

COACH PARENTS TO SHARE THEIR FAITH

Why Coach Parents?

The Time Is Now

We hear concerns from parish leaders all the time:

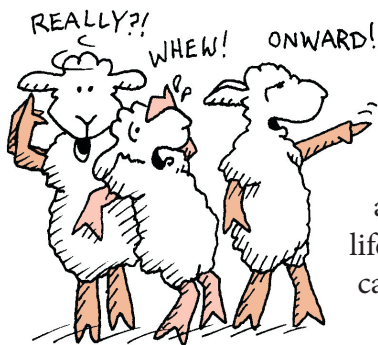
- Families are not attending Mass regularly, not even those with children preparing to receive sacraments.
- Once children receive their sacraments, we never see them again.
- Kids don't understand or prioritize their faith.



Studies have consistently shown that parents are the most influential factor in whether their children remain Catholic into adulthood. Catholic parents who show that faith is essential to them—through their words and actions—are much less likely to have children who leave the faith. No matter how hard we try, *we cannot replace parents* and their essential role in sharing faith.

Coaching Parents

The answer is to partner with and coach parents, giving them the tools and support they need. We have seen, again and again, that when this is done well it is incredibly effective. The key to evangelizing and catechizing children is evangelizing, engaging, and equipping their parents.



This looks rather different from the drop-off classroom model that we have become accustomed to in parish life. It requires a new kind of catechetical event:

- Parents and children attend the event together.
- Parents practice teaching their children about faith.
- Parish facilitators coach the parents.
- Both parents and children grow in their faith.

Growing Up Catholic Is Designed for This Challenge

Our team has been testing and refining our resources to coach parents for over 15 years. We have found that parents are delighted to step into this role when given the opportunity and good support. Our approach is:

- **Evangelization-first**, making a convincing case for our faith (assuming a skeptical audience) and drawing families closer to Christ and the Church.
- **Focused on the most central aspects of our faith:** the Gospel message and our call to live it out as disciples in the world.
- **Humorous, entertaining, and thought-provoking.** Faith formation should not be dull.
- **In plain English/Spanish**, not advanced language that may confuse or turn off families.
- **Inviting and accessible to parents.** We don't scare them with a heavy textbook or assume they know the answers, but help them grow into their role as primary catechist.
- **Family-focused**, helping them to bring faith into their homes in concrete, practical, long-lasting ways.

Join the Movement!

Learn more about Growing Up Catholic resources for family catechesis inside and on GrowingUpCatholic.com. Reach us at support@pastoral.center or 844-727-8672 with your questions.

Growing Up Catholic Community Initiative

This five-year initiative to expand our parent-centered family catechesis ministry is funded by a \$1.25 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc.


- The grant will dramatically extend the Pastoral Center's ability to train, equip, and support parish leaders in English and Spanish to better partner with parents to pass on faith to their children.
- It will enable the Pastoral Center to reach out to every diocese in the United States to offer support and training for parish leaders as they seek to move toward a whole family catechesis model.
- The funds will also support the ongoing creation and development of English and Spanish Growing Up Catholic resources, which offer practical resources for parishes to help families share their faith at home or at parish-centered family events.
- Fifteen dioceses will be selected for a cohort program, supporting parishes and schools seeking to transition into or deepen their approach to family catechesis. Each cohort will benefit from in-person workshops, leader support, and access to family curriculum resources.


Whole Family Catechesis Resources


We have many resources to support family catechesis in different settings and through many topics. However, our cohort program is focused on a **two-year extended sacramental preparation process** for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. This process includes kerygmatic sessions focused on Jesus and the Gospels, in addition to immediate preparation for the sacraments.

Editions

Each session is made available in a variety of formats to meet your ministry needs.


 **Spoken languages.** In addition to all-English and all-Spanish editions, our bilingual edition has parent text in Spanish and child text in English.


 **Age levels.** Family handouts are available in editions for elementary (ages 7-10) and middle school (ages 10-14).


 **Print options.** Parishes can purchase the full-color printed booklets or licenses to print themselves.


Features


The curriculum is designed to work well wherever your families will use it.


 **Family handouts.** These non-intimidating color booklets are the core of the curriculum, with parent instructions, activities, and question prompts.

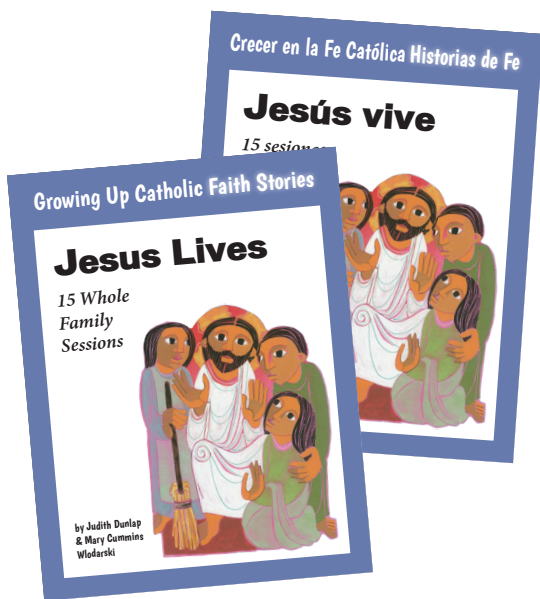
 **Leader guides.** Thoughtful facilitator instructions guide you through how to best host sessions at the parish or prepare families for a home experience.

 **Get families talking.** The process prompts parents to have meaningful faith-based conversations with their children.

 **Step-by-step parent instructions.** The resource coaches and guides parents with simple numbered steps, with no advance preparation necessary, empowering them to step into an active role.

 **Practice in place.** Instead of just telling parents what they should do later (and hoping they remember to follow through), we help them to practice sharing faith with their children in the moment.

 **At-home this week.** The last page of each handout prompts families to extend the experience through at-home goals for the week, with prayer, faith-sharing, service, and more.



Coach parents to share Jesus and the Gospel stories with their children!

Introduces families to the kerygma—the central message of our faith—through Gospel stories and activities.

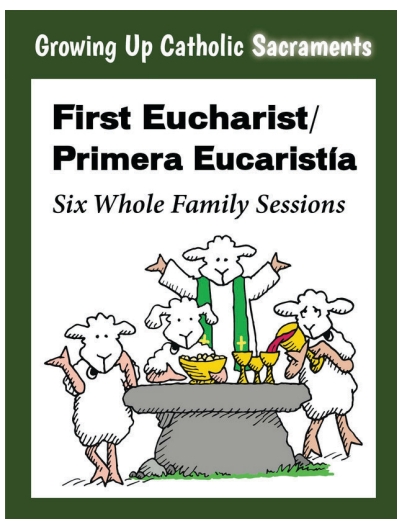
- **Helps families meet Jesus** through his birth story, friends, parables, miracles, Holy Week, and Resurrection.
- **Offers a multi-setting approach**, with six unit sessions intended for parish-hosted, interactive, community sessions and nine story sessions to be sent home in-between (or all can be used in the parish).
- **A simple process** that will work well even with families who are on the margins of the church.



Coach parents to share the gift of Confession with their children!

Prepares children for the sacrament and helps families learn how to live a holier, more joyful life.

- **Takes an engaging approach** to help families appreciate how we were all created to love others, how to make better decisions, and how the Sacrament of Reconciliation can help.
- **An engaging approach that** incorporates music, short videos, prayer, Bible stories, cartoons, conversation, and creative activities.
- **Compatible editions** for both general catechesis of all ages (Revival edition) AND sacramental preparation.



Coach parents to share the gift of the Eucharist with their children!

Embraces the goals of the Eucharistic Revival by connecting the Mass and Eucharist to missionary discipleship.

- **Teaches about the Eucharist** through the lens of the dismissal, as recommended by Pope Benedict XVI.
- **An engaging approach that** incorporates music, short videos, prayer, Bible stories, cartoons, conversation, and creative activities.
- **Compatible editions** for both general catechesis of all ages (Revival edition) AND sacramental preparation.

Growing Up Catholic Sacramental Preparation

2025-2027 Catechetical Years • Sample Two-Year Schedule • 20 Parish + 9 Home Sessions

	2025-2026	Parish-Hosted Sessions	At-Home Sessions	2026-2027	Parish-Hosted Sessions	At-Home Sessions
27th Sunday in OT	10/5/25	Sharing Stories		10/4/26	Eucharist 1	
28th Sunday in OT	10/12/25			10/11/26		
29th Sunday in OT	10/19/25	Reconciliation 1		10/18/26		
30th Sunday in OT	10/26/25			10/25/26	Eucharist 2	
31st Sunday in OT	11/2/25			11/1/26		
32nd Sunday in OT	11/9/25	Reconciliation 2		11/8/26		
33rd Sunday in OT	11/16/25			11/15/26	Eucharist 3	
Jesus Christ, King	11/23/25			11/22/26		
1st Sunday of Advent	11/30/25	Jesus Lives 1	Jesus Lives 2	11/29/26		
2nd Sunday of Advent	12/7/25			12/6/26	Advent Retreat	
3rd Sunday of Advent	12/14/25			12/13/26		
4th Sunday of Advent	12/21/25			12/20/26		
Holy Family	12/28/25			12/27/26		
Epiphany of the Lord	1/4/26	Reconciliation 3		1/3/27	Eucharist 4	
Baptism of the Lord	1/11/26			1/10/27		
2nd Sunday in OT	1/18/26			1/17/27		
3rd Sunday in OT	1/25/26	Reconciliation 4		1/24/27	Eucharist 5	
4th Sunday in OT	2/1/26			1/31/27		
5th Sunday in OT	2/8/26			2/7/27		
6th Sunday in OT	2/15/26					
1st Sunday of Lent	2/22/26	Reconciliation 5		2/14/27	Jesus Lives 9	Jesus Lives 10 & 11
2nd Sunday of Lent	3/1/26			2/21/27		
3rd Sunday of Lent	3/8/26			2/28/27		
4th Sunday of Lent	3/15/26	Reconciliation 6		3/7/27		
5th Sunday of Lent	3/22/26			3/14/27	Jesus Lives 12	Jesus Lives 13 & 14
Palm/Passion Sunday	3/29/26			3/21/27		
Easter Sunday	4/5/26			3/28/27		
2nd Sunday of Easter	4/12/26	Jesus Lives 3	Jesus Lives 4 & 5	4/4/27	Eucharist 6	
3rd Sunday of Easter	4/19/26			4/11/27		
4th Sunday of Easter	4/26/26			4/18/27		
5th Sunday of Easter	5/3/26	Jesus Lives 6	Jesus Lives 7 & 8	4/25/27	Jesus Lives 15	
6th Sunday of Easter	5/10/26			5/2/27		
7th Sunday of Easter	5/17/26			5/9/27		
Pentecost Sunday	5/24/26			5/16/27		

Faith Stories: Jesus Lives

Story	Objectives	Themes	Catechism References
1 Who Is Jesus?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To remember that God loves us and that Jesus came to live out that love. To introduce the many ways we have of talking about and naming Jesus. 	Jesus came to reveal who God is, to share God's love and to help us see our part in the Plan of God.	CCC #430-435, 456-460, 512-524
2 Jesus Is Born	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To recognize that even in Jesus' humble birth he was surrounded by love. To appreciate and celebrate the gift of Jesus to the world. 	Jesus' humble birth shows us that love is what people need most.	CCC #461-463, 470, 478, 525-534
3 Friends of Jesus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To realize that Jesus needed good friends in his life just as we do. To discover what qualities we find in a good friend and recognize those qualities in Jesus. 	Jesus needed friends just as we do. Jesus also wants to be our friend.	CCC #541-545, 552-553, 946-953
4 Zacchaeus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To see in the story of Zacchaeus that Jesus made a point of befriending the outcast. To think about who Jesus would befriend today. 	Jesus wants us to be friends with everyone.	CCC #374, 2010-2011, 2477-2479
5 Mary and Martha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand the importance of taking time out to be with God. To spend time in prayer by writing a letter to Jesus. 	Jesus wants us to spend time with him.	CCC #27-30, 31-35
6 The Parables of Jesus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To realize that Jesus liked to teach by telling stories. To introduce some of the parables that Jesus told. 	Jesus told stories to teach us about God's love and how we are to help bring about the Reign of God.	CCC #56, 74-79, 546
7 The Son Who Ran Away	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To realize that we make choices every day to love or hurt others. To understand that even when we make wrong choices God will still love and forgive us. 	God will never stop loving us. God will always forgive us when we ask forgiveness.	CCC #1425-1433, 2838-2845
8 The Man Who Stopped to Help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To recognize and affirm the differences of people throughout the world. To recognize and affirm our own goodness and the goodness in others. 	We are to love our neighbor as ourselves. Our neighbors include everyone, even those who are called enemies.	CCC #1939-1942, 2839-2845
9 The Miracles of Jesus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand that Jesus' miracles were part of his Good News. To realize that we can be miracle workers if we help carry on Jesus' work. 	Jesus' love for people produced some surprising actions and miraculous results.	CCC #547-550, 2616
10 Bartimaeus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand that people have not only material but also emotional and spiritual needs. To recognize the needs of people both close to us and far away. 	Jesus is with us in the darkness to help open our eyes to see the needs of those around us.	CCC #1783-1785, 1878-1979
11 The Special Picnic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To encourage a thankful heart for gifts received. To encourage a giving spirit for those in need. 	When we share what we have as Jesus teaches, surprising things can happen.	CCC #1786-1789, 1831, 1822-1829
12 The Last Days of Jesus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review Jesus' life by remembering favorite stories about Jesus. To recognize that Jesus had enemies who wanted to stop the Good News. 	Jesus' life was an example to us. Jesus lived the Good News all through his life, even to his death.	CCC #426-429, 512-521
13 Arriving in Jerusalem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand that Jesus made a choice to go to Jerusalem and face his death. To discover that being a follower of Jesus is not always easy. 	Sometimes it is not easy to be a follower of Jesus. We must do what is right even when it is difficult.	CCC #557-560, 569-570
14 How Jesus Died	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To reflect on Jesus' walk to Calvary, To respond on Jesus' "way of the cross" through prayer. 	Jesus died to show us how to live.	CCC #571-591, 595-618, 624-630
15 Jesus Is Alive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To recognize that Jesus is still alive with us today. To affirm how we are "Jesus" for each other. 	Even death had no power over Jesus. Jesus is alive with us today.	CCC #638-677, 727-730, 988-1004



Growing Up Catholic • Eucharist • Scope & Sequence

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	START WITH THE ENDING	WHAT'S THE WORD?	TAKE AND GIVE	IN LIVING MEMORY	WE ARE WHAT WE EAT	IMPOSSIBLE MISSION
FOCUS ON LEARNING	Sent on Mission / Sunday Sabbath	The Bible / Seasons & Stories	Responding to God's Gifts	Remembering / Dying in Self-giving Love	Understanding and Receiving Communion	Following Jesus / Spreading the Good News
SCRIPTURE READING	The Mission of the Twelve (Matthew 9:35-10:14)	Jesus Reveals His Mission (Luke 4:16-22)	The Widow's Offering (Mark 12:41-44)	The Last Supper (Luke 22:10-20)	The Walk to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35)	The Promise of the Holy Spirit (John 14:15-21, 25-27)
GETTING TO KNOW THE RITE	Introductory Rites (Greeting, Penitential Act, and Gloria)	Liturgy of the Word (Readings and Homily)	Profession of Faith, Prayer of the Faithful, and Offertory	Eucharistic Prayer	Lord's Prayer, Sign of Peace, and Communion Rite	Blessing and Sending Forth
PRAYER CELEBRATION	Jesus Wants Our Help Song: "Simple Plans"	Called to Love Song: "Love the World"	One Body, Many Parts Song: "What You Got"	All Together Song: "All Together"	Bread of Life Song: "I Am the Bread of Life"	I'm Sending You Song: "Traveling Mercies"
AT HOME THIS WEEK	Sabbath & Sunday plans / Practice prayers	Using the Bible at home	Gratitude, money, and generosity	Sharing supper / Planning or Remembering	Receiving / Meal prayers	Invitations / Preparing to all receive
CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH	#831: The Church is sent out by Christ on a mission to the whole world.	#1154: The liturgy of the Word is an integral part of sacramental celebrations.	#1351: From the very beginning Christians have brought bread, wine, and gifts to share.	#1366 The Eucharist is a sacrifice that re-presents (make present) the sacrifice of the Cross.	#1382 To receive communion is to receive Christ, who has offered himself for us.	#768: The Church receives the mission of proclaiming and establishing the Kingdom of God.




Growing Up Catholic • Reconciliation • Scope & Sequence


	1	2	3	4	5	6
	MADE TO LOVE	WANTAS & HAFTAS	WHO WE ARE BECOMING	BEING SORRY	WE DON'T GET WHAT WE DESERVE	LIVING THE GOOD LIFE
FOCUS ON LEARNING	God's Plan for Relationships	Making Good Choices	Conscience, Character, and Sin	Contrition and Sorrow	Mercy and Forgiveness	Virtue and Peace
SCRIPTURE READING	Jesus Loves the Children (Mark 10:13-16)	The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)	The Two Sons (Matthew 21:28-32)	Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)	The Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-24)	The Lost Sheep (Luke 15:1-7)
GETTING TO KNOW THE RITE	Why Receive? / Preparation / Reconciliation Room	Why Confession? / Greeting / Reading	Confession / Response / Penance	Contrition/ Act of Contrition	Absolution / Praise & Dismissal / Effects	Review
PRAYER CELEBRATION	Loving and Being Loved Song: "Exactly As I Am"	Choosing Love Song: "Love Is What We Need"	Growing In Love Song: "God Is for Us"	Admitting We're Wrong Song: "Open My Eyes"	Mercy In Motion Song: "No Strings on Love"	Going In Peace Song: "Traveling Mercies"
AT HOME THIS WEEK	Learning prayers / Examination of Conscience / Voicing love	The Bible at home / Family service / Bedtime ritual	Details of sin / Small acts of penance / Pray like you mean it	Act of Contrition / Daily Examen / Examination of Conscience	Review prayers & steps / Role play / Parents confessing	Plan a party / Lead your family in faith
CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH	#1604: God who created man out of love also calls him to love...	#1730: God created man a rational being... who can initiate and control his own actions.	#1777: Moral conscience... enjoins him to do good and to avoid evil.	#1451: Among the penitent's acts contrition occupies first place.	#1449: The Father of mercies is the source of all forgiveness.	#1804: The moral virtues... are the fruit and seed of morally good acts.


Become a Pilot Parish or School!

In each diocesan cohort, 10-15 communities will be selected as funded pilot parishes to receive additional support, including free curriculum resources and an assessment process. (Note: Additional parishes can also participate in the cohort.)


Benefits


 **Free resources.** A grant will cover the full financial costs of the designated resources (including delivery costs) for use with the families in a two-year sacramental preparation program. You can continue to purchase them for subsequent years.


 **Prioritized support.** Beyond the in-person introductory training and leader support framework, your leaders will receive prioritized support and follow up. We will give you everything you need to be successful in walking with your families.


 **Measuring success.** The assessment phase will give you specific feedback about the results of the program: comments from parents and data about whether the experience changed any of their faith-oriented behavior.


Requirements


 **Have great expectations.** Be truly open to partnering with and coaching parents and believing they can be effective catechists of their children.


 **Use the parent-centered process.** Use of the Growing Up Catholic Extended Sacramental Preparation program (and the other supporting resources) with one set of families over two years is required.

 **Attend workshops & trainings.** At least one leader must attend the initial two-day training and participate in year-end events.

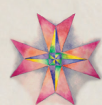
 **Facilitate parent surveys.** Provide access to your parents so we can survey them before and after they participate in the program.

 **Staff and volunteer support.** Give parish staffing support to facilitate the process and support your families well.

 **Spread the word.** Allow other curious leaders to visit and learn from your program. Tell others about your experience afterwards.

 **Give feedback.** Share with us what works and what can be improved to strengthen the program.

We would love for you to join us as a pilot parish. Please visit us at GrowingUpCatholic.com to learn more and to apply!



The Pastoral Center

Pastoral ministers helping pastoral ministers

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For more information on our resources, the grant-funded initiative, and the parish application, please visit: GrowingUpCatholic.com