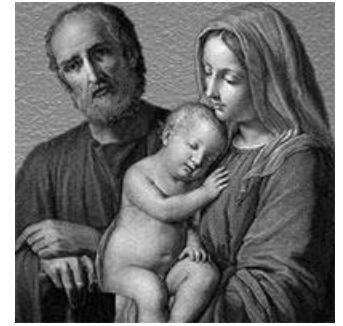


Building the Domestic Church

While Strengthening Our Parish

The Family Fully Alive



The Family that Prays and Plays Together, Stays Together

Program Outline for the Fraternal Year 2018-2019

July, 2018	WITNESSING TO THE FAITH	<i>Faith In Action: Into the Braech</i>
Theme:	Because families play an indispensable role in the new evangelization, we want to share our faith with other families and those who are far away from God.	
Family Project:	Invite a family member, friend or acquaintance to Mass, adoration or a faith-forming event with you. Also, write down ideas for small sacrifices and offerings on individual pieces of paper. Place these in a small bowl. Every day, have each member of the family randomly select one piece of paper to offer the sacrifice listed for the intentions of a relative or friend. At the end of the month, each family member might send a note to the person for whom they made the offering, telling him or her about their prayers and sacrifices.	
August, 2018	HOSPITALITY	<i>Faith In Action: Family Week</i>
Theme:	Scripture speaks frequently about the importance of a family's hospitality because of its life-giving love that nourishes weary souls and heals broken hearts.	
Family Project:	Invite acquaintances from your parish or neighborhood over for a meal, and spend some time socializing afterward. Invite them to join you for family prayer, too.	
Sept., 2018	CHARITY	<i>Faith In Action: Coats for Kids</i>
Theme:	We learn of God's love through the Scriptures, the testimony of God himself, where we read that "whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me" (Mt 25:40). The Scriptures therefore instruct all, including families, to practice charity because Christ is present in every person, especially the poor and needy.	
Family Project:	Volunteer as a family with your parish, local Knights of Columbus council or other local Catholic ministry. If there are no nearby Catholic charities, then consider volunteering at a nearby soup kitchen or similar local charity.	
October, 2018	TOGETHER ON MISSION	<i>Faith In Action: Marian Icon Prayer Program</i>
Theme:	By understanding its mission, the family can more fully embrace God's plan for the fullness of divine life and love that he wishes to share with the family.	
Family Project:	Set aside a Sunday afternoon this month to pray the rosary together as a family. Consider having a family brunch before praying, and talk to your children about the rosary and how it is prayed. Pray especially for peace in your family and for the healing of family wounds.	
Nov., 2018	THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS	<i>Faith In Action: Family Spiritual Renewal Day</i>
Theme:	By virtue of baptism and the sacramental graces of marriage, the Christian family is built into a communion of saints. Holiness is a gift given to every baptized Christian that becomes a joyful task for the whole of life.	
Family Project:	Select a few saints and learn about their time period and culture and why they are invoked for specific causes or intentions. Include a dish from their culture during one of your meals. Also, consider making a pilgrimage to a sacred place dedicated to a saint.	
Dec., 2018	JOY	<i>Faith In Action: Food for Families</i>
Theme:	Joy is an attribute of God's divine love. To reflect God in our family life, we are called to be joyful by developing our relationship with Christ.	
Family Project:	Put joy into practice by creating a family book of favorite religious hymns and carols. Have each family member choose a song that they enjoy and make copies to share. Then sing together advent and Christmas songs at times that are convenient. For instance, a family could sing before its family prayer, before bed, before lighting the advent wreath, before opening presents at Christmas, or at another time. If you have young children, sing a few simple songs to them so they can begin to learn the lyrics.	

January, 2019

FAMILY PRAYER

Faith In Action: March for Life

Theme:

The Christian family needs to put first things first by cultivating a relationship with God together through prayer. Prayer is essential for families to develop Christian joy, faith, hope and love.

Family Project:

The Catechism recommends that we find places favorable for prayer. One of the places it suggests is a “prayer corner” in the home. If you do not already have one, make a prayer corner in the home in order to facilitate prayer. This sacred space could be a simple table with a nice cloth over it, a Bible, religious images and statues, rosaries, candles, prayer cards, a family prayer intention book, a vase for flowers, etc. Make the corner unique to your family and have each family member contribute one religious item to the prayer corner. For further ideas, see the following resource: The Little Oratory: The Beginner’s Guide to Praying in the Home by David Clayton and Leila Marie Lawler.

Feb., 2019

THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

Faith In Action: Holy Hour

Theme:

The foundation of the domestic church is the sacrament of marriage. It is therefore important to reflect often on the mystery and calling of this sacrament. Also, our children may be called to become spouses and parents, so it is important to help them understand the type of love that is necessary in marriage and family life.

Family Project:

Read the nuptial prayer from the Order of Celebrating Matrimony. Share memories about your wedding day with your family over a nice family meal. At this meal, have each child share one thing they appreciate about their parents’ marriage. Then, each spouse should share one reason why they are grateful for their marriage and how each one sees Christ as present in their marriage.

March, 2019

FAMILY DIFFICULTIES

Faith In Action: Support Vocations Program

Theme:

All families face difficulties. At such critical moments, it is important to learn how to suffer well and to suffer together with Christ. Suffering, if given to the Lord, can bring families closer together and strengthen their love.

Family Project:

Ask each family member to think about one difficulty in the family and to pray for it every day. At the end of the month, share your prayer intentions and experiences.

April, 2019

MERCY AND FORGIVENESS

Faith In Action: Good Friday Family Promotion

Theme:

The inner form of Christian familial love is mercy like God the Father who is “rich in mercy” (Ephesians 2:4).

Family Project:

As a family, go to church for the sacrament of reconciliation. A week later, take a few moments to discuss how the sacrament has helped each of you to be more holy and to fight against temptation and sin.

May, 2019

HOPE

Faith In Action: Christian Refugee Relief

Theme:

Because love is filled with hope when it is communicated, our family wants to promote hope and the life-giving spirit that flows from it to our families.

Family Project:

Ask each person to choose something “impossible” to pray for this month, and choose one person in your family to pray for every day during the month. Also, to celebrate the life-giving spirit of your family, discuss times in your family’s life when you grew together in faith or love. Discuss moments of your relationship, courtship, engagement and wedding celebrations that helped you grow as a couple. Share stories of your children’s births, and discuss the gift that each of their lives has been to your family. Gather photos or various mementos of these events for a scrapbook or memory box that your family can cherish, or consider compiling them into a slideshow that can be shared with relatives.

June, 2019

SELF-GIVING LOVE

Faith In Action: Special Olympics

Theme:

The form of marital and family love is given by God himself, who is love. The Christian family, the domestic church, has been entrusted with the irreplaceable vocation of being the first school of human and divine love.

Family Project:

An important part of love consists in doing things out of love for others, even things that we may find unpleasant. To encourage these little sacrifices, research and make sacrifice beads (also known as “good deed beads”), inspired by a practice that St. Therese of the Child Jesus used to do when she was a child. Sacrifice beads are essentially a way of helping the family look for opportunities to make little offerings of love to God through small acts of self-giving service.