

The Dos and Don'ts of Faith Sharing for Parents

Do: Start by taking a little bit of time each day or week to reflect on your life. Encourage your family to adopt a similar practice.

- What has happened or what did I experience that reminds me of God's love for me?
- What has happened or what did I experience that challenges my understanding of God's love for me?
- Do I believe that God loves me?

Do: Read and reflect on the daily Mass readings individually and as a family. You will be amazed by how often God speaks to us through them!

Do: Encourage family members to adopt more of a faith language when describing good things that happen. For example these might be "blessings," "providence," "God's care," and "God's plan."

Do: Consider purchasing the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults* to help begin to learn about or deepen your knowledge of the Church's faith Tradition.

Do: Encourage your children to share, in their own words, what they are learning about in religious education class, youth group, or Catholic school. The more they practice articulating and reflecting on faith the more routine sharing becomes!



Don't: Begin faith sharing by reading the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* with your children. Although the *Catechism* is an authentic presentation of and reference for Catholic teaching, it was not intended for casual reading or sharing with youth or adults.

Don't: Think that you have to be a theologian to share your faith with your children! God put the spiritual care of your children in your hands, not the hands of a theologian! What is needed is your commitment to discovering God in your own life and sharing that discovery with your children.

Don't: Think that the Church is responsible for your children's faith formation. You are! The Church is here to assist you, but your witness is so foundational to their spiritual development.

Don't: Sugarcoat your personal witness of faith. Be honest! If you struggle or have struggled with Church teaching, or liturgy, or people in the Church, share that with your children. Be sure to do so in an appropriate way that draws attention to the fact that you are doing your best to love God and his Church.

