Missions, Moments, and Milestones
Presented by Michael Theisen
(miket@nfcym.org)

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2/22/2019

Top 5 Workshop Topics
Requested at NCCYM
from 2006-2018

2018   '16   '14   '12   '10   '08   '06 Topics
1 1 1 1 1 1 1 Involving Parents
2 4 10 9 NA NA NA Family Ministry
3 2 2 3 6 3 2 Leadership Development
4 7 NA 6 10 NA NA Best Practices
5 3 6 8 9 10 5 Advocating for Youth/YM

Today’s Goal:
Seek Effective and
Strategic Ways to Engage
and Support the Family to
Live as a Domestic Church
Missions, Moments, and Milestones
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7

Missions

8

Pope Francis
Missions the Church...
... to Accompany Parents and Families on Their Journey of Faith.

9

“Active Listening is a Sacred Act

Seek First to Understand...

10

Francis Shows Us the Way...

11

“We need a church capable of walking at people’s side, of doing more than simply listening to them; a church which accompanies them on their journey…” WYD, 2013

12

“The Church will have to initiate everyone – priests, religious and laity – into this art of accompaniment, which teaches us to remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other.” (Evangelii Gaudium, 149)
The Journey of Faith

Hunger

Search

Awakening (AHA!)

Response

The Pastoral Journey

Hunger

Hunger

Search

Response

Evangelizing

Discerning

Awakening (AHA!)

Accompanying

To Where Do We Accompany Families?

All Our Paths Should Lead to Discipleship

FAITH

WORSHIP

PEACE

LOVE

JESUS CHRIST

FAITH

WORSHIP

PEACE

LOVE

The Key Question

How can the church help you/your family live out your faith in the world?

Accompany Families Toward a New Sense of Identity as a Domestic Church
The Four Building Blocks of The Domestic Church

- Family Life is Sacred
- Family Activity is Holy
- Family Has a Unique Ministry
- Family is a Believing and Evangelizing Community

“Family, become what you are.”
- ST. JOHN PAUL II

GATHERED
Sacred
Parents are Pastors
Unique Ministry
Evangelizing Community

Three Parental Roles for Pastoring a Domestic Church

- The Bridge
- The Interpreter
- The Gatekeeper

“If parents do not introduce the Catholic faith to their children, they usually will not be exposed at all.”

Interpreters: Connect Life with Faith... Everyday

Our Story + The Story = Faith Growth

Where is God?

“...parents are like a faucet, determining whether religious content will arrive in children’s lives at an occasional drip or in a regular flow.”
Who Has Power Between the Sundays?

“Parents are the single most important influence on a child’s faith.” [NSYR]

Empower Parents to Go BIG!

The Bridge
The Interpreter
The Gatekeeper

Where do we start?

Invite A Deep Gaze Into Their Parental Mirror to Ask...

What Am I Reflecting?

A Tool to Help Parents Determine Their Starting Point

The Strong Catholic Family's Family Faith Inventory

Free Online at: http://nfcym.org/scfresources

Assist Families in Defining Their Mission

http://nfcym.org/scfresources
The Gonzalez Family Mission

The Gonzalez’s are a Catholic, Christ-centered family striving to love one another through words and deeds, remembering WWJD.

We follow Jesus by loving tenderly, serving others, being generous, learning and growing in our faith, enjoying one another through laughter, play and prayer to share in God’s glory.

Engage Families Through Their Mission

Engaged - 16%
Actively Disengaged - 35%
Not Engaged - 49%

How can the Church help you/your family live out your faith in the world?

Moments

What Are Parents Most Common Questions? Fears? Concerns?

How do you think you’re doing?
What Do Parents Wish/Want for Their Children?

The Sacred Wish...

What role do you want faith to play in the life of your children when they are adults?

And What Do Teens Wish For?

"If you could change anything about your family situation, what would it be?"

To become closer to my parents
I don’t know how to do it

The Recipe for Family Faith Growth

"The Church can contribute significantly toward strong, life-shaping families for young people by equipping, supporting, and encouraging families with adolescents to:
• engage in family faith conversations
• teach moral values
• develop healthy relationships
• good communication skills
• celebrate family rituals
• pray together
• participate in shared service activities
• explore and discuss vocations
• nurture close parental relationships and parental faith."

And the Secret Ingredient is...

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2/22/2019

How Can We Help Families Connect to the Sacramental Moments Found in Their Daily Lives?

The Key Question

How Should We Move Parents Forward in Sharing These Sacramental Moments?

Sharing Family Moments...

- Do you know where your grandparents grew up?
- Do you know where your mom and dad went to high school?
- Do you know where your parents met?

Which Leads to Sharing Their Faith Moments!

- Why are your parents Catholic?
- What is a favorite scripture story of your parent(s)? Why?
- What would your parent(s) consider one of their memorable moments of faith?
- What is a favorite form of prayer for your parent(s)? Who taught them this?
- What family faith rituals do you celebrate and where did they originate?
- How would someone observing your family for a day know you were people of faith? A Catholic family?

Help Parent Become Constellators

Parents Need Help Having These Faith Conversations

During your high school years, how often, if ever, did your parents talk to you about religion?
U.S. Catholics ages 14 to 17

- Never
- Rarely
- Less than once a week
- At least once a week
- Daily

- 7%
- 21%
- 30%
- 20%
- 8%

SECRETS OF HAPPY FAMILIES

Bruce Welten

Catholic Kids Now: Can
Milestones

noun
1. an action or event marking a significant change or stage in development

Family Milestones
- Births
- First Words/Walk/Toilet Trained!
- Starting School/Transitions to New Schools
- First Phone
- Drivers License
- New Jobs/First Job/Promotions

Faith Milestones
- Sacraments of Initiation, Reconciliation, Marriage
- Attending Children’s Liturgy
- Bedtime/Meal Prayers
- First Bible/Rosary
- Taking on a Church Role (Altar Server, Choir, Lector,

What Say You LA?
MILESTONES
WORTH CELEBRATING!

Sarah’s Story...
Our Message to Families: We Got You!

A Prayer for Families
Lord of Life,
Bless and sustain our families.
Hold us close, keep us connected
and protect us from all evil.
Gift us with love and patience
for one another.
Help us to reconcile that which divides us,
and celebrate all that unites us
as one family,
where you live and reign now and forever.
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Contact: Michael Theisen
miket@nfcym.org
Directions:

1. Each family member places their unique mark next to 3-5 words that best describe what is most special about your family.

2. Share what each sees as the unique gifts your family has been blessed with and write these inside the doorway.

3. Use these key words and the starter sentences on the right to create your own family mission.

4. Enter your mission on the computer and add your family picture to it.

5. Print out and frame your Family Mission Statement!

The _______________________________ Family....

Possesses the gifts of...

We seek to be...

Therefore, we choose to....

Commitment
Love to Laugh
Spiritual
Willing to Serve
Kind Hearted
Motivational
Act Justly
Courageous
Creative
Trusting
Happy
Prayerful
Always Growing
Imaginative
Free Spirited
Generous
Deep Thinkers

Catholic
Enthusiastic
Unique
Adventurous
Optimistic
Disciples
Concern for Others
Leaders
Forgiveness
Love Tenderly
Modesty
Good Sports
Celebrate
Responsible
Truthful

Promise Keepers
Open-minded
Always Learning
Sacramental
Individualistic
Thoughtful
Decisive
Colorful
Supportive
Grace-Filled
Patriotic
Storytellers
Christ Centered
Friendly
Good Neighbors
Domestic Church
Pioneers

Adapted with permission from “The Secrets of Happy Families” by Bruce Feiler. Visit www.brucefeiler.com for more family resources.

Developed by the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (www.nfcym.org)
Taking a Family Faith Inventory...

This is a short inventory identifying ways that faith can be practiced and lived out in the home. It is not a test, rather a personal assessment to help your family determine how you can continue to grow in faith as a family.

To best use the inventory, each adult should individually rate each statement. Then go back through the ratings and check the ones that you would like to change in the coming year. Next share the results with one another. Do not feel that you have to tackle everything at once. Chances are, most of the things you will want to see happen will happen if you start with just a couple of actions, like sharing meals together, participating in Mass, or spending a few minutes reading Scripture and sharing faith together prior to or after a meal.

This inventory was developed for the Strong Catholic Families national initiative (www.strongcatholicfamilies.org)

Family and Community: How well does our family recognize the sacredness of a family meal and discover God in the ordinary moments of family and parish life?

1. Eating dinner together is a priority in our family schedule.
   ○ Never  ○ Very Little   ○ Somewhat  ○ Fairly Often  ○ All the Time  □ Okay or □ Change

2. Being Catholic is a significant part of our family identity.
   ○ Never  ○ Very Little  ○ Somewhat  ○ Fairly Often  ○ All the Time  □ Okay or □ Change

3. We participate in social and community events at our parish (outside of Mass).
   ○ Never  ○ Very Little  ○ Somewhat  ○ Fairly Often  ○ All the Time  □ Okay or □ Change

4. Religious art, images, and Bibles can be found throughout our home.
   ○ Never  ○ Very Little  ○ Somewhat  ○ Fairly Often  ○ All the Time  □ Okay or □ Change

Prayer and Worship: Does our family recognize and embody the centrality of prayer in Catholic life, both individually and collectively?

1. We attend Mass together on a regular basis.
   ○ Never  ○ Very Little   ○ Somewhat   ○ Fairly Often  ○ All the Time  □ Okay or □ Change

2. I pray on my own (outside of Mass).
   ○ Never  ○ Very Little  ○ Somewhat  ○ Fairly Often  ○ All the Time  □ Okay or □ Change

3. We pray together as a family (outside of Mass).
   ○ Never  ○ Very Little  ○ Somewhat  ○ Fairly Often  ○ All the Time  □ Okay or □ Change

4. Family members take turns leading prayer.
   ○ Never  ○ Very Little  ○ Somewhat  ○ Fairly Often  ○ All the Time  □ Okay or □ Change

5. We celebrate the seasons of the liturgical year (e.g., Advent, Lent) with special prayers, actions, and rituals at home.
   ○ Never  ○ Very Little  ○ Somewhat  ○ Fairly Often  ○ All the Time  □ Okay or □ Change

6. Special family occasions are marked with blessings and/or prayers.
   ○ Never  ○ Very Little  ○ Somewhat  ○ Fairly Often  ○ All the Time  □ Okay or □ Change
Family Faith Inventory (continued)

Formation: How important is learning and growing in the faith to our individual and family life?

1. I read Scripture on my own.
   - Never  - Very Little  - Somewhat  - Fairly Often  - All the Time
   - Okay or  - Change

2. We read Scripture as a family.
   - Never  - Very Little  - Somewhat  - Fairly Often  - All the Time
   - Okay or  - Change

3. We put a high value on learning more about our Catholic faith.
   - Never  - Very Little  - Somewhat  - Fairly Often  - All the Time
   - Okay or  - Change

4. I participate in faith formation opportunities (e.g., classes, spiritual reading, and spiritual direction).
   - Never  - Very Little  - Somewhat  - Fairly Often  - All the Time
   - Okay or  - Change

5. I make sure my children/teens participate in faith formation opportunities (e.g., youth ministry, religious education, retreats, mission trips, etc.).
   - Never  - Very Little  - Somewhat  - Fairly Often  - All the Time
   - Okay or  - Change

Justice and Service: As individuals and as a family do we seek opportunities to perform works of mercy in our neighborhood, church, or other organizations?

1. We discuss current events in light of the values and beliefs of the Catholic faith.
   - Never  - Very Little  - Somewhat  - Fairly Often  - All the Time
   - Okay or  - Change

2. I model discipleship (following Jesus) for my children and/or teens.
   - Never  - Very Little  - Somewhat  - Fairly Often  - All the Time
   - Okay or  - Change

3. In our family, we talk about morality and how to judge between right and wrong.
   - Never  - Very Little  - Somewhat  - Fairly Often  - All the Time
   - Okay or  - Change

4. I am involved in regular justice and service in the parish and/or wider community.
   - Never  - Very Little  - Somewhat  - Fairly Often  - All the Time
   - Okay or  - Change

5. We expect family members to be involved in parish ministry or service in addition to Mass and religious education (e.g., lector, usher, catechist, choir, vacation Bible school, etc.).
   - Never  - Very Little  - Somewhat  - Fairly Often  - All the Time
   - Okay or  - Change

Two Things: What next steps you will take in the coming months, as an individual and as a family.

Individually reflect on your own inventory ratings and decide on two things you will do on your own to grow in faith in the coming months...

   Thing One:
   Thing Two:

As a family decide together on two things the family will do to grow together in faith in the coming months...

   Thing One:
   Thing Two: