

The Catholic Home

Life in Christ

In Baptism, you have been called to share in the life of Christ. You have been given a great gift, but the gift requires that you give your best effort to follow Christ. This means that you need to learn the difference between right and wrong and choose to do what is right and good. When you learn to choose to do what is right, you are leading a life in Christ.

The following list will help you review how to lead a life in Christ. Almost everything you will learn this year has been designed to help you and your family love your way through life, by following the way of Jesus. In these ways, you can share a family life in Christ:

1. **You have been created in the image and likeness of God.** This truth is the starting point for Christian living in a Catholic home.
2. **You are called to do what is good.** The Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes tell you that God calls you to live a healthy, holy and happy life. Being weakened by the effects of Original Sin makes doing what is good difficult. With God's grace you can choose good.
3. **You are created to be happy.** You have a natural desire to be happy. The Church teaches that when you know, love and serve God, you can be truly happy.



4. **You are created free.** You have the gift of free will. This makes it possible to choose how to live and to act. Yet God calls you to be responsible for your actions.
5. **You have a conscience.** You have the ability to know the difference between what is right and what is wrong. This judgment is called *conscience*. The Sacred Scriptures, the teachings of the Church and the examples of good people help you to inform and form your conscience and to follow it.
6. **You have been given the gifts of the virtues.** At your baptism, you were given the gifts of faith, hope and love. These Theological Virtues help you to develop all the good habits you need to live in Christ. With God's grace, you can live according to the virtues.

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- 7. The Holy Spirit helps you lead a good life.** Jesus sent his Spirit into the world to help people, including you, to lead a healthy, holy and happy life.
- 8. God is merciful.** God gives the gift of mercy to all those who are sorry for their sins, receive the Sacraments and strive to do what is good. Though when we sin, we fail to love God and others, with God's merciful and forgiving love, we can change our ways.
- 9. You have a responsibility to the human community.** You have been made to live in community. You are called to help society live according to the way of Jesus.
- 10. You follow legitimate authority.** Inspired by the Holy Spirit, the Church helps you learn about Christian living. You can follow the authority of the pope and the bishops. You can also follow the just rules of society. And most importantly, you can obey your parents too.
- 11. You have the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes as your guide.** Learning to follow the Ten Commandments and to live in the spirit of the Beatitudes will help you love your way through a life in Christ.

- 12. You know and follow the law of love.** In everything you do, you want to show that you love God with your whole heart and that you love your neighbor as yourself.



Prayers for the Family

Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come;
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who
trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your
faithful and enkindle in them the fire of
your love. Send forth your Spirit and they
shall be created, and you shall renew the
face of the earth.

O God, who instructs the hearts of the
faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit,
grant us by the same Holy Spirit a love
and relish of what is right and just, and
a constant enjoyment of your comforts,
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Glory Prayer

Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit
of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now, and at the hour of our death.
Amen.



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Amen.



Morning Prayer

Almighty God, you have given us this
day. Strengthen us with your power
and keep us from falling into sin. So
that whatever we say or think or do
may be in your service, and for the
sake of your Kingdom. Amen.

Evening Prayer

Lord, watch over us this night.
By your strength, may we rise
at daybreak to rejoice
in the Resurrection of Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

A Prayer for Forgiveness

My God, I am sorry for my
sins with all my heart. In
choosing to do wrong and
failing to do good, I have
sinned against you whom I
should love above all things.
I firmly intend, with your
help, to do penance, to
sin no more, and to avoid
whatever leads me to sin.
Jesus Christ suffered and
died for us. In his name,
dear God, forgive me. Amen.

A Vocation Prayer

God our Father, it is
your will that all people
be saved and come to
the knowledge of the
truth. Send workers
into your great harvest
that the Gospel might
be preached to every
person, and that your
people, gathered together
by the Word of Life and
strengthened by the
power of the Sacraments,
may advance in the way
of salvation and love.
Grant this through Christ
our Lord. Amen.

Grace before Meals

Bless us, O Lord,
and these thy gifts,
which we are about to receive
from thy bounty,
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Grace after Meals

We give you thanks for these
and all your gifts, Almighty God.
You live and rule forever. Amen.

Family Prayer

Heavenly Father,
you have given us a
beautiful example in
the Holy Family of
Jesus, Mary and Joseph.
Give us openness to
your Spirit, so that we
may follow through in
the family practice of
virtues. Strengthen our
bonds of love. Grant us
the courage to reach out
to those in need and to
do your will. Amen.

Family Living

The Great Commandment

“You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. . . . You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:37–39)

Jesus’ Commandment

“This is my commandment: love one another as I love you.”
(John 15:12)

The Ten Commandments

1. I am the Lord your God: you shall not have strange gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord’s Day.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not lie.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor’s goods.

(based on Exodus 20:2–3, 7–17)

The Theological Virtues

Faith, Hope and Love

The Cardinal Virtues

Justice, Fortitude,
Temperance, Prudence



The Beatitudes

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are they who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the land.
Blessed are they who hunger
and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be satisfied.
Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.
Blessed are the clean of heart,
for they will see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.
Blessed are they who are persecuted
for the sake of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

(Matthew 5:3–10)

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UNIT 1

God’s Gift of Family



Supporting Families

Strong and healthy families are good for the whole Family of God, the Church. The parish, the diocese and the community can and should support families to be strong. They can come to the aid of families in need, and they can rejoice together at times of family celebrations.

Here are a few ways a parish can support strong family life:

- Give shelter to homeless families who need a safe place to stay.
- Help unemployed families pay bills and supply needed groceries.
- Support families who are dealing with alcoholism, drug abuse, divorce or death.
- Organize parties, trips and other events for families to enjoy together.
- Offer classes in marriage preparation, in parenting or in Catholic family life.

Discuss how your family can join with your parish in one or more of these activities.



Healthy Habits in the Home

Occasionally complete a family mood check. Identify the usual mood in the home on a given day. If someone thinks the family needs a mood change, decide together on a healthy course of action.

Family Blessings

Creator of all life, guide us in the order and pattern of all family life. Help us follow the example of the Holy Family so that peace and joy may reside in our home. Amen.

Taking the Lesson Home

Share with your family several ways you all can live a healthy and holy life together. Do a family checkup.

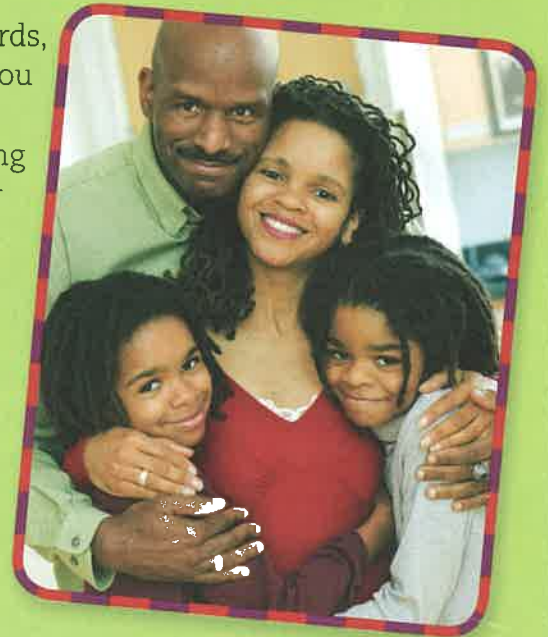
As a family, talk about each statement:

1. We have fun together at least
once a week.
2. We like to celebrate our customs
and culture.
3. We do not use physical or
verbal violence.
4. We have strong family loyalty.
5. We pray frequently together.

Making Connections

To help family members communicate with one another, have each family member respond to and discuss each of these questions:

1. What was the best thing that happened to you recently?
2. At what times do you feel closest to our family? Why?
3. When are you sad or tense? What are some ways our family could help?
4. In two words, what do you like best about being a member of our family?



Faith on the Fridge

"May Nazareth serve as a model of what the family should be. May it show us the family's holy and enduring character and exemplify its basic function in society: a community of love and sharing, beautiful for the problems it poses and the rewards it brings . . ."

Pope Paul VI in Nazareth on
January 5, 1964, Office of Readings



Family Ties

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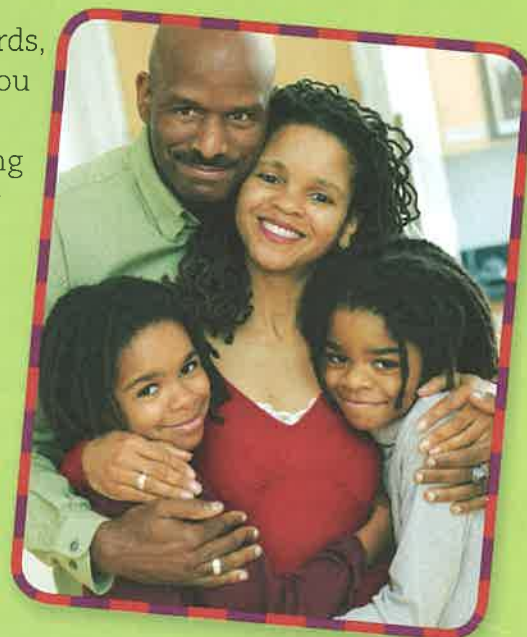
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More Than a Picture

Jean Marie and her family had just moved to Chicago from New Orleans in Louisiana. She didn't know anyone in her new class. Just as the teacher began the lesson, a boy called out. "Mr. Tomczak, haven't you noticed? We have a new girl in class."

"Yes, Neil, I know," responded Mr. Tomczak. "I was waiting to see if anyone would remind me to welcome her. In fact, let's begin today by introducing ourselves to our new student, Jean Marie Brossette." Everyone in the class began talking at once. Mr. Tomczak raised his hand and said, "Let's use our parish family directory to help Jean Marie learn more about who we are. You go first, Neil." The class crowded around Neil and the directory.

"Okay. Here I am with my mom. We live right across the street from school. My dad lives near the lake, and I spend summers with him. We have a great time together."

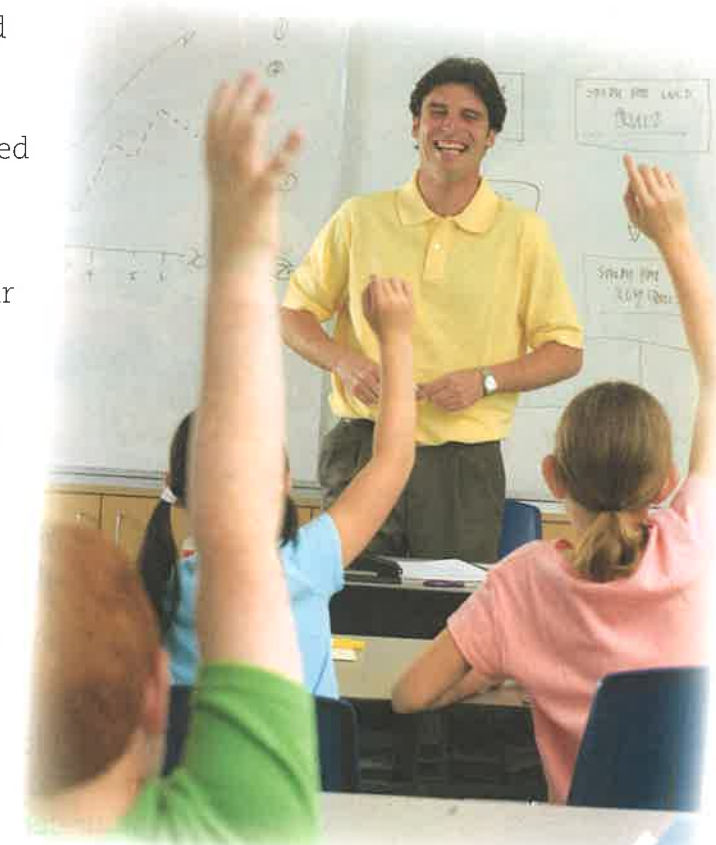
"Hey, there's a dog in that picture!" interrupted Ray, pointing to a different photo. "That's Jaime Huerta," said Andrés, waving his hand. Everyone laughed. "I don't mean the dog!" said Andrés. "Jaime is my uncle, and that's Jojo, his guide dog. She's like part of the family." "Thank you, Andrés," said Mr. Tomczak. "Why don't you go next, Denise?"

Denise turned a few pages and pointed. "That's me, my parents, and my older brother. My mom and dad are foster parents. We have a baby boy staying with us right now."

Finally, when everyone had a turn, Mr. Tomczak said, "Well class, we really said a lot more about ourselves and family than can be seen in a picture. What ties the people in the pictures together? What makes each of them a family?" Just then, the lunch bell rang.

This lesson will help you to:

- **explore** the similarities and differences among families.
- **discover** the qualities of a healthy and holy family.
- **celebrate** your family's qualities and uniqueness with appreciation.



? The class showed hospitality. What does someone do when they are being hospitable?



Catholics Believe

The family is an important part of God's plan of creation. The family is an icon or image of the Church. It is guided by the Church to a life of service and a mission of love.



Signs of a Strong Family

A family is two or more people who are related by blood, marriage or adoption. Many things about family cannot be found in a dictionary. Family is where love, care and concern surround you like the air you breathe. Family is a place of hospitality. Family includes people who help you grow, accept you as you are and understand when you are hurting. Family is how you learn the meaning of forgiveness, sharing and cooperation. In a special way, your family shapes the way you look at yourself and at your life.

Many important qualities of a family cannot be seen in a family snapshot. These include customs and traditions, as well as attitudes and values. Customs and traditions are ways of living and celebrating. Many families have their own special customs and traditions. These flow from a family's history and culture. A culture is a special mix of customs and traditions.

Attitudes are the ways a family relates to the world. Attitudes can be positive or negative. Values are those things held to be important to living a happy life. Sometimes a family has to work hard to change a negative attitude or to hang on to a positive value.



Think about some of the important attitudes, qualities or values of your family.

The following is a list of qualities that can help a family to be strong in healthy, holy and happy ways:

- 1. Communication**—Communication includes being willing to share and to listen. Listening helps family members know and understand one another. A family that communicates can share joys and burdens and solve problems together.
- 2. Respect**—Respect includes treating one another with consideration. Through both actions and words, family members show that they value one another. They accept one another as the unique person God created them to be.
- 3. Trust**—Trust includes being able to depend on one another. Family members count on one another to be honest and supportive. Trust helps children understand that their parents are doing what is best for them.



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Growing in Virtue

Hospitality is a wonderful way of respecting the customs and traditions of families. It is an attitude of welcoming, openness and acceptance.

4. Loyalty—Loyalty includes staying committed to the family with its traditions and values. Family members support one another even when there are problems, failures or when someone is being hurt or abused.

5. Responsibility—Responsibility includes being accountable for one's words and actions. Each person has a duty to help meet the needs of the family, for example, by sharing chores and being sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.

6. Companionship—Companionship includes making time to have fun together. Enjoying time together does not have to involve spending money. It can mean simply playing a game or going for a walk.

When a family lives according to these qualities, each person makes their home a place of hospitality. And in this way, everyone in the family is welcomed and supported.

“Showing Family Strength”

Working in a group, write a short skit in the space provided that shows one of the qualities of a strong family. Perform the skit before the class.

Activity

Blank space for writing a skit.

Catholic Family Album

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph is a model for all families on how to be a strong, healthy, holy and happy family. Jesus was born into a Jewish family, who followed the Jewish customs and culture at that time. According to Jewish custom, Jesus learned about the Torah and celebrated all of the religious feasts, including Passover. The Bible consistently reveals how Jesus, Mary and Joseph lived as a strong family, providing for the needs of one another.



Celebrating My Family

Imagine that you are in charge of organizing a family gathering. Use the party planner below to express the uniqueness of your family through the choices that you make. You can show the values and attitudes, customs and traditions of your family through your decisions about the menu, music, entertainment, games, activities and decorations. Be sure to explain the purpose and reason for the celebration in the invitations section.

Party Planner

- Menu
- Entertainment/Music
- Games/Activities
- Decorations
- Invitations