



COACH PARENTS TO SHARE THEIR FAITH

Why Coach Parents?

The Time Is Now

We hear concerns from parish leaders all the time:

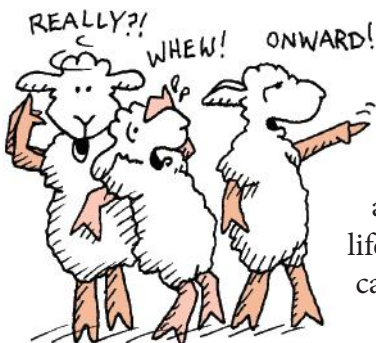
- Families are not attending Mass regularly, not even those with children preparing to receive sacraments.
- Once children receive their sacraments, we never see them again.
- Kids don't understand or prioritize their faith.



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.

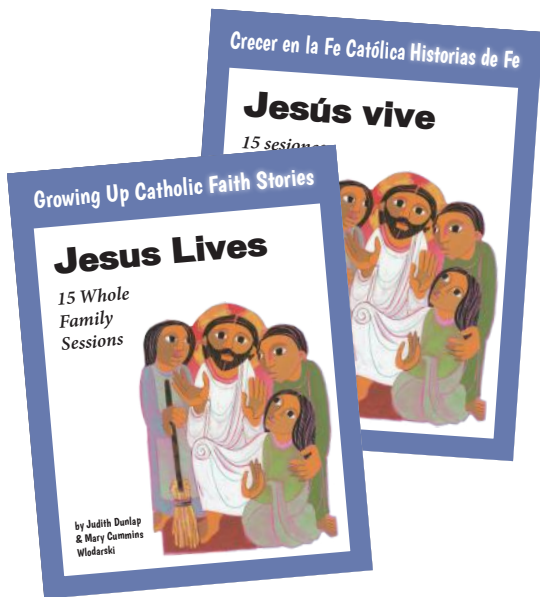
 **Leader guides.** Thoughtful facilitator instructions guide you through how to best host sessions at the parish or prepare families for a home experience.

 **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.

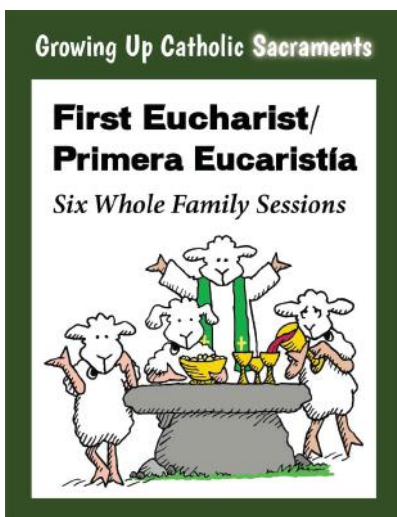
- **Helps families meet Jesus** through his birth story, friends, parables, miracles, Holy Week, and Resurrection.
- **Offers a multi-setting approach**, with six unit sessions intended for parish-hosted, interactive, community sessions and nine story sessions to be sent home in-between (or all can be 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.

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.

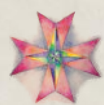
 **Facilitate parent surveys.** Provide access to your parents so we can survey them before and after they participate in the program.

 **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

www.pastoral.center • (844) 727-8672



Claudio Mora

Director, Growing Up
Catholic Initiative

claudio@pastoral.center

(844) 727-8672 x201



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