

HOSPITALITY IN

Our Religious Formation

Parish programs that offer faith formation and sacramental preparation for children are often our first opportunities to welcome, evangelize and empower families. We have a responsibility to not only educate children about the truths of the faith, but to partner with parents to make sure they have the knowledge and tools to accompany their children on a lifelong journey of faith and to practice the faith daily in their homes, neighborhoods and workplaces.



REFLECT

Christ himself teaches us how to evangelize, how to invite people into communion with him, and how to create a culture of witness: namely, through love, mercy, and joy. Christ gives us the method: Come and see (Jn 1:39); Follow me (Mt 9:9); Remain in me (Jn 15:4-6); Go therefore and make disciples of all nations (Mt 28:19). The words of Christ form the methodology for missionary discipleship that corresponds to:

| <i>Come and See</i> | <i>Follow Me</i> | <i>Remain in Me</i> | <i>Go Therefore and Make Disciples of All Nations</i> |
|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|---|
| ENCOUNTER | ACCOMPANY | COMMUNITY | SEND |

National Directory for Catechesis (NDC): The New Evangelization as the Context for Missionary Discipleship

Children's preparation for the Sacraments begins in the home. The family has the most important role in communicating the Christian and human values that form the foundation of a child's understanding of the Eucharist, Reconciliation and Confirmation... Catechesis offered [by the parish should] help parents grow in their own understanding and appreciation of the Sacraments and enable them to catechize their children more effectively. [NDC 126-127](#)

Parents don't need theology degrees or extensive knowledge of the Bible or liturgy to pass on their faith. Parents merely need the love they have for their children to effectively form them and introduce them to a relationship with Christ. Every child and youth program needs to have one thing: Opportunities for kids and parents to gather together to talk about faith. And parents need to lead it.

www.usccb.org/news/2020/putting-parents-center-our-ministry-efforts

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What faith formation programs do we offer for children and teens and how are parents involved in the current programs? How might we strengthen the partnership between the parish faith formation program and the parents and families it serves?
2. What support do parents/guardians need from their parish catechetical program and catechists to allow their homes to become true "schools of Christ," building a "new civilization of love"?
3. Do we treat our families any different than other activities that families are involved with outside the church (e.g. youth sports, drama/dance, scouting, etc.)? How do our faith formation programs help families feel like they belong, are valued, are respected, are appreciated?
4. Are our programs leading families closer to each other, and closer to Jesus?