

C3: Slide Summary for Parent Session

Partnering with Parents to Bring Home the Faith



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Partnering with Parents to Bring Home the Faith



Strong Catholic Families: Strong Catholic Youth

Parent Presentation



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Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (NSRV)

"Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone! Therefore, you shall love the LORD, your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength.

Take to heart these words which I enjoin on you today.

Drill them into your children.

Speak of them at home and abroad, whether you are busy or at rest.

Bind them at your wrist as a sign and let them be as a pendant on your forehead.

Write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your gates."

What is Your Wish?

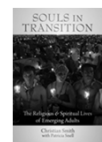


Objectives

- Learn about what current research is telling us about young people and faith...
- Consider its implications for us as parents...
- ...and how the Church can help you.




National Study of Youth & Religion




- The "gold standard" of research on youth & faith.
- One-hour teen interviews, 30-min. parent interviews, PLUS face-to-face follow-ups lasting as long as three hours
- Now with three waves of longitudinal data, from 2002 thru 2008

Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers



I. When it comes to faith, most young people:


- A. Are rebellious against the faith of their parents.**
- B. Consider their parents' religious practices to be old-fashioned and not for them.**
- C. Pretty much follow the faith of their parents.**



I. When it comes to faith, most young people:

Pretty much follow the faith of their parents.

A different generation...




Teenage faith is very conventional.

“The vast majority of U.S. teens are not alienated or rebellious... Most are quite content to follow in their parents' footsteps.”

Source: Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers p. 260.

In fact...




“The single most important influence on the religious and spiritual lives of adolescents is their parents.”

Mass / Religious Service Attendance

Frequency of Attendance	Catholic Youth	Catholic Parents	All Youth
More than once a week	6%	5%	16%
Once a week	33%	37%	24%
2-3 times a month	13%	15%	12%
Once a month	8%	8%	7%
Many times a year	8%	5%	8%
Few times a year	21%	18%	14%
Never	11%	12%	18%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: NSYR Resource CD © Ministry Training Source. Used with permission.

Teens were asked:



“If you could change anything about your family situation, what would it be?”

Source: Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers.

“To become closer to my parents.”



**Teens were then asked:
“Why aren’t you close to them?”**

“I don’t know how to do it.”

Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers.



***Two of three teens and three of four
parents say they would be willing to give
up a weeknight activity if it meant they
could have dinner with their family.*** (CASA, 9/2009)

**How do you feel
about your family
time at home?**



- Only 34 percent of North American families eat one meal together each day.
- The average father spends eight minutes per day with his children (includes meals and TV).
- Parents spend fewer than 3 minutes of non-directive communication with children per day.

**How do you feel about
your family time at
home?**



- Only 12 percent of families pray together.
- The average couple spends only four minutes of uninterrupted time together a day.

Source: “Raising the Bar: Ministry to Youth in the New Millennium,” by Alvin Reid



**2. In terms of positive life
outcomes, highly religious
young people appear to
be doing:**

- A. *About the same as other teenagers.*
- B. *Better than other teenagers.*
- C. *Worse than other teenagers.*

NSYR “Religiosity Variables”

- Religious service attendance
- Importance of religious faith shaping daily life and decisions
- Made personal commitment to live life for God
- Involved in a youth group
- Frequency of teen praying alone

Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers.

NSYR “Religiosity Variables”

- How close teen feels to God
- Number of mission trips and retreats
- Interest in learning more about your religion
- Frequency of reading from the bible alone
- Frequency of drug and alcohol use

Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers.



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2. In terms of positive life outcomes, highly religious young people appear to be doing:

Better than other teenagers.

“...religious faith and practice themselves exert significant,

positive,

direct, and

indirect influences

on the lives of teenagers, helping to foster healthier, more engaged adolescents who live more constructive and promising lives.”



Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers, p 263

More = More

“The greater the availability of religiously based relationships, activities, programs, opportunities and challenges for teenagers...



...the more likely teenagers are to be religiously engaged and invested.”

Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers



Consider the possibilities...

Youth who have participated in at least one retreat, rally, conference or mission trip report:




- ✓ being significantly closer to God
- ✓ that religion helps shape their daily lives
- ✓ reading the Bible more often.

YET...
71% of junior high youth, and
61% of high school youth
have NEVER
attended a
religious retreat,
rally, conference
or mission trip.




More = More




“The more they attend Mass and participate in religious activities and groups, the more they make religious practices their own, but most do not participate.”

3. In most variables measuring religiosity, the Catholic Church in comparison to other Christian churches was:



A. Better than most.
B. About the same as most.
C. Worse than all others.

3. In most variables measuring religiosity, the Catholic Church in comparison to other Christian churches was:



C. Worse than all others.

Our NSYR Report Card




Mormon youth are faring best, followed by...

- 2. Conservative Protestant**
- 3. Black Protestant**
- 4. Mainline Protestant**
- 5. Catholic**
- 6. Jewish**
- 7. Non-religious**

Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers.

Why the difference?

Churches relying on parents and family to transmit faith and the church to “mission” it, appear to be doing better than the ones who delegate this responsibility to others...



And something else is going around...



NSYR researchers uncovered a new and virulent “strain of faith” that is sweeping the country...

Moralistic Therapeutic Deism (MTD)



The “MTD” Creed

1. There is a God that watches over the world from a distance.
2. God wants people to be “nice, good and fair”.
3. The goal in life is to be happy and feel good about oneself.
4. God only gets involved when needed to resolve a problem.
5. Good people go to Heaven when they die.

So what’s the problem with MTD?

- It’s not Catholic (or Christian).
- It’s “feel good religion” without demands or challenge.
- It’s individualistic and focused on me.
- It lacks the communal dimensions of faith: worship, justice and service, sacrament, participation in a faith community.



We’re in this together...

“...No previous generation of American Catholics inherited so little of the content and sensibility of the faith from their parents, as have today’s Catholic youth.”



Church historian R. Scott Appleby, Notre Dame University

...facing two big challenges...

“The challenge of Catholic education and formation in our media-driven, cyberspace age is no less than this: older Catholics must be restored to, and younger Catholics introduced to, a sense of Catholicism as a comprehensive way of life.”



Church historian R. Scott Appleby, Notre Dame University

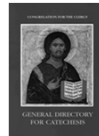
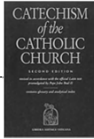
After hearing all this...

1. What are you thinking?
2. Your comments or questions?
3. Comments or questions for other parents or leaders?



The Church speaks...

- “The role of parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute.” (CCC 2221).
- “Parents are the most influential agents of catechesis for their children.” (NDC 234)
- “...the Christian Community must help [parents] assume their responsibility of educating their children in faith.” (GDC 227).



Good News

The Church wants to be our partner and is working towards providing “more = more”.

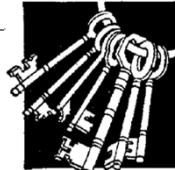
Bad News

The activities of “Living Faith” have been “demoted” in our busy lives and in the larger culture.



What are the Five Keys to Building Strong Catholic Families & Strong Catholic Youth?

KEYS



The Five Keys

1. Live the faith you want to pass on.
2. Make faith a top family priority (see “Family Faith Inventory”).
3. “Gatekeep” your kids’ activities & time. Remember “More = More”.

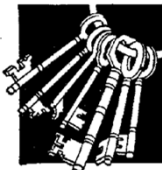
KEYS



The Five Keys

KEYS

4. Support one another & build inter-family networks of faith and life support.
5. Live as the “domestic church” you already are!




Next Steps...

1. Complete & submit your Parent-to-Parish Response Form.
2. At home, fill out and discuss your Family Faith Inventory with your spouse and family.
3. Attend the follow-up parent session to share more thoughts and help plan parish responses.



A Faith That Matters








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