



FAMILIES FORMING DISCIPLES

A FAMILY-FOCUSED APPROACH TO FAITH FORMATION

YEAR FIVE

CALLED TO LOVE: THE ADVENTURE OF LIFE IN CHRIST

WELCOME SESSION JUST FOR PARENTS

TOPIC: CALLED TO LOVE: THE ADVENTURE OF LIFE IN CHRIST

CALLLED TO MISSION: CATHOLIC PARENTING IN A POST-CHRISTIAN WORLD

STEPS TO NURTURING THE DOMESTIC CHURCH

MATERIALS:

Refreshments & snacks

Bible & *Catechism of the Catholic Church* for each family

OPENING PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ,
We entrust our family to you and ask
for Your blessing and protection. We
love You Lord Jesus with all our hearts
and we ask that You help our family
become more like the Holy Family.
Help us to be kind, loving, and patient
with one another. Give us all the grace
we need to become saints and Your
faithful disciples.

Amen.



ICE BREAKER

Ask everyone to:

- Introduce themselves
- Share how many children they have and their ages/grade levels
- Share how long they have been participating in *Families Forming Disciples* (FFD)
- (Returning FFD families) Share what they like best about family faith formation, or how family faith formation has benefitted their family
- (New FFD families) Share their hopes for how FFD can benefit their family



TEACH

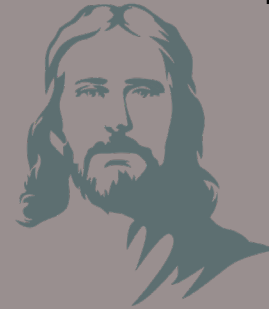
1. Hook/Question

What is the mission of your family?



2. Introduce Topic

Called to Love: The Adventure of Life in Christ



3. CONTENT

Explain: Families have an important mission in the world today. The culture we are living in is becoming more and more opposed to God, His Love and His Order for our lives. God wants us and our children to be happy and healthy. The only way to truly be happy and healthy is by living in His Holiness. But how do we do that when we find ourselves immersed in a culture that is battling against our values, against God?

Watch: The Catholic Family in a Post-Christian World | The Mission of the Family (13:19 min)



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (4-6 PARENTS)

- When you were growing up, what was your family life and the practice of faith like?
- When you were growing up, how was the culture different than it is today?
- Was God or faith the source of warmth in your home?
- What challenges do parents and children face that are unique to today's culture?

Explain: God created and founded the family on the bedrock of marriage, the union of husband and wife, so that children can be united to their father and mother. While this is the ideal, we recognize that the reality of many families varies. For example, looking back on our Catholic faith, we find saints who were raised by single parents, as well as single parents who became saints! For example, St. Louis Martin was a widowed father left to raise his five daughters on his own. St. Martin de Porres, Blessed Francisco de Paula Victor, and Blessed Lojze Grozde were all born out of wedlock. St. Margaret of Cortona was an unmarried single mother. Blessed Columba Kang Wan-suk was a single mother whose husband left her for another woman. St. Cecilia Yu So-sa was a young widow and mother of two who lived in poverty. St Elizabeth Ann Seton was a widowed mother of 8 and Blessed Concepcion Cabrera de Armida was a widowed mother of 9.

Servant of God Dorothy Day was a single, unwed mother who had had an abortion before she found God and devoted her life to serving the poor. Servant of God Catherine Doherty was a mother who went through the process of receiving a declaration of nullity (annulment) in the Catholic Church after she left her abusive, adulterous husband. Catherine would later marry and found a community called Madonna House. (See <https://aleteia.org/2020/05/09/6-single-mom-saints/> and <https://aleteia.org/2021/04/24/saints-born-out-of-wedlock/>.)

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (4-6 PARENTS)

Although families can be very different, they are the same in one very important way. They are all called to holiness. Whether you are a single or married parent, your home is called to be a Domestic Church, a place where God is the source of warmth and love, and where faith thrives.

Name some ways that your family nurtures being a Domestic Church. For example, do you eat together as a family? Do you have moments of sharing, listening, forgiveness, healing? Do you put special emphasis on the Liturgical Calendar, such as Holy Days and seasons? Do you do service together as a family? Do you pray together as a family before meals? Do you go to Mass and/or Reconciliation/Confession together as a family? Do you play and laugh together?

- How can you lead your family more intentionally to Jesus?
- How can families support one another to live as disciples of Jesus?
- How can your parish church better support your family to live as a Domestic Church?
- When your children are grown and they look back at their childhood, how would you hope they will say they saw God's grace and love in your home?

Explain: As we shared at the beginning of our gathering, families have an important mission in the world today. The surrounding culture is becoming more and more opposed to God, His Love and His Order for our lives. However, the only way to truly be happy and healthy is by living in His Holiness. This is our quest, to grow more deeply into the Heart of Jesus!

At the start of our quest, each family should be armed with the Holy Bible and a copy of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. During this year we will draw from Sacred Scripture and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* to discover both our great dignity of being made in God's image, and our call to live the Christian moral life that such immense dignity requires.

As we find ourselves immersed in a culture that is battling against our values and against God, we, as sons and daughters of the Father, are called to follow Jesus. By the Holy Spirit and the grace of the sacraments, we are called to become ever more configured to Him. We are excited for you to join us for Year 5 of *Families Forming Disciples: Called to Love: The Adventure of Life in Christ!*



PARENT AND LEADER RESOURCES

View the compiled [list of resources](#) for Parents and Catechists



The screenshot shows a website titled "FAMILY RESOURCES" with the tagline "FAMILIES FORMING DISCIPLES". It is divided into several sections: "Catholic Parenting Resources" with links like "Raising Upright Kids in an Upright-Catholic World" and "Standing Strong: Good Discipline Makes Great Kids"; "Catholic Leader Resources" with links like "Religious Parenting: Encouraging Faith and Values" and "Catholic Parenting: Seven Sex Attraction Support"; "Resources for Parents" with links like "The Roman Catholic Church Life" and "The Holy Family Prayer"; and "Resources for Leaders" with links like "The Holy Family Prayer" and "The Holy Family Prayer". There are also several small images and icons scattered throughout the page.

CLOSING PRAYER

Ask for intentions and pray for the FFD families as they begin their year!

“...But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” (Joshua 24:15b)

Prayers for Your Family

Heavenly Father, we come before You as a family, seeking Your divine guidance. Help us to love and support one another, and may our family be a source of unity and strength. We ask for Your blessings and grace to be upon us always. Amen.

Adapted from www.christianity.com

