



# FAMILIES FORMING DISCIPLES

A FAMILY-FOCUSED APPROACH TO FAITH FORMATION

## FIVE KEYS FOR PRACTICING FAITH AND LIVING AS THE DOMESTIC CHURCH

### 1. Caring Conversations.

Catholic values and faith are passed on to the next generation through supportive conversations. Listening and responding to the daily concerns of children and youth makes it easier to have meaningful conversations regarding the love of God and Christian discipleship, and are ways to express God's love to others. Hearing their parents' "faith stories" is one of the most important influences on the faith of children and teenagers.

### 2. Family Devotions and Prayer.

The Catholic faith shapes the whole of our lives and involves a lifetime of study, reflection, and prayer. Family devotions provide a way to learn more about the Bible and Christian traditions as a family, and apply the teaching to daily life as a follower of Jesus Christ. This understanding of devotional life includes, but is not limited to, public worship (liturgy), bedtime prayers, Bible reading and study (e.g., lectio divina), grace before meals evening and morning prayers, devotionals such as the Rosary or the Divine Mercy Chaplet, and praying together at any time of the day or night.

### 3. Family Rituals and Traditions.

Families identify themselves and tell their family stories through daily routines, celebrations, and rituals. Family rituals can take many forms from daily rituals such as mealtime, bedtime, leaving and returning; celebrations such as birthdays, anniversaries, baptism days and saint name days, and special achievements; Church/liturgical year rituals at home such as Advent and Lent; milestones such as births, deaths, first day of school and graduations, and so on. Family rituals and traditions speak volumes about what the family values, believes and promotes, and how much the family values its faith.

### 4. Family Service.

Engaging in service with one's family is a powerful opportunity for growing in faith. Both youth and adults are more likely to have a growing strong faith when their family serves others together; in the home, in the congregation, in the community and world.

### 5. Strong Family Relationships.

Every moment of family life, in the joys, struggles, and sadness, is an opportunity to grow closer to each other and to the Lord. Living as a Domestic Church means strengthening your relationships together with Jesus at the center. Our Christian faith should be the source of warmth and affection within the home. The family that prays, plays, talks, and works together, stays together!

**Source:** Faith Formation 20/20: Designing the Future of Faith Formation, by John Roberto, Lifelong Faith Associates, 2010, pg. 135-136. See also The Peyton Institute for Domestic Church Life, particularly [Celebrating the Liturgy of Domestic Church Life](#), by Dr. Greg and Lisa Popcak (2022).

The Five Keys complement the Liturgy of the Domestic Church and the "Rites" of Christian Relationship, Family Rituals, and Reaching Out as described by the Popcaks in the article cited above.