



# Joseph's Workshop

Fathers Preparing  
their Sons  
for a Life of  
Faith and Holiness

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**IF YOU WANT  
TO  
CHANGE  
THE WORLD,  
GO HOME  
AND  
LOVE YOUR FAMILY**

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**TO MANY OF US,  
WHAT FOLLOWS  
IS NEW WINE  
WHICH  
MAY NOT FIT  
IN OUR OLD  
WINE SKINS**

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## Introduction

Having encountered several fathers whom one would regard as very devout Christians, these men are uniformly puzzled. They believe and they practice the Faith, but their children or grandchildren have left the church. Their concern has troubled me for some time.

What follows is a response to analyze and begin the synthesis and revival of a holy, protective, masculine, family-directed future.

I write this as a committed Catholic Christian, a convert to the Faith, hoping that Christians will soon work together to lead this endeavor to fruition.

We do not intend to disturb the lukewarm lambs or awaken the slumbering sheep. Rather, we seek to arouse and unite the lions of Christ.



*"Never undertake any work or activity without first having lifted your mind to God and committing that activity to Him with holy intentions."* St. Padre Pio

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## What Can We Do?

*We are witnessing a sick country and a sick world that has become morally and ethically adrift. The immediate patient is the family; the prescribed medicine is Jesus Christ.*

**We are now living in a country our founders fought to escape.**

Only 21% of Americans think the country is heading in the right direction. All of our societal and most of our religious institutions have become corrupt. Like the multi-headed mythical hydra, we perceive dozens of problems but every new “solution” sprouts up two or three ugly new problems.

Politicians won't save us; science can't save us and our admirable technology just seems to make us smarter and less wise with every sparkling new advance.

We have lost sight of the true, the good and the beautiful in the familiar stampede that has become our very day to day existence.

***This is a new undertaking to better prepare our young children and our society for a holier future.***

It is vital that we renew Christian values in our homes and train our sons to become strong, faithful husbands, fathers and future leaders – in their homes first, and in a society that will sustain a peaceful and productive culture.

***This is a new – and difficult – calling.***

It is for those fathers who recognize they may otherwise lose their sons and indeed, our very civilization to the present massive evil that has encroached upon every aspect of our lives.

*This undertaking is for the few, not the many, who unfortunately remain asleep to the danger and who cannot, or are unwilling, to sacrifice their present comfort.*

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### How and When do Children Acquire Their Values?

Current CCD/Religious Ed. and other religious training has been called inadequate for the journey ahead. In some dioceses, the last significant revision was about 60 years ago. This will probably offend some people, especially those who are committed to the old ways and who have grown up accustomed to its past effectiveness.

Centralized public schools now require the typical child to spend almost two hours a day 'learning' on a school bus – time away from home and any sensible education. When they finally arrive at school, they learn nothing of the Christian Faith and way of life, but a great deal about the wide road to the secular material world of sin and pleasure.

*Many parents have innocently surrendered their children to the TV set and the internet. 97% of children today use social media. **One in five use it almost constantly.** The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychology said that in 2020, on average, **children 8 to 12 were spending four to six hours a day watching or using screens.** And teens were spending up to 9 hours a day on their screens.*

Many adults would be horrified if they were aware of what their children are seeing and doing with this new medium. One study found that more than half of all children have watched pornography by the age of 12.

Studies show that the most effective time to guide a child in the Faith is before the age of 13.

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## **Where is the Best Place to Learn?**

Every study shows children learn faith and moral values much more effectively *at home*, not in church nor in school classrooms.

The key is mothers and fathers who *live* the Faith and teach by *word and example*.

Boys trained in the morals and holiness of Christian living become strong young men who can lead faithful, religious families. The most effective catechesis occurs in the home. The Catholic Church has asserted this in Canon Law and the Catechism<sup>1</sup> and in a number of encyclicals and church documents<sup>2</sup> over the years.

Many parents underappreciate the important role their own teaching and strong lived example can have on their sons. A theology degree is not required to lead your family to Christ.



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### **Which Children are More Likely to Live a Faithful Life?**

- More than 66 % who follow a practicing father
- Only 2% who follow their practicing mother

A 2000 study showed that when a father follows and takes his faith seriously and goes regularly to church, that child is almost certain – between 2/3 and 3/4 of their children – are likely to follow the Faith for the rest of their life.<sup>3</sup>

However, if just the mother follows the Faith, only one child in 50 will follow into adulthood.

Sometimes the truth comes as a shock. But when it makes us change to more effective action, that awakening can be a blessing.

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## Why do Only a Few Societies Survive?

We in the West are fairly comfortable that we have a way of life that, although it has changed, by and large, many of us expect it to continue fairly much forever. But is there any evidence to the contrary?

Carle Zimmerman in his study, *Family and Civilization*<sup>4</sup>, has done a deep dive into societies that became civilizations and civilizations that failed.

Zimmerman's historical studies show two things are required for a civilization to survive:

1. A two-parent family, led by a strong, loving and protective father,
2. A common religion that is practiced.

We need to understand the concept of 'civilization' and the difference between a civilized and an uncivilized society.

A 'society' is simply a group of people – families – who live in a community but have differing values. Barbarians, atheists and warmongers can form societies. These societies may not be peaceful but until they kill or drive everyone away, they continue.

A 'civilization' is a society that has a commonly practiced moral value system which permits peaceful living and productive enterprise. For example, the Ten Commandments, in one form or another give guidance that prevents adherents from doing harm to other citizens or their families.

**Every successful civilization – of which there have been only a few – is composed of two parent families, led by strong, loving and protective fathers. Historical studies further show that each one has a communal value system based on a practiced common religion.**

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### So How Do We Ensure Strong Fathers?

- First, by making fathers understand how very important they are to the proper faith and moral development of their sons.
- By strengthening and enabling today's fathers to better learn, follow and teach the Christian Faith to their sons. And giving them the best resources.
- By preparing today's boys who will become the fathers of future sons.

Anthony Esolen, in his book, *No Apologies: Why Civilization Depends on the Strength of Men*, clearly makes a case for “the masculine virtues of strength, drive, ambition, and determination in building and upholding civilization itself.”<sup>5</sup>

*Fathers need to become aware how important their role is. We live in a culture that has been putting down and demeaning the role of strong masculinity. Many men are afraid to assert their masculinity and many wives have been conditioned, through decades of toxic feminism that everything depends on them and men are unnecessary. This is the ideal of Satan and the work of Marxist Socialism.*<sup>6</sup>

If catechesis – Christian teaching – is to occur in the home, fathers need to be *available and prepared*. Children have the darndest questions and no one can be totally prepared for all of them. But parents are normally the most successful teachers.

So we need a means of preparing and equipping more fathers. And they need someplace they can depend on to get help and resources for the more difficult parts of the job.

**That's where a network of like-minded fathers comes in.** Training fathers in well-prepared classes and having them work together will bring like-minded men together to form friendly relationships. In many situations this can be a team effort.

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## How Do We Raise Boys to Follow the Faith?

*Studies show it is most probable that your sons will learn best from their fathers. As we discussed earlier, sons of fathers who believe and follow their faith are most likely to follow the same faith for the rest of their lives.*

*Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6*

There is no “one size fits all” to effective catechesis. But when a father truly and reverently follows the Faith, that alone can be a tremendous factor in getting a son’s attention.

Unfortunately, answers to many of the impeding and show-stopping questions children have are not easily found in formal church documents, practices or prayers.

Fundamental and very deep things, like, What is the purpose of my life? Why am I here? Where did all this created matter come from? And dozens of other questions that only a prepared father can effectively answer.

When we relinquish the child to the formal classroom catechesis, it might be anywhere from an hour to a few hours a week. For the other 160-plus hours he is with his family or in school or elsewhere. But when catechesis occurs in the home, he is exposed to much more than those few hours a week.

***Fathers:*** *If your children are prepared, with strong moral character, they are much more likely to survive and thrive and live productive lives that demonstrate a love of God and neighbor. You are their best teachers.*

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*But you need to understand the essential importance of your own role. You may need to learn more so as to better understand and guide your own children. Begin now to prepare yourselves.*

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### **Why not Focus on Training Girls also?**

This is an important question.

Girls need to be well trained in the Faith because many will become mothers, supporting wives and good citizens. And that is a separate, and important topic and not addressed in this present effort.<sup>1</sup>

But well-trained boys who will become morally strong men are more likely to have a different, more stable future relationship with their own children, their wives and the society in which they live.

Some commentators will point to exceptional, strong men who were raised in the Faith by mothers alone. Studies show these are exceptions.<sup>7</sup> These are very important exceptions and all glory to God for those mothers who are able to do so. The example of the renowned Dr. Ben Carson comes immediately to mind. But they are in the minority in our culture.

It is said that a mother can raise a boy to be an adult, but only a father can raise him to be a man. Strong sons are more likely to become faithful, protective and strong husbands and fathers. A godly civilization requires two-parent families led by strong, protective, religious fathers.

Many ardent feminists will disagree with all of this. So will others who see little value in a strong two-parent family. But despite the 'ethos' of today's failing culture, several thousand years of successful societies and civilizations have proven otherwise.

It does not "take a village." It takes a two-parent family with a dedicated and loving father.

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<sup>1</sup> See Paragraph on *The Importance of Early Motherhood* on page 20.

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### **What About Those Fathers Unprepared to Lead?**

Then we need to identify those fathers who greatly desire a faith-filled life for their sons.

If there are things fathers can profit from learning, we need to teach them.

How does one determine what sons need? How do fathers effectively present this to their sons?

First among these are the importance of home prayer, the example of righteous, moral living and regular church attendance.

And most important is to be aware of whom the children are associating with. Much better are like-minded friends and relatives who are properly prepared and present a strong moral example.

There is a vast wealth of easily presented material in the form of videos, podcasts and books. The *St. Augustine Institute* in their *FORMED* collection has hundreds of videos which are appropriate for different ages. Other resources are listed in the section, *Some Resources for Concerned Parents*, on page 28.

*Fathers, who are prepared to help guide their sons through this newly created jungle of the mind and soul, may be their last and only hope.*

### **Training Fathers to Teach their Sons**

So now comes the difficult question. Recognizing that most fathers are very busy trying to make a living and handle all the problems associated with running a family. How then can we best prepare them for this new journey without wasting their valuable and scarce free time?

No one should be surprised that *very few* fathers may be willing to undertake the personal sacrifices this effort will require. If five percent

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of fathers were to become involved that would be a great sign. It may be fewer or more. Only God knows, but we must be very aware of the difficulties that fathers who make this commitment will face.

We must anticipate many sacrifices and inhibiting factors.

First, fathers can expect a great sacrifice of time, resources and entertainment. Then, there will be many challenges and questions, from family, associates and friends, and especially from resistant older children.

Depending on church affiliation, many can expect resistance from those who are inculcated in the traditional means of catechization – formal CCD/Religious Ed., and other religious education programs.

Indeed some of the strongest opposition may come from the established religious community, including nuns and priests who may insist on the old ways.

### **Enter the Laity**

This is primarily a job for the laity<sup>8</sup>. This is not to say that the formally educated religious community (including the ordained) can also be an available and valuable backup resource.

Let me repeat – **the laity must take on this task**. Priests may be better informed in the Faith than the typical family father, but they, in their dwindling numbers, have become very busy and only in rare instances will they be available for this intense mission.

Statistics don't lie – our sons are leaving the Church in vast numbers. As fathers became more and more occupied with commuting, overtime work, and sometimes multiple jobs, the established church has tried to fill the gap that occurred at home. A few admirable exceptions aside, it hasn't worked.



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## **Embedded Faith versus Mere Rules Learned**

Memorizing the rule book can make anyone a source of information. That's brain knowledge. But the true goal is to embed the knowledge of Jesus in the heart. It's the difference between *learning* the Faith and *living* the Faith.

Many parents start by teaching their children a few standard prayers. That is well and good up to a certain age until, hopefully, they will begin to ask a lot of serious questions. If they don't get answers at home they will get them on the school bus, in the play yard or from their secular teachers. Or worse, from their cell phones and their TikTok or Instagram 'friends'.<sup>9</sup>

## **Unarticulated and Unspoken Questions**

Today's boys have many questions – existential, psychological, medical/bodily, scientific, religious and theological – beyond most of our typical religious training. **Unanswered questions can become inhibitors to further learning.** Or worse, when they are answered with 'street-wisdom'.

Many children have no one to talk with about their deepest thoughts and concerns, which may be only partly formed and seldom articulated even to those they trust.

*Children who can depend on their parents to listen and engage with their deepest and often troubling thoughts are less likely to become distant or even spiritually alienated in later life.*

Mothers and teachers can often help, but prepared fathers are often the best ones to address this with their sons.

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## **This is a Slow, Deliberative Process**

For every problem there are potentially two solutions. There is the short-term solution – *fix that which is broken **now***.

Then there is the long term solution – anticipate, prepare and *prevent **future breakage***.

Good planning and patience will be necessary to make this effort successful. Knee-jerk reactions based on familiar social tradition and old wives tales will no longer suffice. Today's children have arrived by a very different societal, cultural and technological embedded path, unfamiliar to many older adults.

### **New problems require fresh solutions**

For that reason, this effort must be started by a **small group of dedicated and faithful men** who can work well together in peaceful, inquisitive exploration; men who absolutely must be prepared to consider new ways of effective training.

Careful planning prior to implementation is essential. Knee-jerk proposals will not be useful. Careful definition of each problem is often 80 percent of the road to a workable solution.

If we are to be effective – beyond the emotional 'feel good' level, we must make sure what we are teaching and doing provably works. This is a foreign concept for many educators who have spent years teaching the Faith. It goes way beyond testing for fact retention. It is about how a life – a soul – is impacted. How much of it has travelled from the head to the heart?

Measurable goals must be defined and periodically quantified, with follow-up and "course correction", as experience is gained.

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**Adults were Prepared for the Past; Children need to be Prepared for the Future.**

### **New Wine in Old Wineskins?**

Many of us who were born in a previous culture and generation have difficulty understanding why our children are leaving the Faith and adopting strange new ways.

In a sense, we are already set in our understanding and ways. But that is not sufficient for these new generations who have been raised in the isolated world of technical interaction and group computer games.

Today's children don't play outside. Few of them physically interact with their peers through contact sports, outdoor games, roughhouse and other endeavors the way many of us grew up. This isolation is very unhealthy.

Yet, children are supposed to be the hope of the future. If they can't develop the moral strength to lead their potential families and their country, we are all in deep trouble unless we act.

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### **We Must Not Forget the Lost Ones**

I am concerned with the *majority* of families – and especially their sons – who are totally lost, on the wrong track, and have no one to guide them or help them find the way. We present them with all sorts of prayers, rules and rubrics but they never actually get to know and encounter Jesus.

They shake their heads and walk away as we say endless prayers and rosaries for them, but do nothing to actually **feed their deep spiritual and psychological hunger**. They are the lost.

They wander through life, having no idea that the road to real internal peace and happiness is through a sound acceptance of Christian Faith – on that road that Jesus showed us.

The true, the good and the beautiful promises of God are lost on them. In its place the Devil enthralls them with an entertainment of pride, evil and zombie-like ugliness.

A majority of today's young children – both boys and girls – are struggling with the massive cultural infusion of pornography, sexual perversion, gender ideology, socialism, shrill social justice demands, and basic godlessness that focuses on the self rather than the needs of others, much less a reverent and holy spiritual life.

We are charged by God Himself to not let these souls wander lost in Satan's desert. To do otherwise is a serious sin on our part.<sup>10</sup>

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## Too Many Adults are Poorly Catechized

Statistics show six members are leaving the Catholic Church for every new one who joins. I, personally, know several who are either estranged from or who have left the church. Most adults are clueless about the Faith teachings of the Church.<sup>11</sup>

Sin has become a “personal choice.” Studies show that Catholics agree that:

- Abortion is OK (51%),
- Contraception is accepted (89%),
- Sex partners are a personal choice (67%) and
- Too many believe that sacramental marriage is passé<sup>12</sup>

*Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.     Isaiah 5:20*

A recent *Barna* survey reports that **only 3% of Americans over the age of 29** embrace all 7 “cornerstones” of the Christian Faith. That survey also shows that only 25% believe in “absolute truth” (No. 5 below).

Barna describes those seven cornerstones as:

1. An orthodox, **biblical understanding of God.**
2. **All human beings are sinful by nature**; every choice we make has moral considerations and consequences.
3. Knowing **Jesus Christ is the only means to salvation**, through our confession of sin and reliance on His forgiveness.
4. **The entire Bible is true**, reliable, and relevant, making it the best moral guide for every person, in all situations.
5. **Absolute moral truth exists**—and those truths are defined by God, described in the Bible, and are unchanging across time and cultures.

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6. The **ultimate purpose of human life is to know, love, and serve God** with all your heart, mind, strength, and soul.
7. **Success on earth** is best understood as **consistent obedience to God**—in thoughts, words, and actions.

If national surveys don't convince, our own eyes tell us that our nation's sons are being devoured by the evil that has penetrated our culture. It has been slowly emasculating, weakening and destroying them. They are falling away from the Church and many are suffering greatly.

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## The Wolves are on the Prowl

All hell is breaking loose as the wolves meticulously chew away at our children's souls.

Older Americans who notice the massive cultural changes around us may be quite concerned.

Young children however, lacking our experience, are often deeply distressed. Their unheard anguish too often turns to dissociation, isolation, mental illness, drugs and suicide.

### A Personal, Private and Tormenting Chaos

*Part of growing up is to develop the ability to take a fuzzy, partly formed thought, or feeling and finally **put it into words**.* That's called 'articulation'. But children aren't born with this ability – it is an acquired skill that only grows with time and experience. Language is a tool for thought. That tool can help us put fuzzy, emotional and sometimes scary thoughts into words that we can then wrestle with effectively.

Young children are often unable to articulate their social, spiritual, sexual and psychological concerns. As a result, they feel awkward, confused, and sometimes terrified. And they may be reluctant to talk with adults about these things, believing their thoughts, minds and bodies are uniquely 'weird' and no other normal person could have these thoughts or feelings, **much less would a normal person understand**. That is what many kids feel and go through. So they repress these thoughts and push them away. That repression then digs deep, dark wounds in their souls.

Then, too often, they lack the moral or intellectual strength to understand and resist dangerous new temptations. Acquiring that strength may require careful, attentive adult guidance. In today's world,

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many false interpretations and temptations are coming to our children through their electronic devices.

On top of all that, add the constant drum beat of our 24-hour, dystopian news-noise from corporate and social media. Their screens – phones, tablets, computers, and game boxes – are unceasingly bombarding them with unspoken fear and anxieties of wars, corruption, genocide, terrorism, kidnapping, murders, riots, racism, gender dysphoria, divorces – the list is endless.

*This burden is unlike anything most older adults ever had to experience in their formative years.*

### **Parental Presence and Intervention**

Children who receive effective, loving and patient parental guidance have been shown to be less susceptible to these disruptions. Their mental health is typically much higher. A loving, spiritually guided childhood can, more often than not, give the child a dependable ‘beacon’ and a ‘lower light’ that sees them through life’s anxieties, uncertainties and truly tough issues.

### **The Importance of Early Motherhood**

Erica Komisar is a clinical social worker, psychoanalyst and parent guidance expert. In her recent book, *Being There, Why Prioritizing Motherhood in the First Three Years Matters*, she explains why a mother’s physical and emotional presence during the first three years of life results in children who grow up to be more emotionally healthy, secure and resilient.<sup>13</sup>



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## Has Our Pastoral Church Lost its Way?

The Catholic Church seems to have lost its way. And it's not much different in many Protestant churches.

Too many of our children are unprepared for a Christian moral life.

Yet, our current approach to education of young people is to send them to class and stuff them with facts and information. They may wind up with brains full of information about Faith but they have no incentive to practice and actually live a faith-filled life.

As one Christian writer noted, "How many Catholic parents and teachers have made the Christian message basically inaccessible to the young, and then wonder why they have 'no interest in religion'?"<sup>14</sup>

For many of our sons – and adults as well – the church has become a complex rulebook. Although the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is an excellent reference and repository of the Faith, it is over 1,000 pages. Too much of our current religious training, both for children and adults amounts to learning the rules before they actually get to **meet and encounter the real Jesus**.

The result, about 80% of them walk away from their faith by the time they reach college age. **The median age for leaving the Faith is 13 years old!**<sup>15</sup>

### Why Don't the Old Ways Work Anymore?

Most religious preparation does not prepare our children to live in a world where technology has revolutionized every activity of every minute of every day.

*Most young people believe our present approach to presenting the Faith is boring and irrelevant.*

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## **Aren't Our Bishops Supposed to Lead Us to Holiness?**

The USCCB<sup>16</sup> bishops have proven ineffectual and have been out of touch on many important issues for some time. Despite their many excellent and holy works and activities, their magisterial teaching authority is poorly used.

(Traditional Catholic media, such as EWTN seldom criticize the bishops' inactions and follies, apparently since they and many other popular Catholic sources are funded partly directly or indirectly, by those bishops. However, other sources, independent media such as National Catholic Register, Life Site News, Crisis Magazine, John-Henry Westen and (the lately departed) Church Militant have proven generally to be more truthful, accurate and reliable.)

Too many of our extra-liturgical church activities, diocesan and parish, amount to little more than "holy entertainment." Or what St. John of the Cross calls "spiritual gluttony," and others might call "preaching to the choir," when only the old familiar faces show up at event after event.

Cardinal Bergoglio, four days before he was elected Pope, described the church as having "ecclesiastical narcissism." He went on to say when it does not come out of itself to evangelize, it becomes "self-referential and then gets sick." He continued, "We priests tend to clericalize the laity. ... it is more comfortable to be an altar server than the protagonist of a lay path." And lay people begin to believe that God is asking them to become greeters, lectors or extraordinary ministers rather than bringing the Gospel to the world and those on the outskirts of existence.<sup>17</sup>

We have thousands of young people who will never again be seen inside a church after their Sacrament of Confirmation unless they are married or buried.

How did we get here?

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*Sadly, most of our bishops only watched but did little or nothing while the Devil won over our kids through tech, porn, corrupt public education teaching gender nonsense, LGBTQ+ sodomy, racial re-segregation, drag queens, pornography, and baby killing, all with an anti-Christian, socialistic flavoring.*

For example, early in 2022, when the Supreme Court began its initial hearings on the Dobbs case, (which led to nullifying of Roe v. Wade), hundreds of citizens and Protestant pastors assembled on the steps of the Supreme Court to speak and pray. *It was reported that not a single Catholic bishop, archbishop, cardinal or anyone in Church authority showed up.*

They have all been issuing weak pro-life statements on and off for 50 years but have accomplished nothing much effective. Frowning radical Muslims make us remember 911; Smiling bishops expect us to forget 915.<sup>18</sup>

For decades we trusted our pastors, priests and bishops to lead the fight against the evil that now threatens the souls of our children. They mostly have failed us, our church and our nation. Now there seems to be no one left to fight for us.

I am sure, there will be many faithful Catholics who will disagree with all of the above. Even to the point of outrage, perhaps. But they who disagree may have been the fortunate ones, to have raised and been raised as faithful children. Devoted ones who, though they may be on the right track, are a tiny minority.

It is easy to feel validated by seeing the faces of this tiny familiar minority attend Masses and other church functions, but most of us seldom encounter the thousands of their other lost brothers and sisters who *never* show up. Nor do most of us do much to lead those souls away from the many paths on the road to Hell.

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### **Does Our Society Impede Raising Moral Children?**

Is it possible to find time to properly raise our children when we have all become so incredibly busy, figuratively treading water, just to keep our homes warm and safe, with bread on the table? And the worst may not even yet be here?

*We are in the midst of one of the most radical revolutions in American history. It is as far-reaching and dangerous as the turbulent years of the 1850s and 1860s or the 1930s. Every aspect of American life and culture is under assault, including the very processes by which we govern ourselves, and the manner in which we live.*

*Victor Davis Hanson*

As our civilization is crumbling around us, too many adults, distracted or uninformed, are often unaware that anything serious is happening.

When hopefully we at last wake up, it may be too late to help our kids.

Meanwhile, we have become a nation of men who are afraid to speak up in the face of evil, seemingly afraid of rebuke, censorship or job loss. So, we wait for someone else to lead us and hopefully they will do all the work.

Across America the nuclear family is being destroyed by many forces.<sup>19</sup> Single parent families are common today everywhere. Yet, throughout history, even though fathers have been vital in leading their sons to become strong, resilient, moral and protective men, militant feminism, casual sex, careless parenting and no-fault divorce are destroying families and the next generation of our children.

Large numbers of us now accept, *unopposed*, governmental tyranny, e.g., pseudoscience-supported “vaccines,” forced church and business closings, masks and other forced social behaviors, costly climate

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alarmism, public school teaching of CRT<sup>20</sup> and DEI,<sup>21</sup> legalization of LBGTQ+ sodomy and surgical child molestation.

How did we come to accept all of this in a *democracy*? Sadly, studies show that **a majority of professed Christians – Catholics and Protestants – do not vote!**

*The price good men pay for indifference to public affairs is to be ruled by evil men... Aristotle*

Alarming, some public speech is being legally forbidden: e.g., forced 'pronouns', and illegal 'misgendering' is now actually becoming law in one state.<sup>22</sup>

Public school pornography instruction is now legal in many states, where explicit sex education is legally OK for kindergarten and early grade children.

Our federal and state governments are pushing climate alarmism, even as it begins to destroy our economy. For example, with restrictive home appliance mandates,<sup>23</sup> fossil fuel bans and regulations, mandated electric cars by 2035, etc...

Resource-rich big business, run mostly by atheists, now controls almost everything – Media, finance, business, our politics, medical care, and education.

The legacy corporate media, whom we once depended upon for important news, has become a source of one-sided entertainment-laced, biased opinion, 90% of which is controlled by 6 powerful men and about 250 underling senior executives. Important news is often covered poorly, with extreme bias or often, not at all. And a majority of people with whom I have discussed this have never seen or even heard of the many independent news sources that exist, such as Epoch Times,

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which is the 4<sup>th</sup> most read newspaper in America. Or Newsmax, the fastest growing cable TV channel.

Many believe our economic way of life is rapidly disintegrating. For example, 50 years ago a family could own a home, a car and send a child to college, all on one income, with a mother at home to run the house and raise the children. Back then the cost of a typical house was the equivalent of three years income. Today that has risen to eight years of income. Our economy has gotten so lopsided that most young people can no longer afford to buy a house.

Government created inflation is destroying people's lives. Recently, 80% of all US dollars in existence were printed in a period of 22 months (from \$4 trillion in Jan., 2020 to \$20 trillion in Oct., 2021.)<sup>24</sup>

Next on the 'agenda', is a new CBDC – Central Bank Digital Currency<sup>25</sup>, approved by the Federal Reserve in July, 2023 and coming soon to you.<sup>26</sup> Other countries are beginning to use this form of payment to monitor every purchase and using it as a social credit system to prevent purchases and personal travel and other government frowned-upon activities which were formerly regarded as God-given freedoms.<sup>27</sup>

When a majority of mothers are working because one job can no longer support a family, all of this societal chaos makes it more and more difficult to properly raise children. Many fathers must commute long hours to and from work while others may be working two or more jobs.

When I was young, nobody had ever heard of drop-off daycare centers. Today in the U.S. there are over 850,000 of them, 'Serving' over 8,700,000 children. Back in that long gone past, almost all of the 12% or so of working mothers had a member of their extended families to watch the kids. This is just one example of how economic and cultural change can interfere with the proper raising of children.

It is against this difficult background that we must find a better way for fathers to make the time to lead and prepare their sons for the future.

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## Training Overview for Fathers – An Example

Parental Guidance -- Examples				
Dangers	Ages	Gospel Proclamations	Gospel Stories	Protections
	0	<p>Jesus loves you; You are created; Image and Likeness; A.C.T.S. Prayers; Thy will be done on earth; Psalm 103:12; Forgiveness (snowball in a tub of hot water); The Great Commandment; The Great Commission</p>	<p><b>O.T.</b> Jeremiah 1:5; God in the whisper; Noah; Abram to Abraham; David the Shepherd; Solomon asks for help; Capstone fortelling Jesus  <b>N.T.</b> Prodigal son; Wedding at Cana; Good Samaritan; Sheep &amp; Goats; Acts 2&amp;4 (sharing); Saul &amp; stoning of Stephen; Saul on Damascus Road</p>	
	1			
SEICUS, LGBTQ+, etc. public school indoctrination programs	2			Home schooling, etc.
	3			
	4			Fatherly expression of faith, as lived
	5			
Smart phones	6			
	7			Responsibility roles in the family
	8			
Social Media	9			
	10			Church youth groups
	11			
Pornography	12			"The Talk", from a Biblical viewpoint
	13			
Predators	14			
	15			Stories with positive role models
	16			
Secular & cultural distractions	17			
	18			Planning for the future: trade school, college, etc.
	19			
ChatGPT and other A.I. "advisors" used as "personal friends"	20			
	21			

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## Some Resources for Concerned Parents

One of the best training resources all families possess is called “dinner time.” That is where everyone sits down together as a family and the children learn to listen and converse with adults. It can be more effective when we all turn off our cell phones and put them in a basket in another room.

Here are some other resources that can be useful:

### Videos for fathers and sons

- *FORMED* – A resource of mostly Catholic Christian videos – several thousand of them – for all ages. From *St. Augustine Institute*.
- *SherwoodEntertainment.com* – “Wholesome entertainment for families with traditional values.” (Coming in the fall of 2023)
- Faith and Family Entertainment – *PureFlix* is a movie studio that produces, distributes and acquires Christ centered movies. Watch movies online on your mobile phone, tablet or TV. *Pureflix.com*
- Teaching older children – *Billy Graham Evangelistic Association*. Good, clean family movies: *billygraham.org/videos/cat/movies*
- *Prager University* – A number of training videos that are strong in moral content. Probably best for older children.

### Holy Bible Scripture

- Jesus said, “I am the way and the Truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will also know the Father.” (John 14:6, NAB)  
So how can we know the Truth; how can we know the true meaning of life if we don’t know Jesus? Ponder this: St. Jerome<sup>28</sup> taught us, “Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ.”
- Scripture reflects successful ancient wisdom that is just as relevant today as it was in past generations. Scripture teaches that children are a gift and blessing from God and they are required to be



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obedient and parents are responsible for their training and education. (Not the government.)

- The wisdom of Solomon in Proverbs 22:6 – “Train up a child in the way he should go and he will not depart from it in his old age.”
- Proverbs 29:15,17 – “The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame. Correct thy son and he shall give thee rest; yea he shall give delight unto thy soul.”
- Paul’s letter to the Ephesians 6:4 – And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”
- And likewise in Paul’s letter to the Colossians 3:21 – “Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.”
- In Timothy’s second letter, 2 Timothy 3:16,17 – “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

### **A Prayer for Parents**

Most loving Father, the example of parenthood, teach us what to give and what to withhold. Show us when to reprove and when to praise. Make us gentle and considerate yet firm and watchful. Keep us from weak indulgence or from great severity.

Give us the courage to be disliked sometimes by our children when we must do necessary things which are displeasing in their eyes. Give us the imagination to enter into their world in order to understand and guide them.

Give us all the virtues we need to lead them by word and example in the path of righteousness. Amen

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## Education:

- Homeschooling. There are many resources available for the homeschooling parent, including podcasts, books and videos. One very popular approach is the *Charlotte Mason* method. Numerous other online resources are available.
- When it's time to think about higher education, be aware that many so-called Christian and Catholic universities have allowed themselves to become images of the many secular and atheistic universities. *Their effect is to erase in four years what parents have taught in a young one's lifetime.* Be very careful.
- Two outstanding Catholic universities are *Franciscan University of Steubenville* and *Ave Maria University*. There are many other outstanding Catholic and Protestant schools that have good reputations for furthering their spiritual growth, such as the non-sectarian, *Christian Hillsdale College*.

## Music that might get some fathers' attention:

- *Cat's in the Cradle* by Harry Chapin. That's an old one about a father who has no time for his son.
- *Son of a Rotten Gambler* by Anne Murray. Another oldie about a father who is at the cusp of a life decision about training his son in love and honesty or...
- *Teach Your Children Well* by Crosby Stills and Nash. An oldie about, well, teaching your kids.

## Managing Children's Smartphones

- A contract between parents and children developed by therapist Thomas Kersting who has worked with hundreds of screen-addicted kids: <http://www.digitallydistracted.info/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Smartphone-Contract.pdf>

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- Parental control apps – Six years after Tom Kersting's contract, there are now a number of different apps that can join the parent phone to the children's phones to monitor, control and limit such things as screen time (how much time per week, times of day), Internet filtering (preventing access to porn and other websites), mobile geo-fencing and monitoring (alerting parents when child goes to a forbidden or potentially dangerous location; or locating the child) and application control. A friend of mine uses one of these apps called *FamilyTime* and speaks highly of it.
- A family we know has a wicker basket outside the dining room where all children's phones go at certain times of day.

### The Author

Al O'Hara converted to the Catholic Faith 21 years ago. He is married to his dear wife, Sally (also a convert). Father of four and grandfather of five, he resides in the country beside a calm brook that becomes a roaring river when it rains. (Life is like that.) A past adjunct instructor at Marist College, he has taught a number of private and public classes in a variety of subjects, including the basics of modern computers to senior executives and speed reading to slow readers. One of a half dozen men who founded a private 7-12 day school. He formed and was president of a management consulting firm for 11 years, whose clients included Fortune 500 members. Author of two books, *ReAwakening the Spirit of America* (2019), and *As I Awoke* (2022). Fifteen years of prison ministry in 9 different prisons; 8 years on local county mental hygiene board (Vice Chair); ministry volunteer at a psychiatric hospital. Worked on early NASA Mercury space program, helped train one Astronaut. He is a licensed engineer (NY State), and an amateur musician and composer.

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## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> CIC 777 & CIC 974; CCC 2223 & CCC 2226 – Parents are their children's primary catechists. ("CIC" refers to Canon Law paragraph; "CCC" refers to the Catechism paragraph).
- <sup>2</sup> Papal Apostolic Letters – *Familiaris Consortio*, p.36; *Catechesi Tradendae*, p.68; *Gaudium et Spes*, p.52.
- <sup>3</sup> Beaumont, Douglas, op. cit.
- <sup>4</sup> Zimmerman, Carle C., James Kurth, et. al, *Family and Civilization*, ISI Books, 2008.
- <sup>5</sup> Esolen, Anthony, *No Apologies: Why Civilization Depends on the Strength of Men*, Regnery, 2022.
- <sup>6</sup> The Black Lives Matter (BLM) organization asserts that one of their goals is destruction of the two-parent family. Their founders have publicly asserted that they are Communists.
- <sup>7</sup> A study published in *Business Week* many years ago found that there was a high incidence of successful male senior executives who had grown up very close to their mothers (not so much so to their fathers) and had a very deep affection – almost a kind of reverence for them. It did not mention their religious affiliation or participation.
- <sup>8</sup> The Second Vatican Council emphatically stated that the number one responsibility for evangelization rested upon the *laity*. Similarly, the 1965 Apostolic Letter, *Apostolicam Actuositatem* provides further guidance for the laity and distinguishes between apostolic and ministry work.
- <sup>9</sup> The Wall Street Journal has reported (Oct. 24, 2023) that, "A coalition of 41 states and the District of Columbia are filing lawsuits alleging that **Meta Platforms** has intentionally built its products with addictive features that harm young users on its Facebook and Instagram services." The assertion is that **these are causing psychological harm to children**.
- <sup>10</sup> James 4:17 – "If anyone knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is a sin for them."  
Ezekiel 33:8-9 – "If I say to a wicked man: Wicked wretch, you are to die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked man to renounce his ways, then he shall die for his sin, but I will hold you responsible for his death. If, however, you do warn a wicked man to renounce his ways and repent, and he does not

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repent, then he shall die for his sin, but you yourself will have saved your life.”

<sup>11</sup> Unable to articulate the reason for their hope; or define, much less employ, the Great Commandment.

<sup>12</sup> *Pew Research*, 2016; *Pew Research*, 2018; and *Daily Wire Survey*, 2017.

<sup>13</sup> Komisar, Erica, *Being There, Why Prioritizing Motherhood in the First Three Years Matters*, Penguin Random House, 2017.

<sup>14</sup> [livingspace.sacredspace.ie/o1285g/](http://livingspace.sacredspace.ie/o1285g/) -- “Commentary on Luke 11:47-54”.

<sup>15</sup> Beaumont, Douglas, “Catechetical Leadership: On Family Faith Formation in the Parish”, January 8, 2019, [douglasbeaumont.com/2019/01/08/on-family-faith-formation-in-the-parish/](http://douglasbeaumont.com/2019/01/08/on-family-faith-formation-in-the-parish/)

<sup>16</sup> USCCB – United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. This group meets twice annually and has no standing with the Vatican. The group spends multi millions of dollars on its meetings which come from cathedraticum (our collection plates) and sets some policies and avoids others.

<sup>17</sup> This paragraph is a topical summary of an article that appeared in *National Catholic Register*, April 12, 2013, by Fr. Roger J. Landry, “Pope Francis and the Reform of the Laity.”

<sup>18</sup> Canon 915 of the Catholic Church – “Those who have been excommunicated or interdicted after the imposition or declaration of the penalty and others obstinately persevering in manifest grave sin are not to be admitted to holy communion.” (The USCCB has been asked repeatedly to apply this to so-called “Catholic” pro-abortion politicians, with no success to date.)

<sup>19</sup> Destruction of the two-parent family is a stated tenet of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) organization and of many other Marxist/socialist organizations.

<sup>20</sup> Critical Race Theory – Where everyone is divided into two classes – racists and the rest of us. Oppressed and oppressors is fundamental to Marxism. Based on Marxist Communism, Critical Theory (CT), rather than destroying its opponents, as with Russian Communism, CT seeks to slowly infiltrate, divide and conquer. CT was founded more than a hundred years ago by Italian Communist Party leader, Antonio Gramsci, a friend and correspondent of Leo Trotsky, CT moved to Frankfurt, Germany, then to New York City in the 1930s, where it became part of Columbia University.

<sup>21</sup> Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – a supposedly more tasteful version of Marxism.

<sup>22</sup> Now a felony in one state (Michigan).

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- <sup>23</sup> Refrigerators, gas appliances, flush toilets, light bulbs, home insulation, and others.
- <sup>24</sup> From *Techstartups.com*: Daniel Levy, “80% of all US dollars in existence were printed in the last 22 months...” (Updated article from December 2021)  
<https://tinyurl.com/2t7s6583>
- <sup>25</sup> CBDC – Central Bank Digital Currency. Akin to China’s social credit system.
- <sup>26</sup> The goal is to eventually eliminate all cash transactions.
- <sup>27</sup> This is prophesied in the Book of Revelation (13:16-17) as “the mark of the beast.” “It forced all people ... to receive the mark ... so they could not buy or sell unless they had the mark ...”
- <sup>28</sup> Saint Jerome who lived in the fourth and fifth century is known as a ‘Doctor of the Church.’ He is known for translating the Bible from Hebrew into Latin, creating the first Bible whose words were accessible to the common man.