

TOP 10 WAYS TO PARENT YOUR CHILDREN IN THE FAITH

"Parents are the most influential agents of catechesis for their children. They have a unique responsibility for the education of their children; they are the first educators, or catechists. They catechize primarily by the witness of their Christian lives and by their love for the faith."

-National Directory for Catechesis, page 234

10. **Storytelling:** Read and discuss stories from a children's Bible and the lives of the saints.

9. **Bless your children:** A blessing can be done simply by making the sign of the cross with holy water on the forehead of each child at the beginning and the end of each day.

8. **Set up a family altar:** The family altar can be a simple bookshelf, table, or mantle with a combination of elements that image our Catholic identity, like: Religious art, Crucifix, Holy Water, Candles, Holy Bible, Statues.

7. **Weekly family discussions:** Having family discussions as a weekly event, such as Sundays after Mass or during a weeknight, is a great way to apply the message of the Gospel (and the homily) to everyday life and grow closer as a family.

6. **Activities with other families:** Celebrate feast days and holy days together, have breakfast or lunch after Sunday Mass, or volunteer to do a service project with another family.

5. **Family Retreat:** A family retreat can be a time for silence, it is also a time to be reacquainted with each other through games, stories, prayer, and other creative ways to bring a family closer to God and each other. Try visiting places like the National Shrine.

4. **Family Prayer:** Choose a specific time each day or evening for family prayer where you can teach your children traditional Catholic prayers like the Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, the Rosary, etc.

3. **Teach by example:** As parents, you offer powerful modeling effects for the faith formation of your children, especially by your example, words, and the way you practice your own faith.

2. **Receive the sacrament of Reconciliation:** Let your children see you model how to receive God's mercy and forgiveness in this sacrament and encourage them to do the same on any Saturday in the church from 4:00 – 5:00 pm.

1. **Attend Mass every Sunday with your children.** Teaching your children special love for the Holy Eucharist and the Real Presence of Christ is one of the greatest gifts you can give them!