

10 Ways to Grow in Faith as a Family

1. **Go to Mass as a family.** Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith. It's vital to make the liturgy a priority each weekend and to plan our activities around what time we are going to Mass. Make it a point to prepare for the liturgy by reading the readings beforehand. When you get home you could sit down and discuss the homily, the songs, or the readings and fill out the Mass Reflection form together.
2. **Go to Adoration as a family.** We offer Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. If you need to come after hours, you can obtain a fob card in the parish office. In Adoration, Jesus waits for us. He wants to pour out His love and grace to us. We need to go to Him. You can go for however long-5-10 minutes, a half/hour, 1 hour. It is essential to teach our children the meaning and value of Eucharistic Adoration. We need to introduce them to the mystery of His presence. Pope Emeritus Benedict said "without adoration there is no transformation of the world." We are Christians and as disciples we are called to put our faith into action by praying for the needs in our own lives, for our families, and for the world. Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament changes our hearts, our lives, and the world.
3. **Go to Confession as a family.** Teach your children about the mercy and forgiveness of God. What better way than to bring them to confession!! Confession heals and restores our relationship with God and with each other. Teach your children to seek and ask for forgiveness for the times we fail. It would be good to try and make a habit to go once a month as a family. What a truly beautiful sacrament confession is!
4. **Have a prayer table in your home.** Have a table with a bible, a crucifix, candle, a bottle of holy water, a statue of Mary, statue of your patron saints, etc. You can have fabric on the table that matches the season of the Church – green, purple, white, or red for the liturgical color. It should be in a place that is visible. This is a place that is set aside in your home for the family to gather in the evening for prayer; to thank God for the blessings of the day, to pray for friends or family, etc. Along, with a prayer table every room in the house should have a crucifix. Reminding us of our faith and letting those who enter our homes know that we are Christians.
5. **Read the bible as a family.** The bible is the Word of God. Every home should have a bible. The bible is God's plan of salvation for our lives. God desires to be in a close and loving relationship with every person. How can we

grow in a personal relationship with Christ if we aren't reading the bible? Take time to read it as a family and discuss it. If you aren't sure where to start begin by reading together the Sunday Readings, which can be found at www.usccb.org.

6. **Pray the Rosary as a family.** Our Lady said at Lourdes and Fatima to pray the rosary for peace in our hearts, in our families, and in the world. There is so much to pray for-the sick, the dying, unbelievers, the youth, our priests, vocations, our friends and family, the souls in purgatory, etc. Teach your children to pray and the importance of prayer. The family that prays together stays together.
7. **Family meals, the saints, and faith movies.** It is so important to sit down together and share a meal as a family. Begin with prayer and thanksgiving for your food. Rotate who leads prayer each night. Have each family member name a thing he or she is grateful for that day. Pray for others. You can keep a list on your kitchen table of people and special intentions for who you would like to pray. You can incorporate the saints by looking at the website Catholic Cuisine at (<http://catholiccuisine.blogspot.com/>) for helpful meal ideas based on a saint.

The saints are our heroes who inspire us and help us on our journey. Get to know them and help your children get to know them. Celebrate the Feast Days of the saints in your home by saying a novena to them, making a special meal, and asking for their intercession. Check out www.catholicvideo.com for great videos. And no cell phones at the dinner table!

8. **Fasting together as a family.** Fasting is a form of prayer that detaches us from the things of earth so that our souls can be purified and more dependent on God. Fast for a particular intention- a friend who is struggling, religious freedom, for conversion of souls, etc. Fast from TV, Video Games, Facebook, chocolate, dessert, meat, complaining, judging, controlling others, etc. It should be a sacrifice and something that is difficult to give up.
9. **Do service projects together as a family.** Service and helping others in our community and in the world should be a way of life. There are many great opportunities for the family to volunteer!
10. **Explore parish events as a family.** Go to a few of the events that are being offered by our parish and plan to attend as a family. This will help you to build community within your parish and experience something new.