

New Evangelization Training  
Office for Evangelization  
October 2015

# Equipping Parents to Evangelize their Children

CCC 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.”

# 1. Return to stage one: Personal encounter with Christ

“Remain in me, as I remain in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing.”

–John 15:4-5

Inspiring parents to:

- Daily Prayer
- Sacraments (Mass and Confession)
- Ongoing Spiritual formation (Scripture study, Spiritual reading, Personal Reflection Time, etc.)
- Participating in Community (Parish Life)

## 2. Creating a home where faith can grow

CCC 2223: 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.

CCC 2226: Education in the faith by the parents should begin in the child's earliest years. 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***.

## 2. Creating a home where faith can grow

Traditions for family life:

- Sunday Mass
- Family Meals
- Morning/Bedtime Prayers
- Christmas/Easter celebrations
- Rosary, Liturgy of the Hours, Confession

Creating a space in the home for faith

- Candles
- Statues/Pictures
- Crucifix in bedrooms
- Bible available

### 3. Parents lead by example of virtue

CCC 2223: 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 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:

“He who loves his son will not spare the rod. . . . He who disciplines his son will profit by him. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

“Modern man listens more willingly to **witnesses** than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are **witnesses**.”

—Pope Paul VI, *Evangelii Nunciandi* (Evangelization in the Modern World)

### 3. Parents lead by example of virtue

#### Cardinal Virtues:

- **Prudence:** Making good choices, good judgment, wisdom
- **Justice:** Giving to another what is due him/her
- **Temperance:** Acting appropriately, self-denial, staying in middle ground.
- **Fortitude:** Appropriate response to fear.

#### Theological Virtues:

- **Faith**
- **Hope**
- **Love**

## 4. Parents with troubled children

“Other difficult circumstances in which the family needs the help of the ecclesial community and its pastors are: the children's **adolescence**, which can be disturbed, rebellious and sometimes stormy; the **children's marriage**, which takes them away from their family; lack of understanding or lack of love on the part of those held most dear; **abandonment** by one of the spouses, or his or her death, which brings the painful experience of widowhood, or the death of a family member, which breaks up and deeply transforms the original family nucleus.” (FC 77)

—St. John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*



## 4. Parents with troubled children

“It cannot be forgotten that the most basic element, so basic that it qualifies the educational role of parents, is **parental love**, which finds fulfillment in the task of education as it completes and perfects its service of life: as well as being a source, the parents' love is also the **animating principle** and therefore the norm inspiring and guiding all concrete educational activity, enriching it with the values of kindness, constancy, goodness, service, disinterestedness and self-sacrifice that are the most precious fruit of love” (FC 36).

—St. John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*

“Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, **forgive him**. And if he wrongs you seven times in one day and returns to you seven times saying, ‘I am sorry,’ you should forgive him.”

—Luke 17:3-4

## 5. Call to service

“Catholic social teaching emerges from the truth of what God has revealed to us about himself. We believe in the **triune God** whose very nature is **communal** and **social**. God the Father sends his only Son Jesus Christ and shares the Holy Spirit as his gift of love. God reveals himself to us as one who is not alone, but rather as one who is relational, one who is Trinity. Therefore, we who are **made in God's image** share this communal, social nature. We are called to reach out and to build relationships of love and justice.”

— from *Catholic Social Teaching: Challenges and Directions*

## 5. Call to service

“A prayer that does not lead you to **practical action** for your brother — the poor, the sick, those in need of help, a brother in difficulty — is a **sterile** and **incomplete prayer**. But, in the same way . . . When time is not set aside for dialogue with him in prayer, we risk serving ourselves and not God present in our needy brother and sister. St Benedict sums up the kind of life that indicated for his monks in two words: *ora et labora*, pray and work. It is from contemplation, from a strong friendship with the Lord that the capacity is born in us to live and to bring the love of God, his mercy, his tenderness, to others. And also our work with brothers in need, our charitable works of mercy, lead us to the Lord, because it is in the needy brother and sister that we see the Lord himself.”

—Pope Francis, 7/21/13

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- 2. Creating a home where faith can grow**
- 3. Parents lead by example of virtue**
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- 5. Call to service**