and children apart.”

The benefits of belonging

- ▶ Those who are engaged in their parish:
 - Are dramatically more likely to be satisfied with the circumstances of their lives.

In other words, they are happier!





So what's a father or mother to do?

Fall in love with Christ;
Develop a regular rhythm of participation in
Mass and in the life of your parish!



The National Study of Youth and Religion

- ▶ “Contrary to popular misguided cultural stereotypes and frequent parental misperceptions, we believe that the evidence clearly shows that the single most important social influence on the religious and spiritual lives of adolescents is their parents.”

(Soul Searching: the Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers, p. 261)

The National Directory for Catechesis

- ▶ “The family is defined as a ‘domestic Church,’ that is, in every Christian family the different aspects and functions of the life of the entire Church may be reflected: mission; catechesis; witness; prayer, etc.” ...



The National Directory for Catechesis

- ▶ “It is, indeed, a Christian education more witnessed to than taught, more occasional than systematic, more ongoing and daily than structured into periods.” (NDC, 255)
- ▶ Or in the words of a wise catechetical leader, “faith is more caught than taught!”

Let's keep it simple



- ▶ Pray together!
 - Sunday Mass
 - Seasonal Prayer
 - At home
 - Let your children know the importance of prayer in your life

- ▶ Play together!
 - Faith Community

Let's keep it simple



- ▶ Talk with each other
 - Apply Church teaching and belief to everyday situations
 - Ask your children what they think, where their challenges are, what they dream of
- ▶ Continue to grow

What do you remember?

- ▶ How did you come to faith in Christ, or grow in faith over time?
 - Did your family pray together? Attend Mass together?
 - Were there family or neighborhood holy day celebrations? Feasts or seasons of the Church year (Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, May Crowning, etc.)
 - How did you learn to pray, acquire basic beliefs, or develop skills in faith-influenced decision-making?
 - Are you still learning and growing in faith?



Who has most influenced you?

- ▶ Who helped you to develop faith in Christ?
- ▶ Who encourages you to live as a faith-filled Christian now?
- ▶ What about that person is most compelling or inspiring?
- ▶ For whom are you called to be such a witness?



Here are some concrete things you can do in the coming months to act on what we have discussed together: