

FAMILIES AT THE CENTER OF FAITH FORMATION

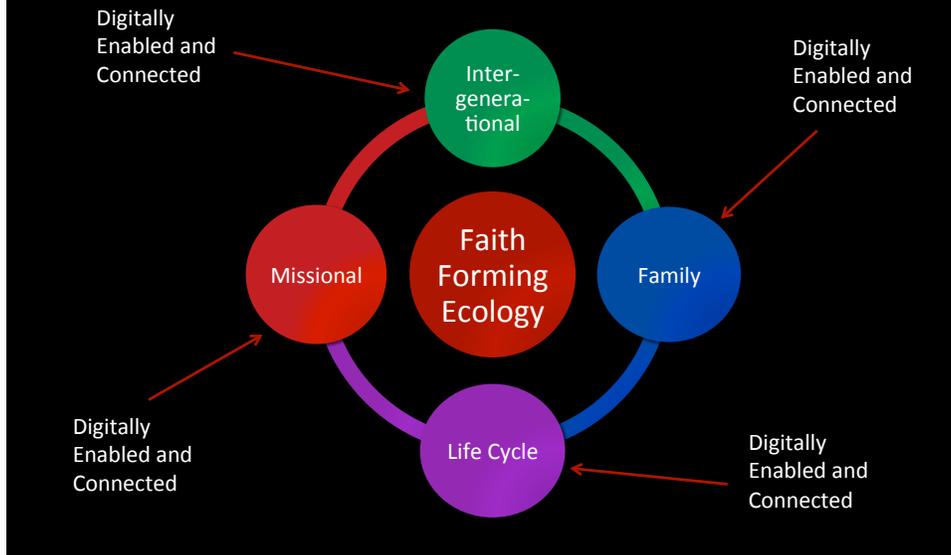


John Roberto
LifelongFaith Associates

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



Changing. . . .

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

Changing. . . .



Wondering. . . .

- * *What does a vibrant and vital family faith look like in a 21st century world?*
- * *How do we meaningfully engage and connect with today's families?*
- * *How do we empower, equip, and 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.*

Transmitting

- ✦ **Primary Influence: Parents and the Family**
- ✦ **Secondary: The Congregation & Significant Adults**

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.

(American Catholic Religious Parenting, Burtkus and Smith)

Transmitting. . . .

- ✦ **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)

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)

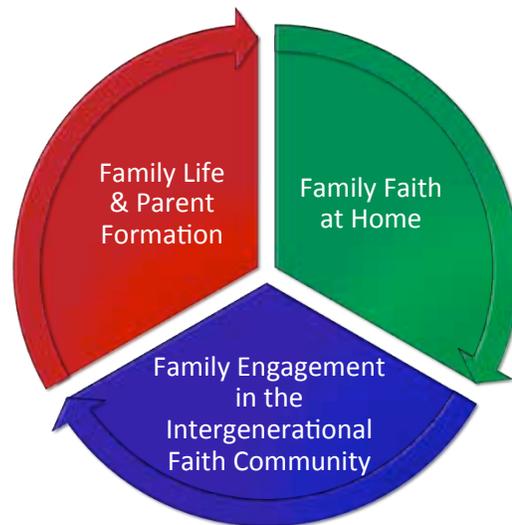
Transforming Our Narrative

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

Transforming Our Practice



Transforming Our Practice: Strategies



Family Faith @ Home

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

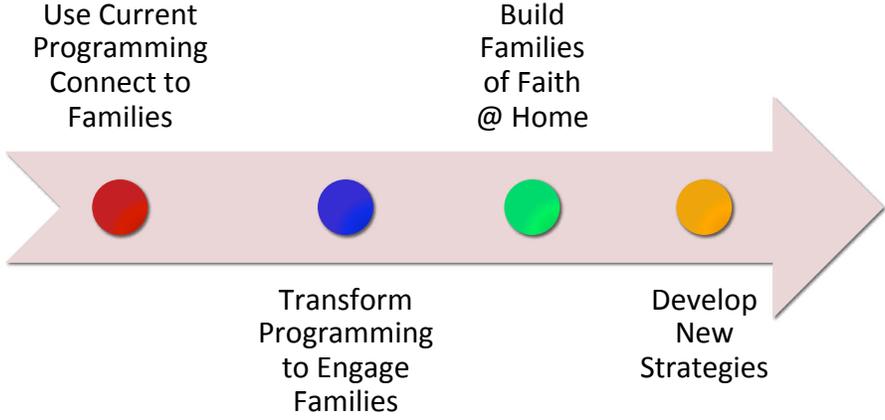
Faith Community

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

Family Life & Parents

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

Transforming Our Practice



Transforming 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

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MazeTot.org is about to get even better with resources for couples, families and kids to fulfill your life and your family's needs.

mazel TOGETHER
— CONNECTIONS, FOR THE AGES —
Coming soon!

What's New
MazeTot.org's partner organizations have a wide range of programs for both Hebrew and English speaking families. Click here for more information.

About MazeTot.org
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](#)

Upcoming Events
Mixed Age Music
Wed 09/14/2016 - 10:10am - 11:15am

Organizations
MazeTot.org partners with dozens of local Jewish organizations, all

Family Faith Formation Online



FAMILIES AT THE CENTER

[HOME](#)
[FAMILY LIFE](#)
[PARENTS](#)
[GOD IN LIFE](#)
[FAITH @ HOME](#)
[MILESTONES](#)
[SEASONS](#)
[SUNDAY WORSHIP](#)
[FAITH @ CHURCH](#)

Families at the Center of Faith Formation

A Network of Experiences, Activities & Resources for Families with Children



Family Life

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

1. January: The Family Meal
2. February: Progresses
3. March: Managing resentment in
4. April: Celebrating Struggles and Milestones

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

Use the resources that accompanies each monthly 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 explore 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) engaging care, 2) challenging them to growth, 3) providing them with support, 4) involving them in decision-making, and 5) expanding their possibilities for the future.

1. Participate in the "Tiny Miracles" "Bedtime Series" without leaving your home!
2. Use a variety of activities to build positive relationships at home.
3. Learn more about your children and teenager.
4. Participate in a Small Group Study with the best selling book "The Secret of Happy Families" by Bruce Baker.
5. Watch the film "Parenting for the Long Run" and download the "16 Parenting Strategies" guide.
6. Strengthen family relationships with teens.
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 His presence is discovered in the fabric of our lives – our experiences, our relationships, and more. We are all spiritual beings. 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. Finding God in your day through the daily Eucharist.
2. Helping children feel God through bedtime.
3. Encouraging the sacred each day through the FAITHS.
4. Finding God through gratitude.

[GOD IN DAILY LIFE](#)



Faith @ Home

Faith @ 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 Review 5-minute devotional

Learning the Christian Tradition

- Ten Commandments Song
- Church Swearing Hand
- I, O & I, O, O
- Thank You for Others

Prayer

- Short Prayers for All Occasions

Serving Others

- Assembly Promise Wreath for Refugees
- Participate in a "Serve 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 celebrate, 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 Patios
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: 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



Forming Faith @ Home

A Family Curriculum

1. Home: What are families doing to grow in faith and discipleship?
2. Intergenerational: How are families connected to the other generations at church?
3. Church: How are churches empowering, resourcing, and supporting families to grow as disciples & practice their faith?
4. Parents: How are churches empowering, resourcing, and supporting parents as faith formers?

Faith Forming @ Home



Stage:	Home	Intergenerational	Church
Caring Relationships			
Celebrating Seasons			
Celebrating Rituals & Milestones			
Learning the Christian Tradition			
Praying & Spiritual Formation			
Reading the Bible			
Serving/Working for Justice			
Worshipping God Together			

Forming Faith @ Home

Developmentally Appropriate activities for . . .

1. Seasons of the year
2. Rituals and milestones
3. Learning the tradition
4. Prayer and spiritual formation
5. Reading the Bible
6. Service, justice, care for creation



Forming Faith @ Home: Discovering God



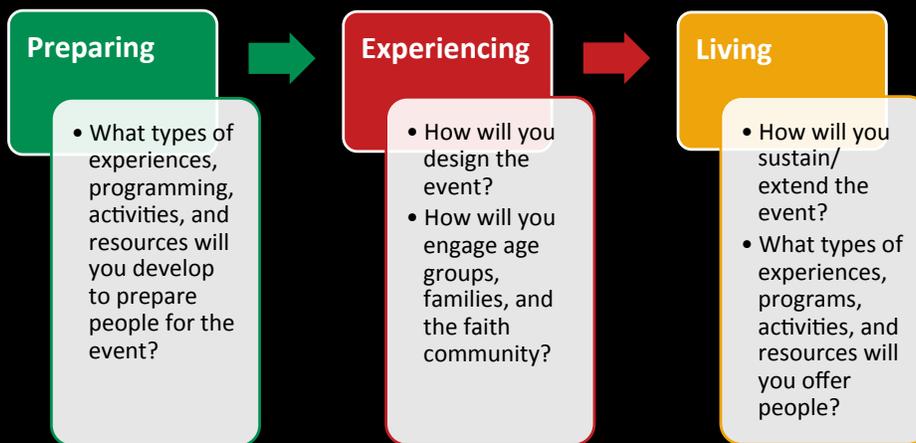
Examen for Children

1. Quiet the children before bedtime.
2. Ask them what made them happy over the past day.
3. Ask them what made them sad over the past day.
4. Ask them what they look forward to tomorrow.
5. Remind them to thank God for what made them happy, ask for God's help when they are sad, and pray for God's presence in the coming day.

Forming Faith @ Home: Milestones

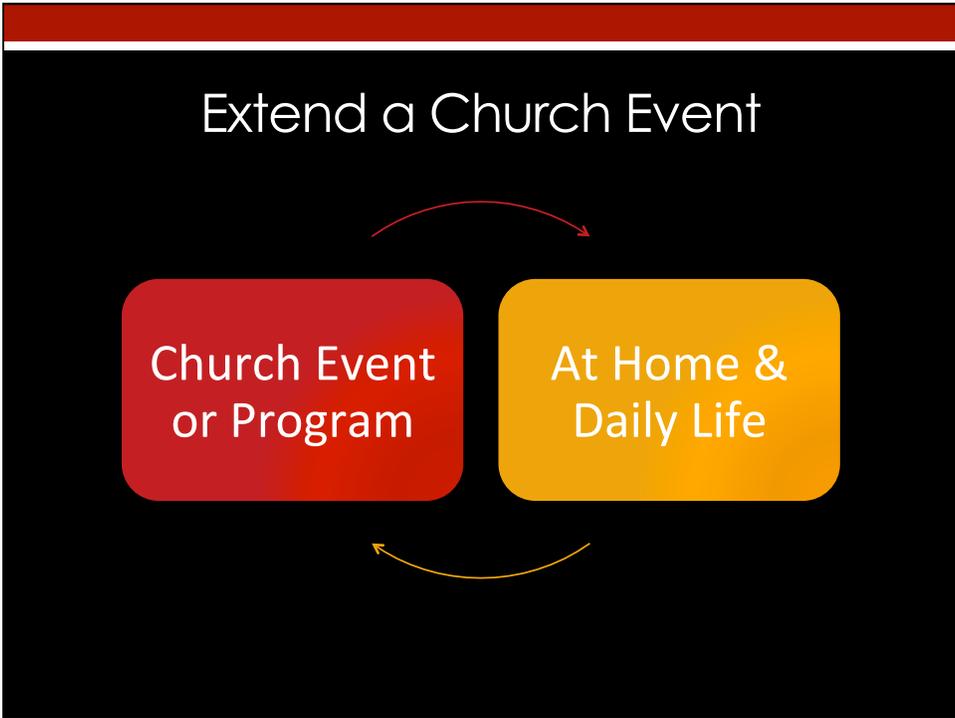
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|---------------------------|--|
| ✦ Birth / Baptism | 1. Church ritual/blessing |
| ✦ Baptism anniversaries | 2. Home celebration/
blessing |
| ✦ First prayers | 3. Learning program – at
church or home |
| ✦ First Bible stories | 4. Symbol |
| ✦ Starting school year | 5. Supporting continued
growth |
| ✦ Receiving a first Bible | |
| ✦ First Communion | |
| ✦ Confirmation | |
| ✦ Graduation | |

Forming Faith through Milestones



Forming Faith @ Home: Seasons

Calendar Year	Church Year
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New Year’s Eve and Day• Martin Luther King Jr. Day• Valentine’s Day• St. Patrick’s Day• Earth Day• Mother’s Day• Memorial Day• Father’s Day• July 4 – Independence Day• Labor Day• Start of School• Halloween• Thanksgiving	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advent• Christmas• Epiphany• Ash Wednesday• Lent• Holy Week• Easter• Pentecost• St. Francis Day–Blessing the Animals (October 4)• All Saints and Souls (Nov 1-2)



Example: 40-Day Lent Curriculum

Church Life →	Daily & Home Life	← Online Life
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ash Wednesday • Lenten Sunday liturgies • Stations of the Cross • Lenten prayer • Lenten retreat • Lenten service • Lenten soup suppers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fasting • Praying • Service/ Almsgiving • Lectionary reflection • Family activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lenten learning resources • Lenten calendar • Daily Lenten prayer • Weekly table prayer • Video resources • Online retreat experience

Example: Earth Day

Community	Church	Home
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community cleanup • Planting a community garden • All ages workshop on caring for creation • Story time at the library on environmental awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecumenical prayer service • Intergenerational program on theology of caring for creation • Church audit • Global project for whole community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycling activities • Planting a family garden • Meal time creation prayer • Daily Bible verses for April • Children's activities • Storybooks and videos • Home audit

Sunday Worship

- Learning
- Praying
- Reading the Bible: Daily Readings
- Living



Family Life & Parents

Family faith formation strengthens *family life* by developing the assets/strengths and skills for healthy family life and providing a supportive context for forming faith, living the Christian faith, and promoting positive development in children and youth.

- Developing family assets or strengths
- Promoting character strengths in young people through developmental relationships.

Family Life & Parents

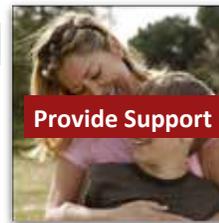
Developmental Relationships – Search Institute



Express Care



Challenge Growth



Provide Support



Share Power



Expand Possibilities

Family Life & Parents

Family Life Programming

1. Communicating effectively
2. Establishing family routines: family meals, shared activities, daily commitments
3. Celebrating meaningful traditions and rituals
4. Discussing tough topics
5. Making decisions and solving problems as a family
6. Learning how to build strong relationships and express care for each other
7. Developing the strengths & potential of children & youth
8. Supporting each other: encouraging and praising, giving feedback, standing up for each other
9. Treating each with respect and dignity

Family Life & Parents

Create a Family Life Plan for Each Stage

Using the Family Assets and Developmental Relationships, curate and create developmentally-appropriate programs, activities, and resources for families at each stage.

1. Family website
2. Parent programs
3. Family programs
4. Family mentors
5. Life cycle support groups for parents

ParentFurther
a Search Institute resource for families

ParentFurther
a Search Institute resource for families

Strengthen Relationships ▾ Prepare for the Future ▾ Understand Ages & Stages ▾

Great Relationships Don't Just Happen.

Strengthen Yours Here.
Start with a visit (our award-winning relationship and parenting e-ops) for success.

- Express Care
- Share Power
- Prevent Alcohol and Tobacco Use
- Spark Kids' Motivation

www.ParentFurther.com

Parents & Grandparents

Twin Tasks

1. Promoting the faith growth of parents
2. Developing the faith forming skills of parents

Content

- Theological and spiritual formation of parents
- Skills for parenting for faith growth
- Knowledge and skills for parenting

Parents & Grandparents

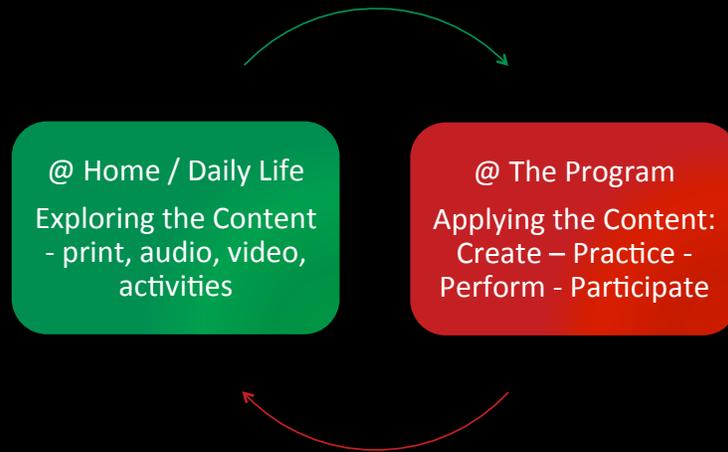
- ✓ Expressing care, love, affection, and support for children
- ✓ Balancing time and commitments, managing stress
- ✓ Practicing healthy relationships
- ✓ Disciplining children and learning discipline practices
- ✓ Creating a warm, caring supportive family.
- ✓ Set boundaries and high expectations for children
- ✓ Managing technology and media use
- ✓ Challenging children to grow and continuously improve
- ✓ Providing support to help children complete tasks and achieve goals
- ✓ Sharing power with children so that their voice is heard and they share in making decisions.
- ✓ Expanding possibilities and connecting children to opportunities for growth
- ✓ Developing emotional communication skills
- ✓ Developing positive parent-child interaction skills
- ✓ Learning to respond consistently to their child

Parents & Grandparents

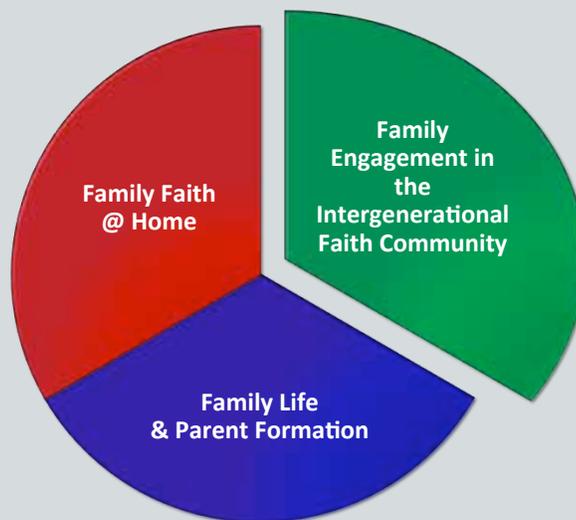
Parent Programming

1. Parent website
2. Parent programs—a progression of workshops, webinars, and/or courses for each stage of the lifecycle
3. Laboratory experiences—immersion/hands-on experiences through church events or family/intergenerational programs
4. Parent mentors
5. Lifecycle support groups for parents
6. A parent catechumenate—around key milestone experiences and “moments of return”

Flip the Model of Parent Formation



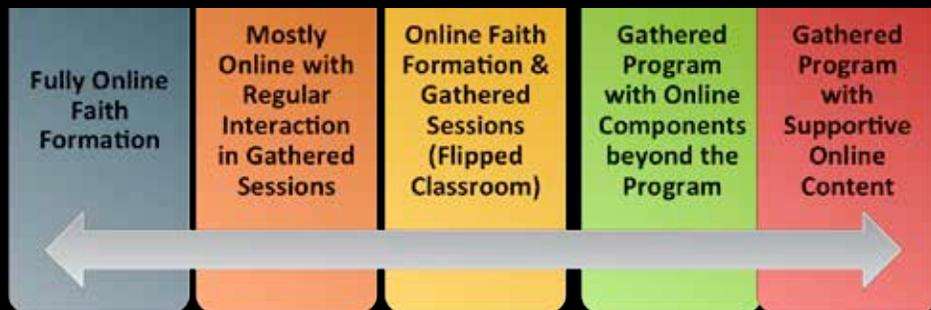
Transforming Our Practice

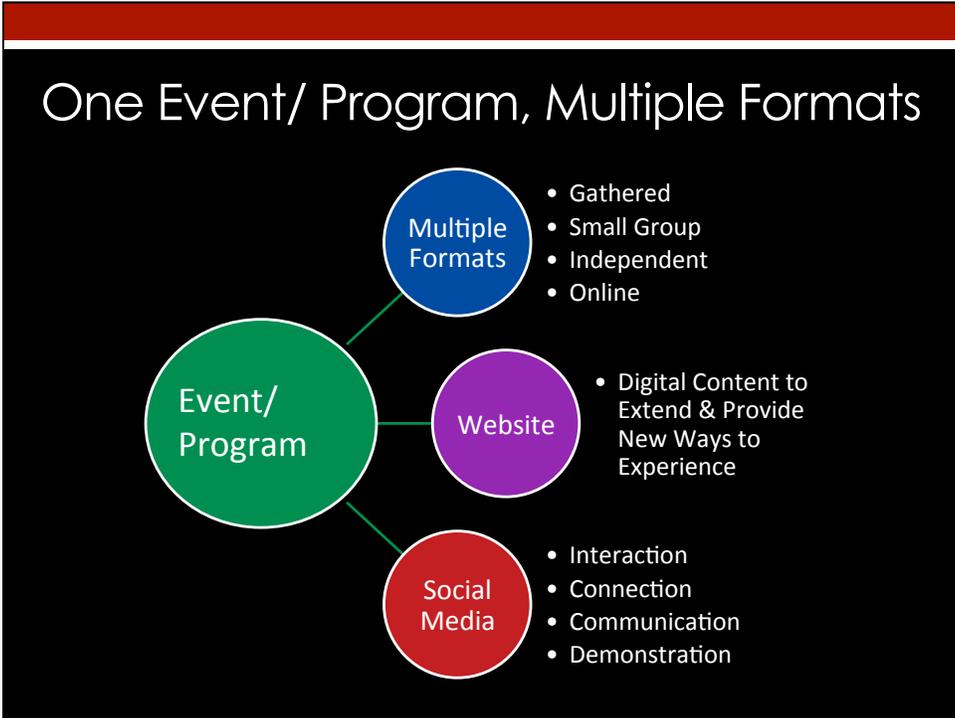


Families & Intergenerational Relationships

1. **Becoming Intentionally Intergenerational**
 - Identify ways families are current connected and engaged intergenerationally in the faith community
 - Develop ways to strengthen IG connection and engagement
 - Create new ways to connect and engage families
2. **Intergenerational and Family Learning**
3. **Intergenerational Family Service**

Digitally Enabled & Digitally Connected Faith Formation





Lifelong Faith Books

www.LifelongFaith.com

Families at the Center of faith formation
Lef Rutland
John Roberts
Steve Bartholomew
Steve Bartholomew

REMAINING FAITH FORMATION FOR THE 21st CENTURY

The Seasons of adult faith formation

GENERATIONS together
CATHOLIC FAITH, IMPACTFUL, AND COMMUNITY