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Building the Domestic Church

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In the early Church, as witnessed to in Acts of the Apostles, evangelization was often a family affair: Crispus, a synagogue official, came to believe in the Lord along with his entire household. When Peter receives the call to evangelize and baptize the gentiles, a man who was to be a recipient of the saving Gospel was told by an angel that it would save him and his whole family. In another moment when Paul and Silas prayed and sang hymns to the deliverance of prisoners, the jailer, in a moment of desperation, asked them what he must do to be saved. Paul and Silas responded, believe in the Lord Jesus and you and your household will be saved.

In the early Church, we see many examples like this of what we call the *ecclesia domestica* or Domestic Church. These families of believers were essential to the growth of Christianity. Families who came to believe were like islands of Christian faith and life amidst a world indifferent or hostile to the Gospel. Still, today, the home is the “first school of Christian life” (CCC 1657).

At the center of a Christian family is the unitive and procreative union whereby a man and a woman become one flesh



through the exchange of vows and the consummation of their union. This one flesh union has the particular call to mutually support each others salvation and the salvation of the entire household. Also, to be a Domestic Church is to live in response to the Gospel in a way that the one flesh union of the spouses evangelizes not only the children that (pray God) come but all who encounter the saving Christ through them. It is to be a lighthouse for those lost in the stormy seas of our World.