



Leading from the front- PART 2

A questionnaire for mum and dad to talk through in the Year of Faith

1. How much importance do we give to communication in marriage and family life? *Communicate, communicate, and communicate. Without strong communication our relationships become weaker.*

- Do I place my family, the raising of my children and my love for my spouse as my highest priorities?
- Do I see the need to talk each day about the kids with my spouse?
- Do I make time to build habits of daily conversation with each of my children?

2. Are we a family of consumers or producers? *'The family budget is a numerical expression of our family's values' says Professor David Isaacs.*

- Do we know how to wait for things or do we buy on impulse?
- Do we try to keep things clean to make them last longer and pass on good clothes from older to younger children?
- Are we generous in helping others and in putting money on the plate on Sundays?
- Are holidays on the expensive side or do we know how to make our own fun?
- Do we keep the world in a positive perspective, the world is not. But teach Christian detachment so that our desires do not settle on material things?
- Have we built up a sober, non-materialistic, family lifestyle where people are more important than things?

3. Do we decorate our home with the things we hold most dear?

- Do we put up images of faith (a crucifix, a picture of Our Lady), memories of times together, wedding photos, grandparents photos?



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Do we celebrate feast days with some special treat and do we have family customs in Lent of going without?

4. Do we remove ourselves from things that are not good for us, avoiding 'occasions of sin.' *Learn the lessons of Lent. Our Lord went off into the desert to pray.*

Do we control the inputs into our family home, internet, social media, mobile, TV – realising that what is not good for the kids is probably not good for me?

Do we lead from the front when it comes to the tone (order, manners and courtesy, dress, language) in the house?

5. Do we take full responsibility to pass on our faith to our children or do we depend too much on the school?

Are we taking an active approach to our kid's faith?

Do they see us say morning and night prayers and do we teach them to do the same? Before children reach school they should know: Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be, Act of Contrition and Morning Offering.

Over time do we cover the basic teachings of our Faith, about how we must thank God for his gifts to us, about the need pray?

Do we teach the children how to follow the Mass and how to behave in a church (not turning one's back to the tabernacle, not chatting, making dignified genuflections when passing in front of the tabernacle, etc.)

Am I dedicated to the task and see that I must set aside time in this demanding yet extremely rewarding venture?



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6. Is each parent determined to give spiritual leadership in the home?

- Are we each careful not to leave the ‘heavy lifting’ for the other?
- Do we each set personal goals in our Faith, monitor them and make ourselves accountable?
- Do my spouse and I pray together?
- Are we optimistic in front of life’s challenges... living by faith? *“There is nothing better in this world than that husband and wife is of one mind.”*

7. Do we try to build up our spiritual lives? In his visit to Australia in 1986, Blessed John Paul 11 stressed the following *‘elements of a Catholic spirituality’*: *appreciation of the life of grace, prayerful meditation on the scriptures, faith-filled devotion to the Eucharist, proper use of the Sacrament of Penance.*

- Can my family tick the above boxes?
- Do we see that attendance at Sunday Mass is absolutely essential and non-negotiable?

8. Do we draw strength from the sacraments?

- Do the children see us seeking out regular confession?
- Will we visit Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament when we are out as a family?
- Do I try to get to Mass sometimes on weekdays?

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Some tasks for discussion and reflection:

- Be a person who knows God. If you do not know God yet, then decide today that you are going to go and do whatever it takes to get to know Him.
- Be a soul of prayer. Commit yourself to spending at least 5 minutes a day with God in prayer for the rest of your life, beginning today.
- Be a person who listens more than they talk. This begins with our relationship with God and includes your spouse and children.



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- Discuss these questions with your spouse, your tutor or a close friend and set some goal to work on in your own spiritual life and your family.