

Preparing for modern challenges on Saturday mornings

A concrete way to help families become better families, and their children become anchored young adults.

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Family life can be a whirlwind as we rush everyday to work, school and a host of other activities. It can be all too easy to lose sight of the real reason why we are doing it all. That

is precisely why a growing number of families in Kingston, Ontario get together two Saturday mornings a month to learn and talk about faith, virtues and the way to cope with the pressures and challenges of modern life. Parents and children of different ages are broken down into groups so that each one gets the teaching, activities and interaction they need.

Parents love to see how it helps their children. Children are taught by parents or teenagers using the Faith and Life series. Every effort is made to show them that faith is life lived with conviction. Bob and Suzanne challenge the teenagers on how to connect the dots between faith and reason in current affairs, peer pressure and virtues. Teresa, a mother of eight, who co-founded this group with me twelve years ago says: “Our kids have benefited tremendously. I really see the difference in those who are now in

university. They are much more anchored than their peers. I attribute a lot of it to this program.”

With over twenty families now attending, friendship, learning and fun are the order of the day.

Volleyball, basketball, drama, arts, crafts and pot luck lunches mean that there is something for everyone. “My kids really enjoy it”, says Tulip. “It's definitely a sacrifice to get here, but we look forward to the classes and the great friends we've met. My boys enjoy the sports break too with all the other kids”.

Children are not the only ones who benefit from Family Catechism. This year Francine led adult discussions on what is known as “Theology of the Body”. These sessions centered on Pope John Paul II's teachings about human person as body, soul and spirit, human sexuality and the person's purpose in the world. They

“really helped us all to get to know this topic and go deeper”, comments Al. “We had a lot of food for thought and I got some great ideas to pass on to my teenagers.”

Discussions on parenting are also vital to the group as they share ideas. “I really appreciated the input of older parents on how I could teach my kids about such things as chastity. The exchange of information is so helpful,” says Karen. A young mom named Beth adds, “I enjoy the classes a lot and wish there was more time to socialize during the break. This has really given us a sense of community with other families like ours. Boy do we appreciate it.”

Everyone agrees that these Saturday mornings are well worth the effort for everyone. Family Catechism is a unique opportunity to strengthen faith, family, friendship and understanding. If you would like to

learn more about the Kingston Family Catechism or other activities like it in different cities, please contact Irene through her website 10kids.com.

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