

“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”

(Matthew 19:14)



Nurturing Family Faith at Home

The family is the community where Christian faith practices are nurtured and developed. We have discovered through research that certain faith practices make a significant difference in nurturing the faith of children and adolescents at home. Among the most important practices are:

1. Reading the Bible as a family and encouraging young people to read the Bible regularly
2. Praying together as a family and encouraging young people to pray personally
3. Serving people in need as a family and supporting service activities by young people
4. Eating together as a family
5. Having family conversations
6. Talking about faith, religious issues, and questions and doubts
7. Ritualizing important family moments and milestone experiences
8. Celebrating holidays and Church-year seasons at home
9. Providing moral instruction
10. Being involved in a faith community and participating regularly in Sunday worship as a family

*Christ and His Church
call parents
to be "the first and
foremost
educators of their
children."*



Inspiration in Daily Family Life

[Gravissimum Educationis 3]



Helping Children Develop Their Gifts

Watching our children grow in their gifts and talents is one of our great joys as parents.

Here are four things you can do to help your child discover and develop his or her special, God-given gifts:

1. Expose children to a range of stimuli and experiences.

Read books, play music, provide art supplies, and surround them with toys that combine fun with a challenge.

2. Be alert for special interests.

Most child-development experts say that the “globally gifted” child is largely a myth. Some children will show an intense interest in one or two areas—music, art, math, writing, or other fields. This can indicate a special talent.

3. Challenge—but be realistic.

Children develop their skills when adults set high standards, but they can be demoralized by unrealistic expectations. It’s important to strike a balance.

4. Pray for your child’s development.

Prayer helps keep things in perspective. God is present in your family and in your child’s life. It’s not all up to you.

Share with Your Child the Joy of Giving

- **1. Involve your kids in “giving” decisions.**
Explain to your children what portion of your family budget goes toward charity and helping others. Get them involved in deciding which causes to support.
- **2. Make giving to others a “given.”**
Studies show that most generous adults had parents who also showed generosity, so be sure that helping others in need is something that your family simply does as a matter of course.
- **3. Maintain a balance between giving and receiving.**
Make sure that your children see examples of giving and receiving within the family. Both sides are important for balanced personal development.
- **4. Share your own needs with your child.**
Depending on the age of the child, it’s O.K. to occasionally say, “I need some help today. I would appreciate it if you took on some of my usual chores.” Then be specific about what the child can do and how he or she can do it.
- **5. Teach them to “offer it up.”**
The spiritual practice of “offering it up” is simply the exercise of offering one’s difficulties and sufferings for the good of others.
- **6. Exercise your faith in God’s providence.**
Generosity is an attitude toward life. It presupposes the faith that God will provide and the conviction that as we have been given, so we should give.

Even so, the home must continue to be the place where we learn to appreciate the meaning and beauty of the faith, to pray and to serve our neighbour.

~ The Joy of Love # 287, Pope Francis