

HOSPITALITY FOR *Young Families*

The parish should be a place of support and empowerment for young families, a place where they feel welcome, where they feel like they belong. A place that they can come as they are and find the tools and support they need to grow and thrive physically, emotionally, and spiritually. A primary focus of parish life should be to build up the domestic church and encourage families to witness to Christ through their everyday lives.

Parish life is a support to young parents raising their children not only in the knowledge of the Catholic Faith, but as members of the Body of Christ that give witness with their lives. Baptism is a graced moment to engage young families and develop a welcoming relationship to bring them to Christ and to the realization that as parents they are called to form their children's hearts to hear this call to discipleship as missionaries in the world.



REFLECT

Let us begin a revival of parish life by welcoming Christ into the journey of our lives... With Jesus as our Good Shepherd and companion we will fulfill his summons to be: the salt of the earth and the light of the world. True holiness makes us disciples of Jesus and missionaries of his gospel.

Call to Holiness, Bishop Jaime Soto

The family is the original cell of social life. It is the natural society in which husband and wife are called to give themselves in love and in the gift of life. Authority, stability, and a life of relationships within the family constitute the foundations for freedom, security, and fraternity within society. The family is the community in which, from childhood, one can learn moral values, begin to honor God, and make good use of freedom. Family life is an initiation into life in society. [CCC 2207](#)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In general, do young families feel welcome in our parish? Do they feel like they belong? How are we witnessing a spirituality of welcoming when these families visit our office or come to our services?
2. What do we currently offer to serve young families in our parish? Do we make an effort to offer programming that works with families with small children? Do we take into account the many different needs children might have, such as those with disabilities or chronic illnesses?
3. Are our Masses places that welcome families with children, or are we building an environment that is antagonistic to the needs of families? Are our welcoming ministries made up of people that greet families with a smile or do we see families with small children as a "problem"?
4. Do we talk to our young parents about their dreams and hopes for their children so we can develop appropriate programs that target those dreams outside of Religious Education?