



[If you haven't already, begin your meal with meal prayer, then take turns reading these boxes aloud, following the directions where applicable]

Family Culture

"The family is the domestic church". The meaning of this traditional Christian idea is that the home is the Church in miniature. The Church is the sacrament of God's love. She is a communion of faith and life. She is a mother and teacher. She is at the service of the whole human family as it goes forward towards its ultimate destiny. In the same way the family is a community of life and love. It educates and leads its members to their full human maturity and it serves the good of all along the road of life. The family is the "first and vital cell of society". In its own way it is a living image and historical representation of the mystery of the Church. The future of the world and of the Church, therefore, passes through the family. ... As the family goes, so goes the nation, and so goes the whole world in which we live.

-HOMILY OF JOHN PAUL II
Perth (Australia), 30 November 1986

Feast Days

Why do we celebrate feast days? Throughout the year, the Church celebrates days that help us remember holy people and the moments when we have seen God working in history. This feasting brings us into the joy that God made us for and reminds us of the joy we hope to have when we are united with Him at the end of all things. It also gives us a Catholic family culture and a rhythm of life that keeps our hearts and minds centered on God, who is at the heart of everything. The greatest feast is the Mass, where God shares the gift of Himself with us. The feast days of first importance are "Solemnities," of second importance are "Feasts," and third importance are "Memorials." There are MANY feasts throughout the year - consider marking your family calendar to celebrate the solemnities and a few of the feasts that have special importance for you such as your patron saints.

Discussion

[These questions are a spark for conversation, not a strict outline. Allow the Spirit to lead. Try to at least discuss the starred questions each week.]

- Before the discussion begins, read your Family Promises from last week as a reminder.
- *Complete this sentence: "We are the _____ family" - what word or words describe the heart of your home?
- If a stranger studied your family for a week, how would they complete that sentence about your family? Why?
- What values or lessons is your family offering to the world around you?

Prayer

[Pray this to end your meal or begin your activity time]

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created and you will renew the face of the earth.

Activity

[For this activity section, you will need the pillars worksheet - If you don't have a copy, you can download it on our website]

Quality family culture doesn't happen by accident, it needs to be built intentionally. This week, we will ponder how our family can grow stronger in 4 areas, or "pillars", of family life.

The Four Pillars of Family Life

Pray together · Play together

Establish family practices · Form the mind and heart

Spend some time together completing the Family Pillars worksheet.

Extras

Looking for more?

- For more about feast days:
<https://catholicstraightanswers.com/what-is-the-difference-between-a-solemnity-a-feast-and-a-memorial/>

https://www.google.com/amp/s/mcgrathblog.nd.edu/the-importance-of-feasting-in-the-christian-tradition%3fhs_amp=true

- Read the full text of John Paul II's homily:

https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1986/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19861130_perth-australia.html

- Parents, watch this segment from about why to build a family culture and how to use it well, from the *Me and My House* series on FORMED.org:
<https://watchformed.org/videos/building-your-family-culture>

- For a detailed look at how to follow through on your commitments and create your own household "rhythm" read *A Mother's Rule of Life*:
<https://watchformed.org/a-mother-s-rule-of-life-how-to-bring-order-to-your-home-peace-to-your-soul-by-holly-pierlot>

Sacramental Life

Why is the Mass the greatest feast? Every Sunday we are celebrating a "mini-Easter" - we celebrate the joy of the resurrection. God invites us to the Eucharist as a feast, where He offers Himself as the greatest gift and we praise Him and give Him thanks. We call this celebration "Eucharist" because the word means to give thanks (from the Greek *eukharistia* meaning 'thanksgiving').

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If your child is preparing to receive the sacraments of First Reconciliation & First Communion or Confirmation, please register them at: <https://tinyurl.com/yczda8t7> Also, please stop by the parish office to pick up a journal for your child who is preparing - more details to come on how to use these.

Looking Ahead

For Next Week, Oct 5:

- Guide sheets will be provided in the bulletin and online
- There will be an additional activity sheet for next week, available to pick up at the parishes or download online
- Optional activity page packets to keep little ones busy are also available to pick up at the parishes or download online
- The month of October is the month of the Rosary and we will be using rosaries in the next few weeks' activities - rosaries are available for purchase in the St Augustine foyer.

Upcoming Events:

- Confirmation Students - your whole family should plan to attend on Oct 12 6-8 pm at St Augustine for our first formation night.
- Mark your calendars for our first parish-wide COR gathering on Wednesday, November 2, 2022 - more details to come!

