

# From the Pastor



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It is not uncommon that parents prefer to give the role of shaping their children spiritually to CCD teachers or youth ministers. The bible clearly says that it's not what God prefers. In the book of Deuteronomy, chapter, we can learn about parental responsibility to teach the Word of God: "When you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up". Again in the letter to the Ephesians 6:4, Paul instructed home-grown leadership when he said, "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." Children need godly parents much more than they need a great teacher or vibrant youth ministry. Bringing your child to faith in God and help him/her to become Jesus' disciple *is your* responsibility, dear mom and dad.

In his second letter to Timothy, St. Paul wrote about "sincere faith . . . which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice" (2 Timothy 1:5). Later, in 2 Timothy 3:14, St. Paul stated, "You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, *knowing from whom you have learned them*". Surely even more than St. Paul's example over a brief period (cf. 1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2; 3:10-11), it was Lois and Eunice that authenticated the message they proclaimed before young Timothy. They "practiced what they preached," and this gave their words a genuineness that Timothy could not deny. It so obvious that, how you live before your children, powerfully impacts them and their faith in God.

How does this work out? If we tell our children that the proper response to the gospel is one of faith, then they should see us resting in the promises of God. Do they see you trusting God even when trials come? If you tell your child that following Christ is costly, is it costing you anything? You tell your child to receive sacraments, but are you doing the same? The Lord might use your godly behavior to have a saving effect upon your children. There is a direct connection between the way we live and our children's understanding of God and the gospel. We greatly impact their faith, whether we affirm or deny it, with our behavior. Are you the godliest person your child has ever known? Here are some things to think about:

1) What do your children see you watching and enjoying on the television? When that improper scene comes on television, have you ever noticed what happens? All eyes turn to dad or mom. You should know why.

2) Apply discipline for correction of wrong behavior before it's too late. (A couple of examples from Bible are: Proverbs 13:24; 22:15; 23:13-14; 29:15; Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:21).

3) Do your children see you giving up your "free time" in order to help them with a project or listen to a story about their trip to the museum? To give and serve like this is to imitate God "who did not spare His own Son" (Romans 8:32) and Jesus who "did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).

4) Sports have become a big problem to the life of a church. Perhaps you find yourself at ball practice, instead of Sunday or Holy Day Mass. Remember Jesus' words in Matthew 6:24, "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other." The remedy is not to renounce sports, but to re-prioritize your family's schedule so that your children will not look back upon their childhood and have to honestly say, "My parents served my sports schedule."

+ *Father Roger*