

DIOCESE OF BUFFALO *FAMILIES AT THE CENTER OF FAITH*

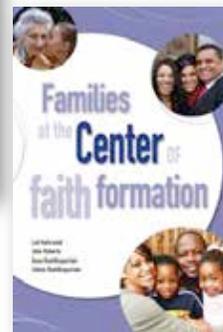
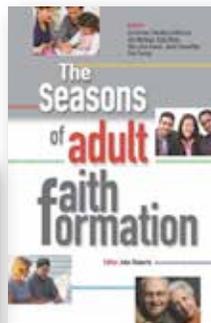
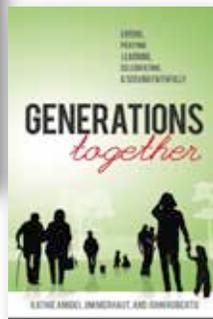
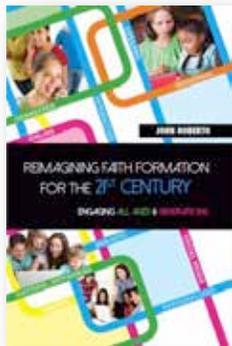


Session One

Presenters

Leif Kehrwald & John Roberto

Lifelong Faith Books
www.LifelongFaith.com



The Program: Wednesday

Topic 1. Families in the 21st Century

- A Profile of 21st Century Families
- The Role of Families in Faith Forming
- Transforming our Approach

Topic 2. Strategies for Developing Ministry with 21st Century Families: Presentation & Application to Parish Life

Part 1. Family Faith at Home

- Discovering God in everyday life
- Forming faith at home through the life cycle
- Forming faith through milestones

Part 2. Family Life and Parent Formation

- Developing a strong family life
- Empowering parents and grandparents as faith formers

Part 3. Families in the Parish Community

- Celebrating seasonal events through the year
- Encountering God in the Bible through the year
- Connecting families intergenerationally

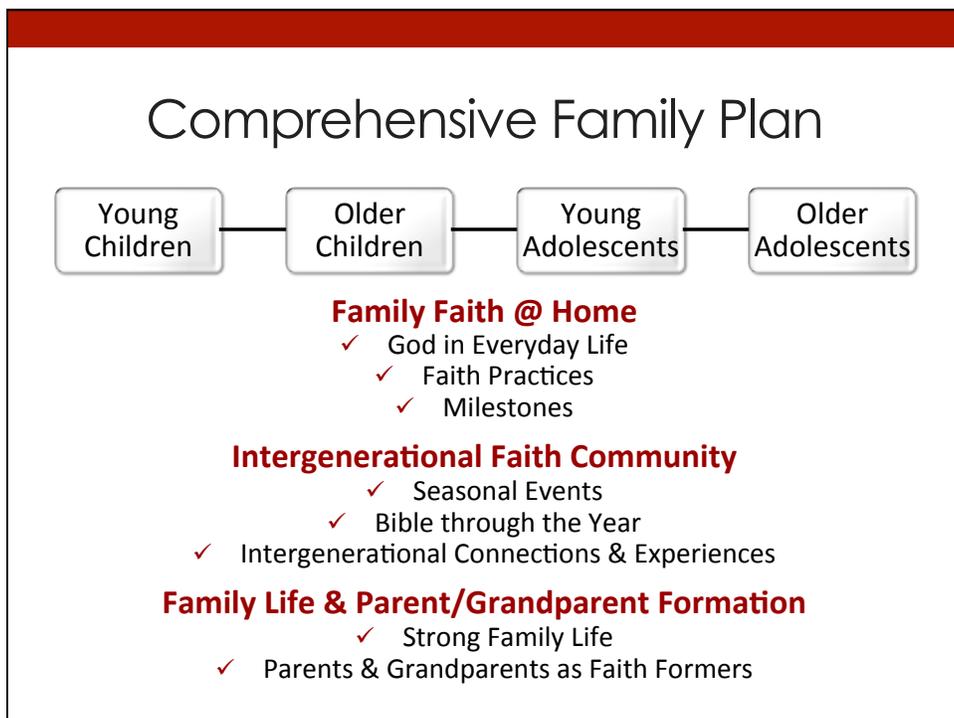
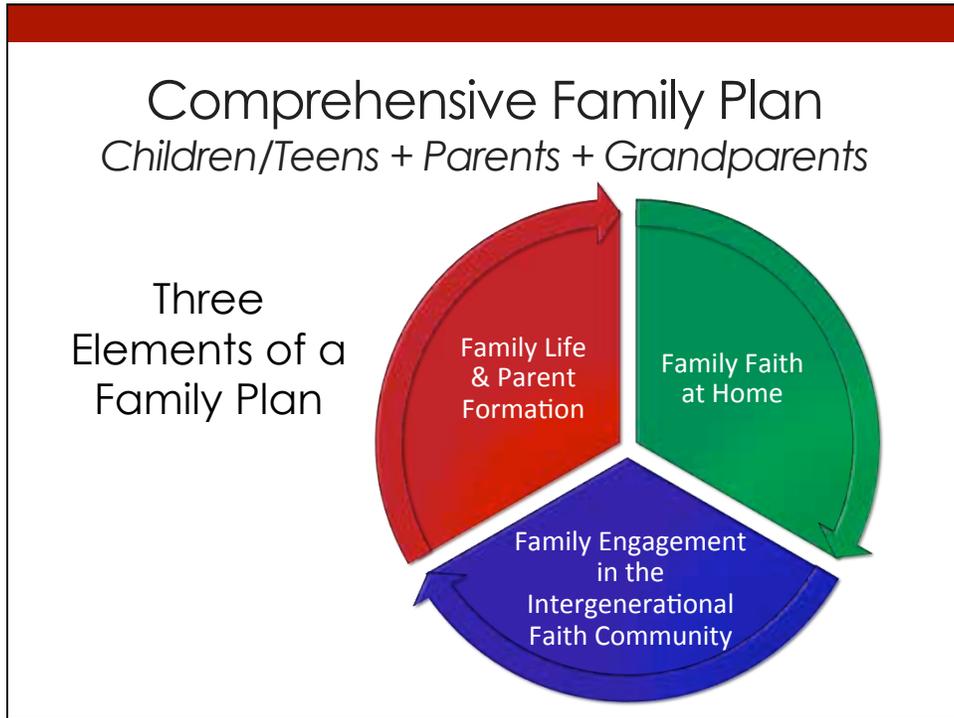
The Program: Thursday

Topic 3. Designing a Plan for Parish Ministry with Families

- Part 1. Digitally Enabled and Connected Approaches, Methods, and Media for Ministry with Families: Presentation and Application
- Part 2. A Parish Plan for Ministry with Families

Topic 4. Preparing to Launch a Parish Plan and New Initiatives with Families

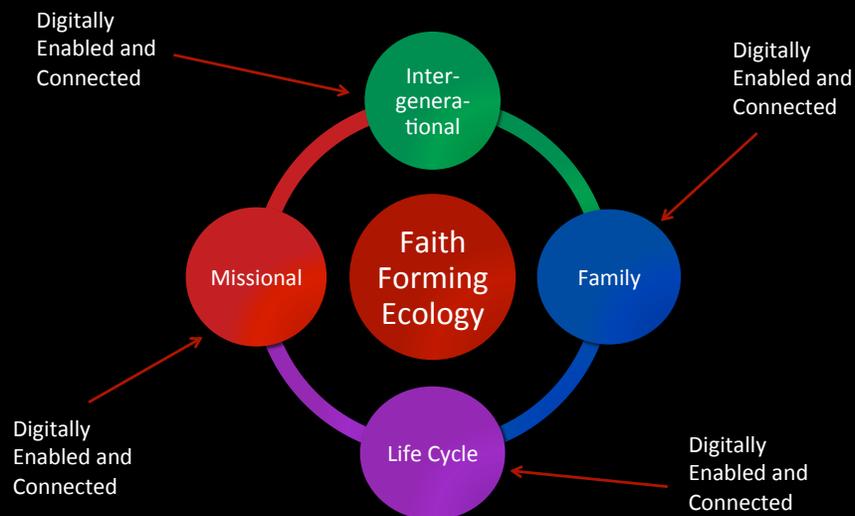
- Processes and tools to introduce new family initiatives and manage change in the parish community
- Curating resources
- Developing a digital platform



We are underinvesting in our families and therefore unable to support, empower, and equip families so that they can invest time, energy, and relational intimacy in forming the faith of children and teens at home and in daily life.

What are our priorities?

The Big Picture: Faith Forming Ecology



Wondering. . . .

- * *What does a vibrant and vital family faith look like in a 21st century world?*
- * *How do we meaningfully engage/connect with today's families?*
- * *How do we empower/equip/resource families to transmit faith at home - to practice a vital and vibrant faith?*
- * *How do we reach families who are not involved in a faith community or feel religion is not important?*

Believing. . . .

- * *God is actively present in family life.*
- * *Parents and the family are the most important religious influence on religious transmission.*
- * *Faith is formed through the day-to-day religious practices of the family and the ways parents model their faith and share it.*
- * *Faith is formed when there is a substantial investment of thought, time, and intimacy by parents in faith transmission.*
- * *Faith is formed in relationships – at home and in the intergenerational faith community.*
- * *Faith is formed in developmentally-appropriate ways over time.*

PART 1 WHAT'S CHANGING



Changing. . . .

- ✓ *Family structure, variety of living arrangements*
- ✓ *Work & \$ – 70% of mothers work outside home*
- ✓ *Complexity of family life, managing/balancing time and commitments*
- ✓ *Generations at home: Gen Xer & Millennial parents, iGen (Gen Z) children and teens*
- ✓ *Religious practice, participation, & affiliation*
- ✓ *Faith transmission and practice at home*

What's Changing?

Diversity of Family Forms

No single family arrangement encompasses the majority of children today.

- ✓ Two-parent, married couple households are on the decline.
- ✓ Children and adolescents live in a variety of family arrangements that change and evolve over the course of a child's life.

What's Changing?

Mothers Working Outside the Home

- ✓ 70% of all mothers of children younger than 18 and 64% of mothers with preschool-aged children work outside of the home
- ✓ About three-fourths of all employed moms are working full time.
- ✓ About thirty percent of mothers living with children younger than 18 are at home with the children.

What's Changing?

Family Life is Complex

Parents are busier than ever—and often “overwhelmed”—managing and balancing work, education, family life, young people’s activities, and their own personal lives. Today’s family is far more complex than in prior decades as parents deal with constant and accelerating change.

What's Changing?

Parents Want Honest, Ethical, Caring Children

- ✓ Parents want their children to be honest and ethical as adults, caring and compassionate, and hardworking.
- ✓ The top values that are important for them to teach include (in order):
 - 1) being responsible, 2) hard work,
 - 3) religious faith, 4) helping others, 5) being well mannered, 6) independence, 7) empathy,
 - 8) obedience, 9) persistence, 10) creativity,
 - 11) tolerance, and 12) curiosity

What's Changing?

Parents Have Different Approaches to Digital World

- There is a widespread adoption of new digital technologies and mobile devices that are transforming the way parents and children relate, communicate, work, and learn.
- Parents can be divided into three groups based on how they limit or guide their children's screen time with each group representing about one-third of all parents:
 - *digital limiters*
 - *digital enablers*
 - *digital mentors*

What's Changing?

Generational Diversity

Gen X Parents (mid 30s-mid 50s)

Millennial Parents (20s-mid 30s)

- Generational approaches to parenting and family life
- Gen X parents approach child-rearing as a set of tangible practices that will keep their children safe, reasonably happy, well-behaved, and ready to take on life's challenges. They practice *protective parenting*.
- Millennial parents, reflecting their values of individuality and self-expression, focus more on a democratic approach to family management, encouraging their children to be open-minded, empathetic, and questioning—and teaching them to be themselves and try new things. They are moving away from the overscheduled days of their youth, preferring a more responsive, less directorial approach to activities. (*Responsive Parenting*)

What's Changing?



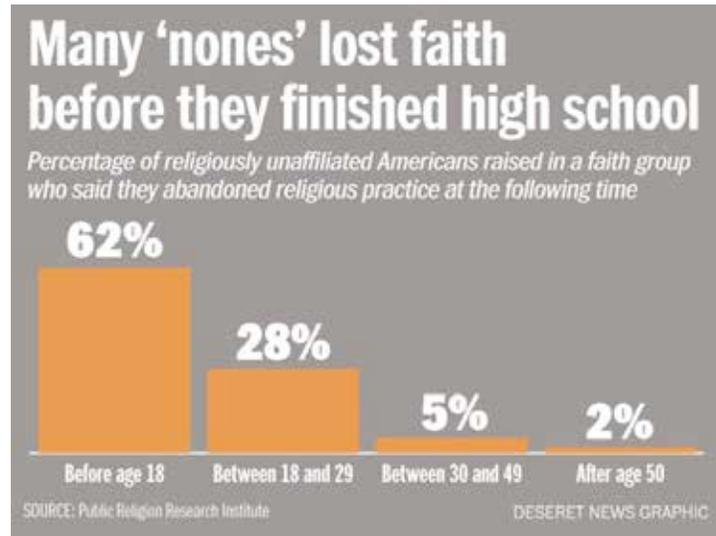
What's Changing?

Spiritual-Religious Diversity

Parents and families reflect an increasing diversity in religious beliefs, practices, and affiliation.

- ✓ 23% of Generation Xers and over 34% of Millennials are not religiously affiliated and the number of unaffiliated Millennials is growing.
- ✓ Families of Generation X and Millennial parents are participating less in church life and Sunday worship. Religion and spirituality may be important to families today, but for many it is not usually expressed by participation in churches

What's Changing

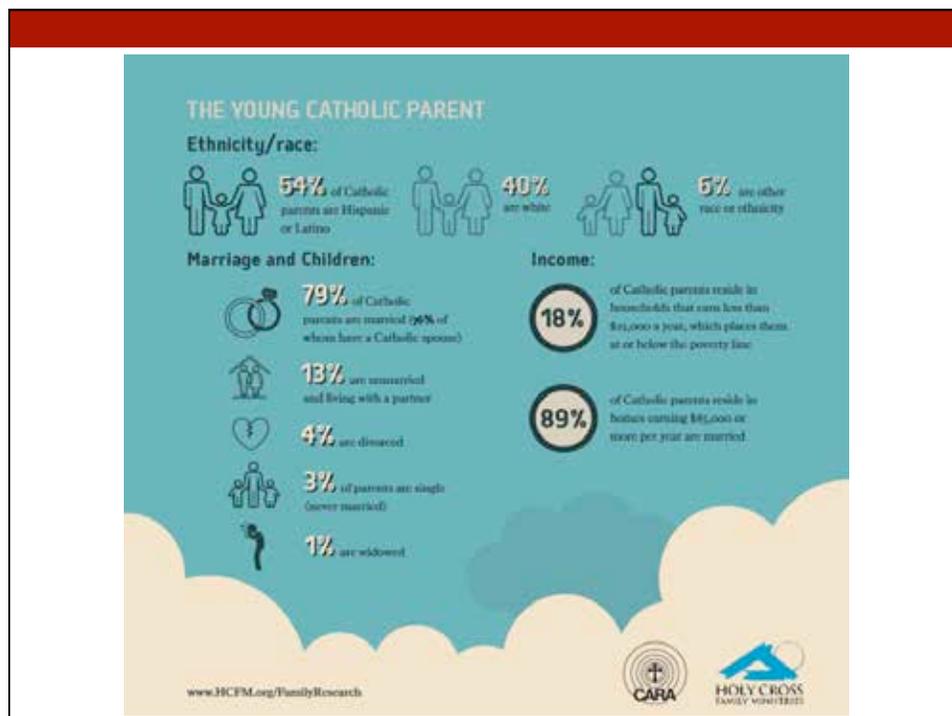


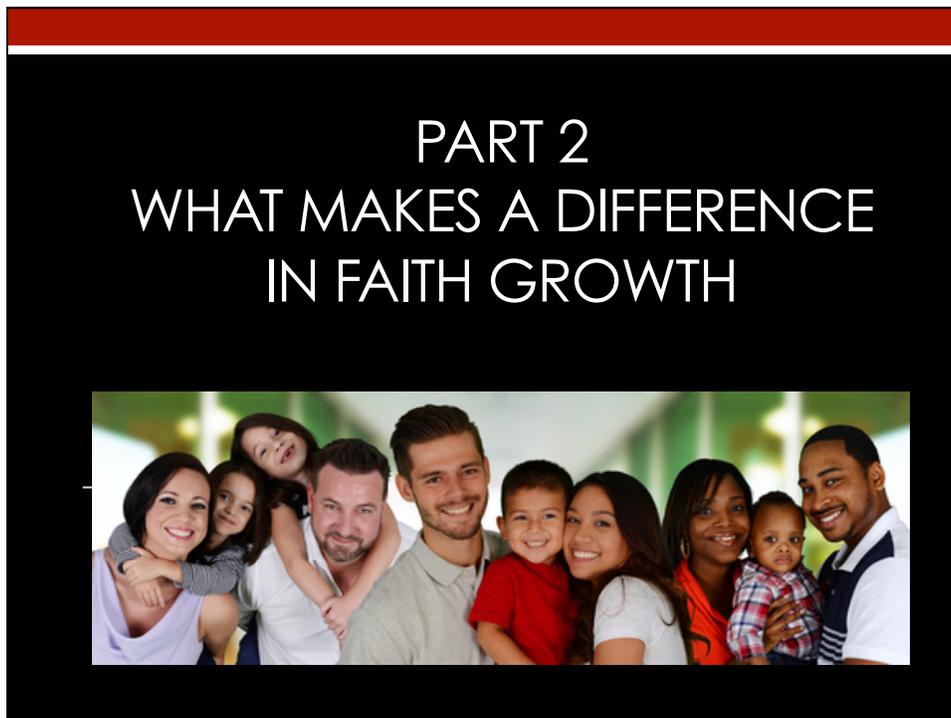
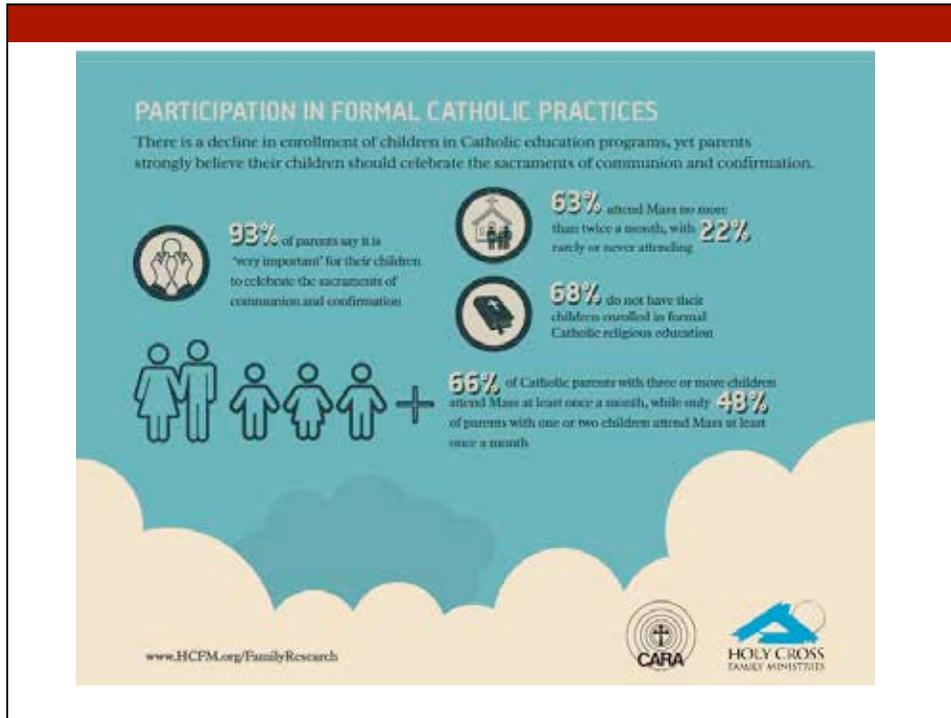
What's Changing



What's Changing?

- Significant indicators, such as religious identification as a Christian, worship attendance, marriages and baptisms in the church, and changing generational patterns, point to a decline in family religious socialization across all denominations.
- There is also a decline in religious traditions and practices at home. Gen X and Millennial parents often lack the religious literacy and religious experiences necessary for faith transmission.





What Makes a Difference?

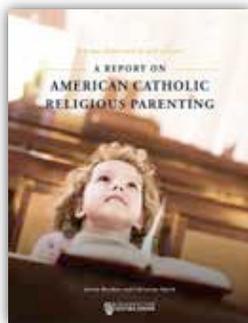


- ✦ Primary Influence: Parents and the Family



- ✦ Secondary Influence: The Congregation and Significant Adults

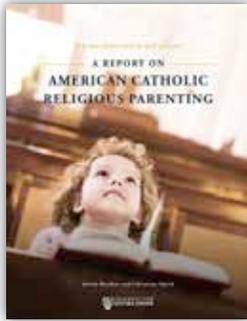
What Makes a Difference?



The primary mechanisms by which Catholic identity becomes rooted in children's lives are not Catholic schooling or sacramental preparation, but rather the day-to-day religious practices of the family and the ways parents model their faith and share it in conversation, collaboration, and exposure to outside religious opportunities.

(Burtkus and Smith)

What Makes a Difference?



This is all to say that the definitive causal agents in the religious and spiritual outcomes of American youth are neither clergy nor youth ministers, neither educators nor the voices of popular culture and media, but parents.

(Burtkus and Smith)

What Makes a Difference?

- ✦ **Sponsor of the Catholic Faith**
- ✦ **Gatekeeper of the Catholic Faith**
- ✦ **Interpreter of the Catholic Faith**

As “sponsors,” “gatekeepers,” and “interpreters” of the Catholic faith for their children, parents give children a glimpse of what Catholicism seems to be all about and whether or not it can meaningfully inform one’s day-to-day life.

(*American Catholic Religious Parenting*, Burtkus and Smith)

What Makes a Difference?

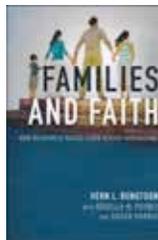
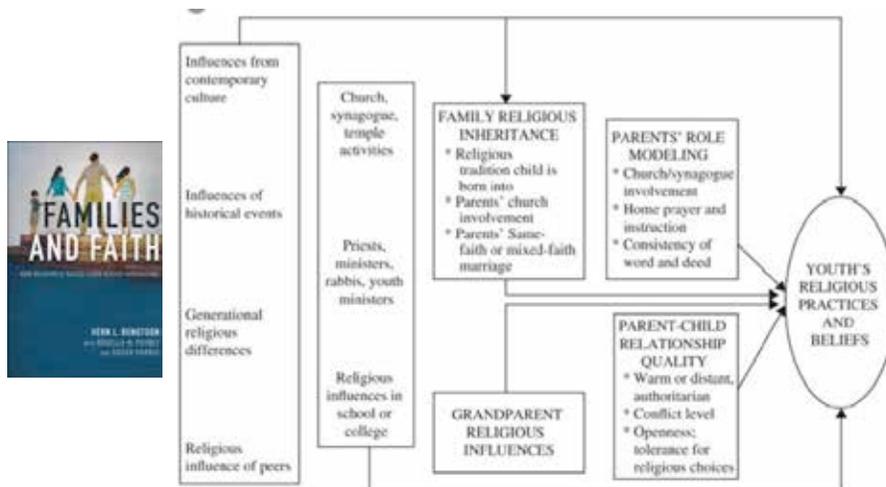
- ✦ Parents by the power of their personality, practices, and way of being, model and generate the culture of the household (both explicitly and implicitly).
- ✦ Parents produce, induce, and interpret the household's experiences of Christian faith.
- ✦ Parents are one influence among others - they are nevertheless the dominant influence which orders and shapes the way children experience other influences, i.e. they constellate children's experiences of various cultural currents, including religion.

One of the most basic suggestions of our findings is that young adults arrive at a sense of their fundamental identity and worldview not by weighing all possible intellectual arguments for and against a proposed way of life, but rather by roughly adopting the worldview of those mentors who left the deepest impression upon them—and who loved them and cared for them the most. It should come as no surprise, then, that the emergence of the new generation of dedicated young Catholics will rise and fall with the choices of their parents.
(American Catholic Religious Parenting, Burtkus and Smith)

Pope Francis, *Joy of the Gospel*

The family is the primary setting for socialization, since it is where we first learn to relate to others, to listen and share, to be patient and show respect, to help one another and live as one. The task of education is to make us sense that the world and society are also our home; it trains us how to live together in this greater home. In the family, we learn closeness, care and respect for others. . . . Every day the family has to come up with new ways of appreciating and acknowledging its members (276)

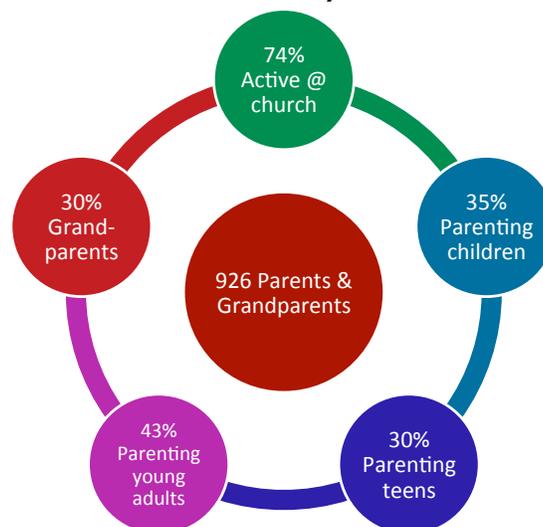
What Makes a Difference?



What Makes a Difference?

1. Parents' personal faith and practice
2. Parent-child relationship: close, warm
3. Parents' modeling and teaching a religious faith
4. Parents' involvement in church life and Sunday worship
5. Grandparents' religious influence & relationship
6. Religious tradition a child is born into
7. Parents of the same faith
8. Family conversations about faith
9. Family religious practices: prayer, reading the Bible, service to others, celebrating holidays/rituals

Practices that Make a Difference Survey



Practices that Make a Difference



Practices that Make a Difference

Top Four Practices

- 79% - Praying as a family
- 77% - Participating in Sunday worship as a family
- 76% - Eating together as a family
- 71% - Celebrating rituals and holidays at home

Frequency

Engage in the practice *at least once a week or more.*

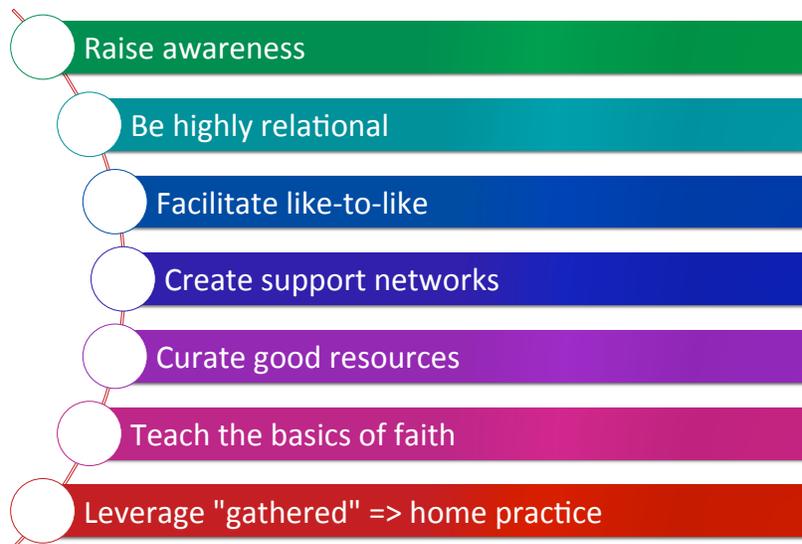
- 80% - Praying
- 80% - Sunday worship
- 91% - Eating together
- 74% - Celebrating rituals

Practices that Make a difference

Next Highest

- ✦ 58% - Serving people in need as a family (23% once a week+)
- ✦ 55% - Having family conversations (77% once a week+)
- ✦ 51% - Taking time to grow in your own faith as a parent (74% once a week+)

Congregation Response



PART 3 TRANSFORMING OUR NARRATIVE



Transforming Our Narrative

From a primary focus on. . . .	Toward an emphasis on. . . .
Viewing the parish as the center of faith forming	Recognizing and equipping the family as the center of faith forming
Forming the faith of individuals	Forming the faith of the whole family
Engaging individuals in church life	Engaging the whole family in church life
Prescribing programs and activities for the family and its members	Building faith formation around the lives and needs of families and parents
Doing things “to” or “for” families	Sharing power with families and treating them as partners

Transforming Our Narrative

From a primary focus on. . . .	Toward an emphasis on. . . .
Starting with messaging to families	Start with listening to families
Buying into negative stereotypes of families	Highlight families' strengths and resilience
Giving families expert advice about what to do	Encouraging families to experiment with new practices
Focusing on parenting as a set of techniques	Emphasizing parenting as a relationship
Intimidating parents with policies and requirements	Informing parents of their role and empowering them to fulfill their role as faith formers of children and teens

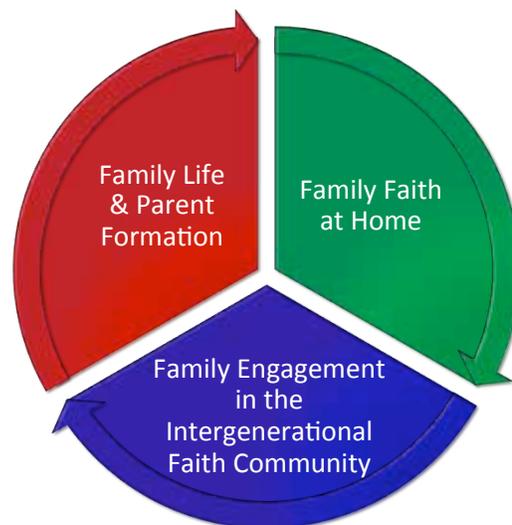
We Need Adaptive Change

- ◆ **Adaptive challenges** are situations for which solutions lie outside the current way of operating.
- ◆ **Adaptive change** requires **learning** - experiments, new discoveries, and adjustments from numerous places in the organization.
 - Without learning new ways—changing attitudes, values, and deep-seated behaviors—people cannot make the adaptive leap necessary to thrive in the new environment.
 - Calls for changes of heart and mind—the transformation of long-standing habits and deeply held assumptions and values.

We Need Adaptive Change Because. . .

- ✓ the solution requires operating in a different way than you do now. . .
- ✓ the problem AND the solution require learning. . .
- ✓ the solution requires shifting the authority and responsibility to the people who are actually affected. . .
- ✓ the solution requires some sacrifice of your past ways of working or living. . .
- ✓ the solution requires experimenting before you're sure of the answer. . .
- ✓ the solution will take a long time. . .
- ✓ the challenge connects to people's deeply held values. . .

Transforming Our Practice



Transforming Our Practice: Strategies



Family Faith @ Home

- ✓ God in Everyday Life
- ✓ Faith Practices
- ✓ Milestones

Faith Community

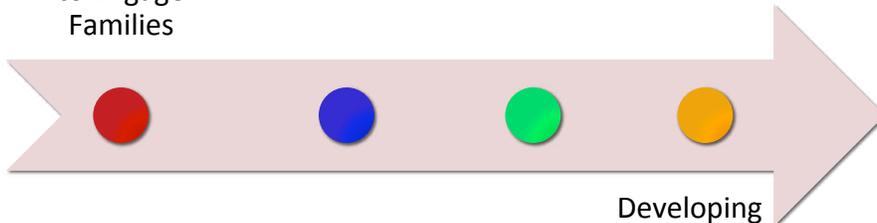
- ✓ Seasonal Events
- ✓ Bible through the Year
- ✓ Intergenerational Connection

Family Life & Parents

- ✓ Strong Family Life
- ✓ Parents & Grandparents as Faith Formers

Transforming Our Practice

Transforming
Current
Programming
to Engage
Families



Developing
New
Strategies
&
Initiatives

Transforming Our Practice: Immersive Environments

Home

Church

Community
& World

Online

Transforming our Practice: Abundance of Resources

- ✦ Faith Forming Programming
- ✦ Faith Forming Resources
 - ✦ Print
 - ✦ Audio
 - ✦ Video
 - ✦ Online
- ✦ Digital Technologies and Tools



Catholic Faith on Amazon Echo

Prayer Buddy

Prayer Buddy is a daily faith guide for you. It's like a prayer buddy who's always with you, ready to help you pray. It's like a prayer buddy who's always with you, ready to help you pray.

To Get This Skill:
"Alex, enable the Prayer Buddy skill."

To Enable This Skill:
"Alex, open Prayer Buddy."
"Alex, ask Prayer Buddy to pray the Rosary."
"Alex, ask Prayer Buddy to pray the Divine Office."

Saint of the Day

Prayer Buddy provides short audio biographies of saints and Catholic traditions, across the country. This skill allows you to hear the best content for each day of the year.

Daily Mass Readings or Catholic Daily

These two skills are nearly identical and are provided by the same developer. They both have Alexa read the daily readings from the lectionary and can come up all the readings or just the Gospel. The only (slight) difference is that Daily Catholic (green) can come up a slightly newer year.

To Get This Skill:
"Alex, enable the Daily Mass Readings skill."
"Alex, enable the Catholic Daily skill."

To Enable This Skill:
"Alex, ask Daily Mass Readings for today's readings."
"Alex, ask Daily Mass Readings for today's Gospel."

Prayer Helper

By i.C.
★★★★☆
Free to Enable

"Alex, ask prayer helper to pray Our Father."

Catholic Daily

By i.C. Digital LLC
★★★★☆
Free to Enable

"Alex, ask Catholic Daily for the readings for today."

The screenshot shows the homepage of MazeTot.org. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, Programs and Events, Organizations, About MazeTot.org, Parenting Resources, and Blog. A search bar and links for Log In and Sign Up are also present. The main content area features a purple and yellow banner with the text: "MazeTot.org is about to get even better with resources for couples, families and kids to fulfill your life and your family's needs." To the right, a graphic says "mazel TOGETHER — CONNECTIONS, FOR THE AGES —" with "Coming soon!" below it. Below the banner are two columns: "What's New" with a link to "MazeTot.org's partner organizations have a wide range of programs for Rosh Hashanah. Click here for more information." and "About MazeTot.org" with a link to "MazeTot.org offers easy access to information about Jewish life for young families in Greater Denver and Boulder and big discounts to make it easier to try new Jewish experiences. We partner with many local organizations that offer hundreds of programs and events. MazeTot.org also helps Jewish families connect with each other. Learn More." At the bottom, there are sections for "Upcoming Events" (Mixed Age Music, Wed 09/14/2016 - 10:30am - 11:30am) and "Organizations" (MazeTot.org partners with dozens of local Jewish organizations, all). A small graphic for "Mazeltot.org 4th Issue TOGETHER" is also visible.

The screenshot shows the homepage of Families at the Center. The main heading is "Family Faith Formation Online". Below this is a large image of a diverse group of families smiling. Overlaid on the image is the text "FAMILIES AT THE CENTER" and a navigation menu with links: HOME, FAMILY LIFE, PARENTS, GOD IN LIFE, FAITH @ HOME, MILESTONES, SEASONS, SUNDAY WORSHIP, FAITH @ CHURCH. Below the image, the text reads "Families at the Center of Faith Formation" and "A Network of Experiences, Activities & Resources for Families with Children".



Family Life

Each month we will explore, experience, and practice an important family issue that can enrich your family relationships and build a stronger family.

1. January: The Family Meal
2. February: Forgiveness
3. March: Managing Household Life
4. April: Celebrating Rituals and Milestones

Join us for our **MONTHLY FAMILY CELEBRATIONS** on the first Sunday of each month after Sunday worship. They will be a time to explore and experience the monthly theme and learn how to practice it at home.

Use the resource that accompanies each month's theme for **PRACTICE @HOME**. Each resource includes stories, biblical reflections, and family activities.

[FAMILY LIFE](#)

Parents

"Just for Parents" offers a variety of ways for you to enhance and enrich your knowledge and skills for parenting children and teens. All of these programs, activities, and resources are developed around research-based ways to help your children and teens grow in healthy and positive ways by 1) expressing care, 2) challenging them to grow, 3) providing them with support, 4) modeling them in decision-making, and 5) expanding their possibilities for the future.

1. Participate in the "First Weekends" Webinar Series - without leaving your home!
2. Use a variety of activities to build positive relationships at home.
3. Learn more about your children and teenagers.
4. Participate in a Small Group Study with the best selling book, *The Secret of Happy Families by Bruce Felde*
5. Watch the video: "Preparing for the Long Haul" and download the "9 Parenting Strategies" guide.
6. Strengthen family relationships with stories.
7. Discover parenting resources.

[PARENTS](#)

God in Daily Life

How can we discover God and the sacred in the rhythms and practices of everyday life? God is truly present to us each day, and this presence is discovered in the fabric of our lives - our experiences, our relationships, and more. We see all spiritual things. We can discover the spiritual in our everyday lives, and recognize, understand, and respond to God's presence in each day. Here are four daily practices to help you discover God:

1. Reading God in your day through the daily Gospels.
2. Helping children find God through bedtime reflection.
3. Discovering the sacred each day through the SACRED.
4. Finding God through photos.

[GOD IN DAILY LIFE](#)

Faith @ Home

Each @ Home provides a variety of activities to help your family grow in faith at home - all of which can be easily integrated into family life. You pick the time.

Reading the Bible

- A 12-week Summer Bible Reading Plan for Children
- An Old Testament Bible Series 5-minute devotion!

Learning the Christian Tradition

- Ten Commandments Magnet
- Church Scavenger Hunt
- I-O-V-E G-O-D
- Stand Up for Others

Prayer

- Meal Prayers for All Occasions

Serving Others

- Assembly Prayers Etc. for Refugees
- Participate in a "Time of the Community" Day
- Collect Food for the Hungry

[FAITH @ HOME](#)



Milestones

Celebrate meaningful, memorial moments in your family's life with these ritual celebrations of milestones.

1. Baptism Anniversary
2. Starting School
3. Getting Ready to Worship
4. Birthday Celebrations

[RITUALS & MILESTONES](#)

Seasons

The seasons of the year offers a variety of opportunities for families to connect, learn, and have fun together. We have selected one family activity for each month of the year, reflecting the calendar seasons and the church year seasons.

1. January: Martin Luther King Jr.
2. February: Ash Wednesday
3. March: The Road to Parick
4. April: Easter and New Life
5. May: Mother's Day
6. June: Vacation Travel
7. July: Independence Day
8. August: Back to School
9. September: Fall Harvest
10. October: A Helping Halloween
11. November: Thanksgiving
12. December: Christmas is Coming!

[SEASONS](#)

Bible & Worship

Bring the message and experience of Sunday worship into your home. Try one or more of the following activities to learn more about the Sunday Scripture readings and to find ways to apply God's message to your lives.

1. Review this Sunday's Worship service.
2. Watch a video reflection on the Sunday reading in story and music.
3. Use "Taking Faith Home" for your daily devotion, Bible reading, and family conversation.
4. Use "Sunday Connection" to connect Sunday worship with daily life, and engage children in creative activities.
5. Read the daily Scripture readings & watch a video reflection.

[BIBLE & WORSHIP](#)

Faith @ Church

Participate with all generations in the events and experiences of the faith community and connect your experiences at church with your faith at home.

1. Worshipping Together on Sunday
2. Celebrating the Church Year Feasts & Seasons
3. Engaging in Service to the Community & World
4. Gathering for Social Events
5. Celebrating Rituals & Sacraments
6. Gathering with All Ages for Learning

[FAITH @ CHURCH](#)

Transforming Our Role

Current Roles

- **Developing** religious content
- **Designing** programming
- **Managing** programming
- **Teaching/Facilitating** programming

Emerging Roles

- **Designing** faith forming environments —*architecture*
- **Designing Digital Platforms** for faith forming content
- **Curating** faith forming content & experiences