

# Journey of Faith



## Family Life

"I want all of you to think about the RCIA," Mrs. Evans said. "But not about how you decided to start the RCIA. How *other* people helped you get here. Who else made it possible for you?"

Tanya raised her hand and said, "My mom drove me here every week."

"My grandma helped me go over our lessons at home," Tomás added.

"Good!" Mrs. Evans, said, beaming. "That's because our families help us grow in faith. In fact, our families are our very first church."



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$$21 \div 3 =$$

$$17 \div 5 =$$



**How has your family helped you with your faith?**

## Your First Church

The Church tells us that our home is our first church. Many of the things Jesus is trying to teach you are things you learn from your family.



*Read the following things Jesus taught us. Then write the name of the person who first taught you to follow Jesus' command.*

Love one another (John 15:12).

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If you have two coats, give to the person who has none (Luke 3:11).

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Your Father knows what you need before you ask (Matthew 6:8).

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Forgive one another (Matthew 6:14).

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## Sharing Jesus' Stories

You can be church at home by sharing Jesus' stories. You can read the Mass readings together before Sunday Mass. Then talk about them together. After Mass, you can talk about the readings again, this time thinking about how the priest's homily added to your family's discussion.



**What is your favorite Jesus story? Why?**

## Making Mass More Interesting

Sometimes Mass seems boring. That one hour feels a lot longer. But you can make Mass interesting. In fact, you can even look forward to going to Mass! Here are some ways you can get more out of going to Mass:

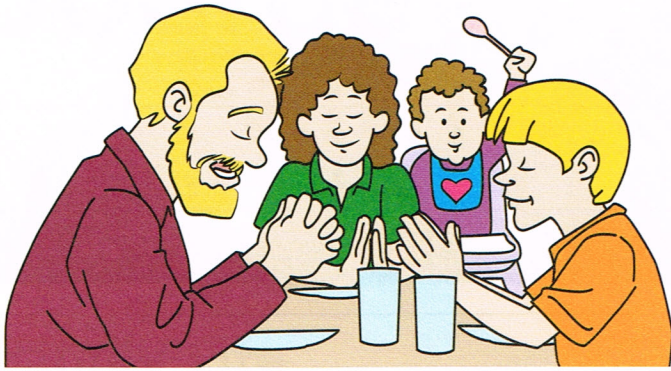
- Get there early when the church is still mostly empty. See how many items you can recognize by name.
- Ask your parents to tell you about things you don't recognize.
- Bring a Mass book to church so you can follow what's going on.
- Sit near the front so you can see and hear everything.
- Sing along with all the hymns and speak out when it's the congregation's time to respond.
- Share a part of your allowance at collection time.



**What else can you do to look forward to Mass?**

## Praying Together at Home

Do you have a family prayer time?



Jesus said, "When two or three of you ask anything in prayer, I am in your midst" (see Matthew 18:20). Here are some special times to invite Jesus into your home through prayer:

- Praying before meals reminds us to thank God for our food.
- Praying before we leave the house in the morning reminds us that God is with us throughout the day.
- Asking God for healing when a friend or family member is sick reminds us that we can do something for those who need our help.
- Praying before a big test can help our studying go better.
- Praying with someone who has a special problem or worry can help us feel calmer or even help us understand the right thing to do.
- Asking Jesus to be with us when we travel reminds us that he is always with us.



**How else can you invite Jesus into your family through prayer?**

## Living Love at Home

It's also important that we show love in the way we speak and the way we treat others. That starts at home. We all make mistakes. That's why we should always show love and forgiveness to each other. We can help each other become better Christians, especially at home.

For example, we can do chores at home without being asked. We can ask how someone else's day has gone instead of ignoring that person or only talking about ourselves. We can turn off the television or computer and spend that time talking or playing games with our family.



**How else can you show your family you love them?**

## Learning From the Saints

The saints are people who knew how to follow Jesus. You can learn more about them by reading their life stories. Then you can follow Jesus by imitating them. Here are some ideas:

- Every day after school, take some time to read about your favorite saints. Maybe your family could all pick different saints and share what you learned.
- Choose a "saint of the week" and find ways to imitate that saint. For example, St. Teresa of Calcutta took care of the poorest of the poor and the sickest of the sick. Imitate her by collecting food for the hungry and making cards for people in the hospital.



The more you learn about the saints, the more you'll learn about God!



# THANK YOU

Think about all the ways your family has helped your faith grow. Write a thank-you note to at least two people in your family who have helped you in a special way.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Love,

\_\_\_\_\_

## In Short



- The family is the “domestic church.”
- Parents are the first and most important teachers of faith.
- Celebrate with your family your faith and the Catholic identity.

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Editors of the 2017 Journey of Faith for Children: Theresa Nienaber-Panuski and Pat Fosarelli, MD, DMin.

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