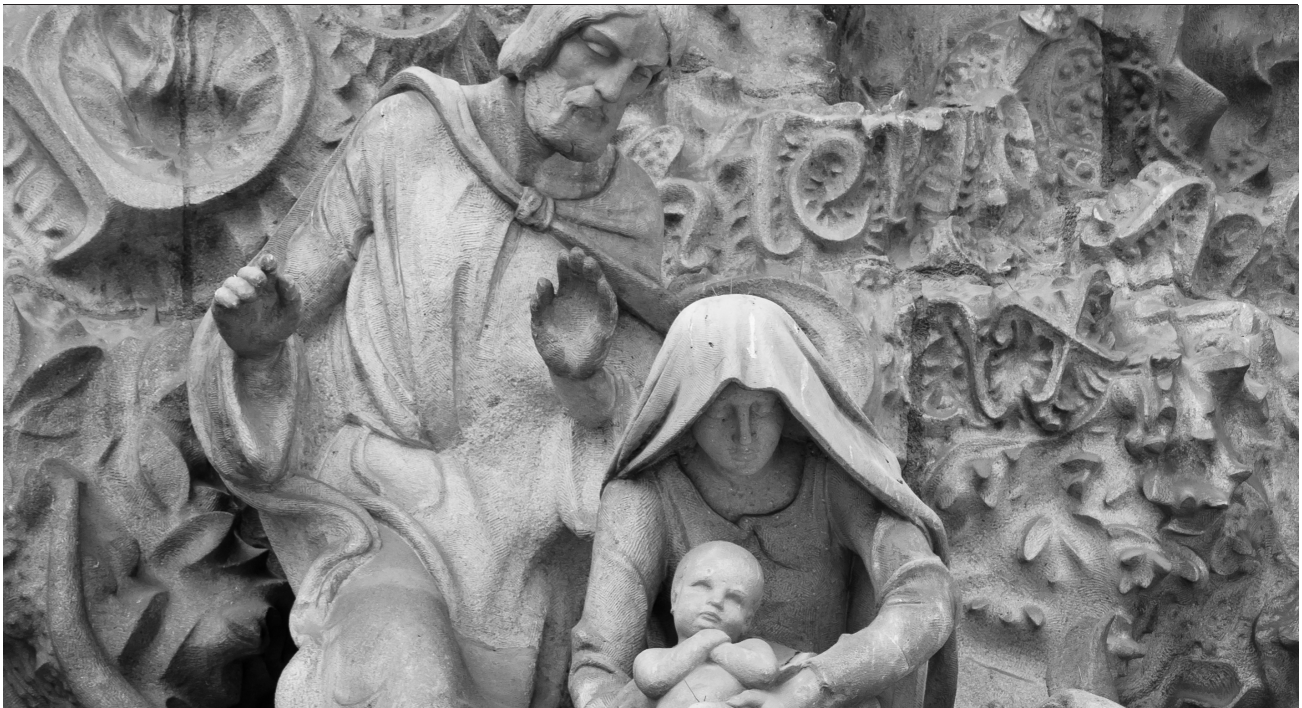




# TOGETHER IN HOLINESS™

CONFERENCE SERIES | FORMATION SERIES

## FORMATION SERIES



AS THE FAMILY GOES, SO GOES THE NATION, AND SO GOES THE WHOLE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE. DO NOT ABANDON YOURSELVES TO DESPAIR. WE ARE THE EASTER PEOPLE AND HALLEJUAH IS OUR SONG. THE FUTURE STARTS TODAY, NOT TOMORROW.

- ST. JOHN PAUL II



# FORMATION SERIES OVERVIEW

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# ST. JOHN PAUL II FOUNDATION

## OUR MISSION

The St. John Paul II Foundation is a national Catholic apostolate proclaiming the Good News about life and family through education and formation.

## WHAT WE DO

We pursue our mission through three hallmark initiatives:

- **Converging Roads:** Where Health Care Ethics and Medicine Converge
- **Shepherd's Heart:** Where Clergy Embrace Christ's Heart for Life and Family
- **Together in Holiness:** Where Spouses Discover God's Plan for their Family

## TOGETHER IN HOLINESS

*Together in Holiness* is a comprehensive marriage enrichment initiative that inspires spouses to grow together in holiness and empowers and equips parents to form their children in the Catholic faith. It accomplishes this mission in two complementary ways:

- An annual, one-day Conference series for couples in dioceses
- A year-round Formation series for couples in parishes, schools, and small communities

## WHAT SETS TOGETHER IN HOLINESS APART

- **Joyfully** and **intelligently** proclaims the Good News of God's plan for marriage and family
- **Engages** spouses and families as **agents** of evangelization
- **Complements** existing pastoral priorities and ministries
- **Mobilizes** a leadership infrastructure to support growth



"THE MAIN CONTRIBUTION TO THE PASTORAL CARE OF FAMILIES IS OFFERED BY THE PARISH, WHICH IS THE FAMILY OF FAMILIES."

— Pope Francis,  
*Amoris laetitia*, 202

### THE NEED

Catholic families in our time face significant challenges that can become overwhelming when experienced in isolation.

### THE SOLUTION

Authentically Catholic marriage enrichment that provides practical guidance and support, equipping couples to thrive as spouses and parents.

### THE POTENTIAL

Grow and sustain intentional communities of friendship, centered on Christ, and radically committed to living lives of holiness and mission.

# MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT ON A MISSION



## **TOGETHER IN HOLINESS FORMATION SERIES**

The *Together in Holiness* Formation series provides year-round marriage enrichment for couples in parishes, schools, and small communities. Through *Together in Holiness*, the St. John Paul II Foundation works collaboratively with parishes to strengthen their evangelizing efforts to couples and complement their existing marriage and family ministry programs.

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- **Short, compelling video presentations**
- **Peer groups** of couples who accompany each other in a process of formation
- **Host Couples** formed and supported by the St. John Paul II Foundation
- **Guidebook** that enhances and deepens formation
- **Bring it Home** segments aimed at translating learning into living
- **Website** that serves as a portal to all videos, materials, and recommended resources

### **COMPONENTS**

- **TH Guidebook**  
A guidebook for couples that includes the materials for Circle gatherings and materials for couples to complete at home.
- **TH Videos**  
Short, visually captivating videos that convey the beauty, goodness, and truth of God's plan for marriage, featuring dynamic national speakers and faithful witness couples.
- **TH Website**  
A forward-thinking platform that is easy to use, adaptable to different implementation options, and features all videos, resources, and guidebooks.

**"THE PASTORAL INTERVENTION OF THE CHURCH IN SUPPORT OF THE FAMILY IS A MATTER OF URGENCY. EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO STRENGTHEN AND DEVELOP PASTORAL CARE FOR THE FAMILY, WHICH SHOULD BE TREATED AS A REAL MATTER OF PRIORITY, IN THE CERTAINTY THAT FUTURE EVANGELIZATION DEPENDS LARGELY ON THE DOMESTIC CHURCH."**

— St. John Paul II, *Familiaris consortio*, 65







## FORMAT

A *Together in Holiness* (TH) Circle includes a facilitating Host Couple and two to five participating couples who gather together seven times throughout the year to accompany one another as an intentional community of friends in order to strengthen their marriages and embrace God's plan for their families.

**Each gathering lasts 1 ½-2 hours.**

### Example of Schedule:

- Meal and conversation (30-45 minutes)
- Opening prayer and reflection (5-10 minutes)
- View video (10 minutes)
- Group reflection and discussion (30-45 minutes)
- Closing prayer and wrap-up (10 minutes)

**"WE HAVE GROWN TOGETHER IN PRAYER AND HAVE BEEN MORE INTENTIONAL ABOUT HOW WE INCORPORATE ADDITIONAL ASPECTS OF FAITH INTO OUR DAILY LIVES. IT IS VERY ENCOURAGING AND UPLIFTING TO WALK TOGETHER WITH OTHER COUPLES WHO ARE ALSO STRIVING TO LEAD THEIR DOMESTIC CHURCHES AND GROW CLOSER TO OUR LORD."**

— Respect Life Program Director,  
Diocese of Charlotte, Jessica Grabowski

**"I LOVE THE FORMAT OF GETTING TOGETHER FOR A MEAL, WATCHING A VIDEO, AND HAVING A DISCUSSION."**

— Participating Couple in Denver, CO



## SERIES THEMES

The *Together in Holiness* Formation series themes have been carefully selected from the life, witness, and teachings of St. John Paul II, who taught that the family is...

**A Domestic Church**

**A Community of Prayer**

**A School of Virtue**

**A School of Love**

**A Seedbed of Vocations**

**A Believing and Evangelizing Community**

**An Image of the Trinity**

## OUTLINE FOR SERIES ONE: FAMILY, A DOMESTIC CHURCH

"The Christian family. . . can and should be called a domestic church"

- *Familiaris consortio*, 39

**SESSION ONE:** From the Beginning: God's Plan for Marriage and Family

**SESSION TWO:** Family, Become What You Are: The Identity and Vocation of the Domestic Church

**SESSION THREE:** A Family of Prayer: Prayer in the Domestic Church

**SESSION FOUR:** Priests, Prophets, and Kings: How Families Build the Kingdom of God

**SESSION FIVE:** Heralds of the Gospel: The Educational Mission of the Domestic Church

**SESSION SIX:** Ordinary People, Extraordinary Love: The Call to Holiness in the Domestic Church

**SESSION SEVEN:** On a Mission from God: The Evangelizing Mission of the Domestic Church

# VIDEO SAMPLES



# PREVIEW SERIES ONE: FAMILY, A DOMESTIC CHURCH

Click the images below to view video samples



*TH* Formation series  
Trailer



Session Four  
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Presenter Danielle Bean  
"Apostolate of Friendship"

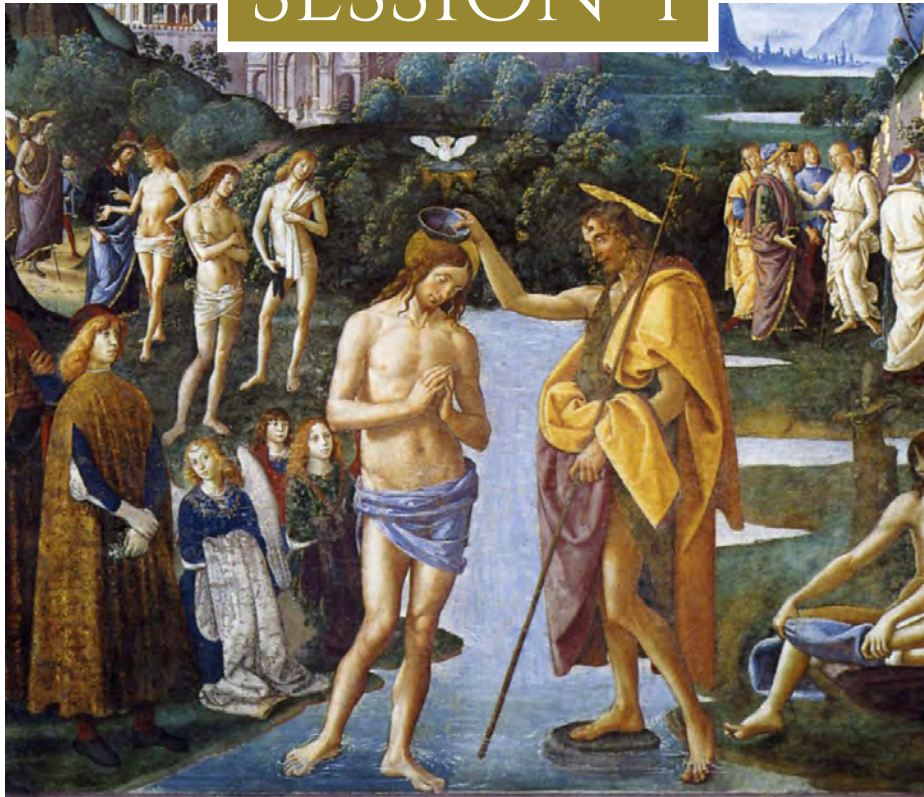


Presenter Damon Owens  
"Family as Domestic Church"

# CURRICULUM SAMPLE



## SESSION 4



# PRIESTS, PROPHETS, AND KINGS

**HOW FAMILIES BUILD  
THE KINGDOM OF GOD**



## OPENING PRAYER

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created, and you shall renew the face of the earth. Amen.



## THE WORD

### 1 Peter 2:4-5, 9-10

*Come to him, to that living stone, rejected by men but in God's sight chosen and precious; and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ . . . [For] you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were no people but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy but now you have received mercy.*



## IN THIS SESSION

### YOU WILL...

- Learn how families build up the Kingdom of God through the ordinary circumstances of daily life
- Discover how the Sacrament of Baptism gives all members of the family equal dignity as sharers in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly offices of Jesus Christ
- Appreciate the distinctive ways in which the Sacrament of Marriage consecrates Catholic spouses and parents to exercise their priestly, prophetic, and kingly vocation
- Explore how each member of the family is called to live in accord with the dignity they have received by offering their lives as a sacrifice to God the Father in union with Christ

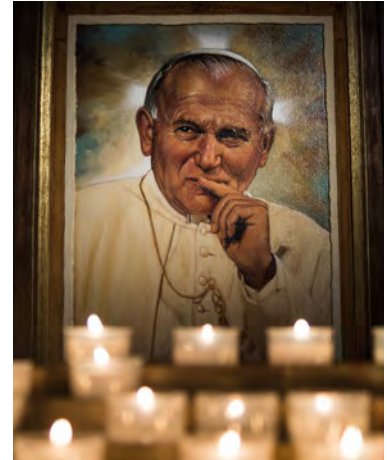




## THE TEACHING

### Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris consortio*, 50

*The Christian family also builds up the Kingdom of God in history through the everyday realities that concern and distinguish its state of life. It is thus in the love between husband and wife . . . that the Christian family's participation in the prophetic, priestly and kingly mission of Jesus Christ and of His Church finds expression and realization. Therefore, love and life constitute the nucleus of the saving mission of the Christian family in the Church and for the Church.*



### KEY POINTS

- Through the Sacrament of Baptism each Christian becomes a sharer in Christ's office as Priest, Prophet, and King
- As *priests*, spouses love each other and their children with the tender love of God the Father and unite themselves with Christ's sacrifice on the Cross
- As *prophets*, they teach their children God's truth and by their word and example model the life of a Christian disciple
- As *kings*, they receive from God the authority to lead and guide their children in loving service
- Living out priesthood, prophecy, and kingship helps all members of the family to live in the image and likeness of God
- Christian families have a unique opportunity to build up the Kingdom of God on earth as leaven in the world, transforming the world from within

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## DISCUSS

- John Paul II writes that “the Christian family builds up the Kingdom of God in history through . . . everyday realities.” What are your “everyday realities” that you can transform into a means of building God’s Kingdom?
- Have you thought of yourself before as a sharer in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly mission of Christ? What does this mean to you?
- How can you cultivate a deeper appreciation of baptism in each member of your family?
- What is one concrete step you can take as a family to celebrate Sunday as the Lord’s Day more fruitfully?

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## FROM THE TRADITION

### Selection from Sermon 21, by Pope St. Leo the Great

*Christian, remember your dignity, and now that you share in God’s own nature, do not return by sin to your former base condition. Bear in mind who is your head and of whose body you are a member. Do not forget that you have been rescued from the power of darkness and brought into the light of God’s kingdom. Through the sacrament of Baptism you have become a temple of the Holy Spirit. Do not drive away so great a guest by evil conduct and become again a slave to the devil, for your liberty was bought by the blood of Christ.*





## WITH THE SAINTS

### KING LOUIS IX OF FRANCE

**Feast Day: August 25**

When his father died, Louis became the king of France. It was five months before his thirteenth birthday, and Louis VIII had died after returning from a battle against a heretical and rebellious sect in southern France.

Louis' mother, Blanche, ran the kingdom until he turned 21, when he took full power as monarch. Blanche was devoted to her son, ensuring that he had the finest education and formation befitting the boy who would become King of the Catholic nation. Yet her first devotion was to Jesus Christ, and her great piety and wisdom would be reflected in the faith and character of the king she raised from infancy. As is so often the case with the formation of great souls, character was born of pain and tragedy: Louis was the fourth child of the king and queen, the previous three dying early in life.



Louis acquired not only his mother's piety, he also followed in her footsteps as a strong ruler. Both would quell revolts and repel attacks from outside forces with great force, maintaining and in some cases strengthening the position of the throne. Although one should not romanticize what must have in some cases been imperfect and at times ruthless efforts, there is also evidence of prudence and even political savvy. Louis, who fought as a knight alongside his soldiers, also became known for his humility and his justice—often personally dining with the poor, and sharing the family's wealth with those who suffered.

As was the custom of the day, the queen mother arranged the marriage of her royal son. Louis and Margaret married in May 1234, and the devoted parents would have eleven children. Louis used his great wealth and power to administer justice equitably among those with disputes, to foster vocations to the priesthood and religious life, to build churches, including the spectacular Saint Chappelle in Paris, and to care for those who were suffering.

Louis led the Seventh Crusade in 1249, sailing with 35,000 men to attack Egypt and use it to ransom Muslim-captured cities in Syria. After a long and tortuous effort, he was victorious, though the army was decimated by losses from battle and disease. Louis, who also suffered from the plague that had overtaken his surviving forces and was captured upon retreating,



## WITH THE SAINTS (CONTINUED)

managed to hear daily Mass during his captivity along with other daily pieties. Upon his ransom and release, he remained to negotiate relief for Christians in Syria, before returning to France upon learning of his mother's death.

During the ensuing years he became a major patron of the Church, the arts, higher education, and charities that he often personally oversaw. Maintaining strong personal habits of mortification and piety, he further strengthened the throne through various alliances and laws before returning to Northern Africa to lead another crusade in Tunisia. Though victorious in their battle, the plague again ravaged the French forces, including their king, who succumbed in August 1270. Knowing that the end was near, Louis prepared his son, Philip, as best as he could to be king, emphasizing the need for faith, virtue, and great concern for the poor.

In death, Louis IX was immediately revered as a saint by his subjects, though he was not canonized until 1297. In the story of St. Louis, we see one of the rare cases of a leader who did not let earthly power corrupt him, who put his authority into the service of those he ruled over, and who exemplifies the priestly, prophetic, and kingly dignity of the baptized.

- What did King Louis' mother Blanche teach him about building up the Kingdom of God?
- How can Louis' life inspire you to prioritize the Kingdom of God in your own life?

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## CLOSING PRAYER

### Adapted from the Prayer of Anointing after Baptism

God of power and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, you have freed us from sin, and you gave us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit.

You welcomed us into your holy people as your sons and daughters. You anointed us with the chrism of salvation that we might participate in Christ's own priesthood, prophecy, and kingship.

Help us to remember our baptism, and to abide in your goodness, that we might always live as members of your body, even unto life everlasting. Amen.



# BRING IT HOME

## OFFER IT UP: HOW TO BUILD A FAMILY CULTURE OF JOYFUL SACRIFICE

### Romans 12:1

*I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.*

Marriage and family life offer countless opportunities to offer sacrifice. This exercise will help couples cultivate a supernatural perspective on the joys and struggles of life and offer them up with Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.

Living with and making accommodations for another person, day in and day out, is no easy thing. In marriage, couples have endless opportunities to practice sacrifice. Often, we don't need to go looking for things to offer up — they come to us. Just as Jesus gave his life for us on the Cross, we are called to unite our sufferings with his for our own sake and for the sake of others. Our suffering takes on new meaning and we can especially grow in love, grace, and holiness when we offer up our sufferings for one another inside of marriage.

Do you offer up things for your spouse and for your marriage? Beginning this week, practice being intentional about offering up small sacrifices for your spouse. You can sacrifice in ways that help to nurture your relationship and that communicate love to your spouse. If you also unite your sacrifice with Christ's and offer up these things for the sake of your marriage, the blessings will multiply. It is a particularly beautiful prayer to offer these sacrifices to Christ during the celebration of the Holy Eucharist at Mass. In the midst of your other prayers during Holy Communion, also think of what you're trying to offer up on your spouse's behalf. To help you see that your relationship is full of opportunities for offering up, each day of the week, focus on one kind of sacrifice. Below is a suggested list of themes:

### Communication

Make sacrifices in your verbal communication with your spouse. You might ask about his or her day, and then listen with love, when you are tired and would rather watch TV. You might hold your tongue when you are tempted to have the last word in a disagreement. You might offer a compliment when you are tempted to criticize.

### Service

Look for ways that you can offer a gift of service to your spouse. You could offer to take the kids to soccer when it's really his turn. You could wash her car. You could make their favorite dessert, empty the dishwasher, take out the trash, or pick up the screaming baby. Offer the gift of service for the sake of your marriage.



## BRING IT HOME (CONTINUED)

### Offer it Up

Think of something you usually enjoy and give it up for just one day, offering this sacrifice for your spouse. You might skip sugar in your coffee, an afternoon snack, watching a TV show, or scrolling through Instagram. Whatever you choose to give up, offer it silently and without complaint, united to Christ's suffering on the Cross, for the sake of your spouse.

### Prayer

Could you offer a little more prayer today for your spouse? Perhaps pray a *Memorare* on your commute to work or pray a decade of the Rosary during your lunch. You might simply add something extra to your daily prayer time, offering it as a gift to God for your marriage. Offer this extra time in prayer especially for your spouse's intentions, asking God to bless him or her and help them to grow in holiness.

### Gifts

Think of something small you can give as a surprise gift to your spouse. Bring home a treat from that bakery she likes or buy him a pair of those socks he likes. Think about what he or she likes and will enjoy, and then offer up your efforts for your marriage.

### Get Inspired

Spend some time in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to guide you in your marriage. Ask for the wisdom to know in what specific ways you are being called to love and serve your spouse right now. After praying, spend some time in silence. Open your heart to what God wants to tell you and be ready to act on it.

### Time

Put away your phone! Turn off the TV! Spend some time doing something together with your spouse. Even better if you can get outdoors and away from distractions. Maybe go for a walk, or take a hike, and really give yourselves time to talk and re-connect.

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