

HOW TO BE AND SHARE CHRIST AT HOME



From the Catechism...

2685 The *Christian family* is the first place of education in prayer. Based on the sacrament of marriage, the family is the "domestic church" where God's children learn to pray "as the Church" and to persevere in prayer. For young children in particular, daily family prayer is the first witness of the Church's living memory as awakened patiently by the Holy Spirit.

The Catechism shares the ideal situation that Catholic families should be striving for. But if your like most teens, your family is far from perfect. How should you, as a Catholic teen respond? Here are some quick tips:

1. Pray. Jesus comes before anything else. Pray for your own relationship with Christ. Pray for your family. Pray specifically for each person's relationship with Christ. Remember, with God, all things are possible.
2. Respect and honor your parents. This is a commandment. Your parents are not perfect but that does not give you permission to be rude or disobedient.
3. Keep your own house in order. It is so easy for us to focus on the faults of others, especially members of our own families. First, make sure that your attitude, your heart, your actions are not selfish or sinful.
4. Forgive, forgive, forgive. Mercy is God's gift to us. We need to give that gift to the other people in our families. If we do not show them Christ's love, who will?
5. Serve your family. Actions always speak louder than words. If you want to lead your family to Christ, then be Christ to your family. Lay down your life when possible. This isn't easy but it is the best way to show them that Jesus is alive in you.

"With God all things are possible."
- Jesus in Matthew 19:26

A Prayer for You and Your Family:

God of life, deepen my faith and strengthen my heart for the gospel of Jesus Christ. Help me to witness the faith to my family. Holy Spirit, empower me to love my family as Christ loves me. Help produce in me the fruits of love, peace and patience. Take away my fear as I trust in you.

Lord, open the hearts of my family. Let them come to know your love and goodness. Let me be a channel of that love. Help me to forgive as freely and kindly as you have forgiven me. Jesus, thank you for my family. Bless us and keep us safe. Amen.

Practical Ways to Witness at Home

- Ask each member of your family what they want prayer for and then pray for them.
- Offer to say grace before each meal and pray spontaneously—give lots of thanks to God.
- Don't miss Mass. Even if your family does not go at all or only goes occasionally, try to find a ride or go on your own every Sunday.
- Tell your parents about your experiences at Church, youth group, or retreats.
- Volunteer some of your time to serving the poor or needy.
- Do not judge others in your family. Do not be critical of others bad choices. Always look for the good in others and let them know you see it.
- Wear a Christian t-shirt, listen to Christian music, and display religious art in your room. But don't let those be your only way of witnessing.
- Be generous in your compliments and thanks to your parents. Their lives are incredibly busy and sometimes stressful.
- Serve your parish as a reader, usher, altar server, or Eucharistic minister.
- Share how God is working in your life with your family.
- Take time out of your busy day to pay attention to your family. Let them know they are more important than television or the internet!

Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."

TRUST IN THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT!

Witnessing for Christ is not a preachy, in your face, holier than thou activity. It is humility, patience, and love at home. It is not complicated, although sometimes it is not very easy. You can make Christ known to your family by praying and doing what Christ wants you to do!