

AQUINAS INSTITUTE OF THEOLOGY

**EXTENDING SUNDAY PREACHING INTO HOMES
WITH THE HELP OF PARENTS**

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To Maria, my beloved wife,
who lighted the candles, prepared the snacks, and called our children together to grow in
the Word of God Sunday after Sunday in their growing-up years,

To Christian parents today and to come,
who sincerely pursue bringing up their children in the love of Jesus Christ through their
conversation, witness, and storytelling.

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Glossary

Preaching. The Cambridge Dictionary defines “preaching” in two categories: one is a religious speech given especially by a priest, deacon, or minister in a church, and the other is more general to mean an act toward persuading other people to believe in a particular belief or follow a particular way of life. In this project, I use “preaching” in its second sense to mean communication toward persuading others to believe in a particular belief or follow a particular way of life. This communication can be a lifestyle; in the Christian tradition, it is often understood as “witness;” it can be a dialogue, for example, conversations among family members on a specific issue, and can be storytelling, for example, parents telling a story to their children and discussing its moral in the light of the Gospel. Whenever “preaching” is used in the first category as giving a sermon or homily by an ordained minister at a religious gathering, for example, Sunday Mass/Service, I use “liturgical preaching.”

Church and church. “The Church” or “Universal Church” means the Roman Catholic Church. “The local Church” refers to a parish, a local Catholic community with a specific group of parishioners at a specific location. “Chinese church(es)” refers to the four Chinese Catholic parishes in the Great Toronto Area of Canada.

domestic Church or domestic church. This term emphasizes the theological fullness of the Church expressed in a Christian family, which is “a community of grace and prayer, a school of human virtues and Christian charity.”¹ The two terms are exchangeable in the Catholic context, while “domestic church” has a broader application to include families from other Christian dominions.

Communion and communion. The word “Communion” with the capital letter “C” refers to Catholic Sunday Mass. The word “communion” with lowercase “c” refers to a group of people on good terms with each other in a community.

3C Parent Preacher Formation Program. The 3C refers to Community, Communion, and Commission. The parent preacher formation program based on the 3C is called the 3C Parent Preacher Formation Program.

1-Pager Story. A short story with a theme related to the Sunday Gospel and relevant to today’s life experiences. Resources for these stories include Jewish family parsha stories, Christian children’s literature, and Chinese idioms and sayings. They can be tales, parables, idioms, and stories. In the context of this pilot project, I chose the story and developed discussion questions for the Parent Night sharing and questions for children in different age groups at Family Snack & Storytime. Parents use the same story at their Family Snack & Storytime as a platform to engage their children in a meaningful conversation to bring the Gospel close to their family life.

Parent Night. The 3C formation participating parents meet at their homes on a rotating basis for one and a half hours. The first part of the gathering is dedicated to evening

¹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church: Revised in Accordance with the Official Latin Text Promulgated by Pope John Paul II*, 2nd ed. (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 1666.

prayer and Lectio Divina on a passage from the coming Sunday readings, and the second half is sharing time among parents based on a 1-Pager Story provided by the researcher. The story comes with three questions fitting children aged 2-7, 7-11, and 12+. The sharing among the parents is to equip them more readily to discuss these questions with their children at home. Parents sit around the table facing each other and taking turns to share; however, each sharing is no more than three minutes. Multiple rounds are possible if time permits. Simple snacks and drinks (water, coffee, or tea) are provided by the host and placed on the table for self-serving.

Family Snack & Storytime. Parents and their children gather at home to enjoy a snack, Scripture reading, storytelling, and sharing time, usually for about an hour on a Sunday afternoon, when their memory of the Sunday homily is still fresh. This hour will be divided into two parts. The first part is Sunday's Scripture reading and listening; children are encouraged to be the readers. The second part is to read the 1-Pager Story (provided at Parent Night) and discuss the questions. The hour is completed with prayers that everyone at the table is welcomed. Though the norm of the place of holding the Snack & Storytime is at home, it can be flexible on occasion; for example, if the family happens to have a picnic in the park on a Sunday afternoon, the Snack & Storytime can also be held at the park.

Family warmth or warmth in the family. It refers to the extent that "parents who interact with their children during their formative years in a warm, affirming, and respectful manner" regarding the religious belief that the children feel that they can freely express their opinion and choose their religious path without coercion from their parents. This is one of the key factors discovered by Bengtson's report toward successful intergenerational transmission of religious tradition, beliefs, and practices.²

² Vern L. Bengtson, with Norella M Putney and Susan Harris, *Families and Faith: How Religion Is Passed Down Across Generations* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013), 79.

ABSTRACT

EXTENDING SUNDAY PREACHING INTO HOMES WITH THE HELP OF PARENTS

Ma, Paul, M.B.A, D. Min. Aquinas Institute of Theology, Saint Louis, Missouri, 2025.

Parents preach to their children with or without faith. Christian parents preach to their children, with or without formation. However, the difference lies between have and have-not faith, formed and not formed. This thesis project is to design a Christian parent formation program based on community, communion, and commission (the 3C). It encourages partnership between Christian parents and between ordained ministers and Christian parents. The goal is to enable Christian parents to be effective Gospel preachers in their domestic Church, a term coined by St. Augustine Hippo in the 4th century and affirmed by the Second Vatican Council.

The first chapter outlines the thesis project's genesis, ministerial context, problem, purpose, hypothesis, assumptions, and limitations. Chapter 2 explores the interdisciplinary foundation. The extensive sociological studies of the 2005 Vern L. Bengtson report and the 2021 Christian Smith report anchored parents' significant role in intergenerational faith transmission. Chinese culture and immigrant study provide further context for the foundation. Chapter 3 investigates the theological framework based on viewing the Christian family as a domestic Church, a fruit of the Second Vatican Council. This chapter further explores the relationship between the Church and the domestic Church and the practices of the domestic Church. Chapter 4 establishes the thesis project's homiletic foundation. This chapter discusses Christian parents as preachers in the domestic Church and their preaching as dialogue, witnesses, and storytelling.

Ten mothers and six fathers participated in the 3C Parent Preacher Formation Program from January 16 to April 4, 2024. Chapter 5 presents this pilot project in detail. Chapter 6 discusses the result of the pilot project, including qualitative and quantitative data, and how the result supports the hypothesis laid out in Chapter 1. The chapter also reflects lessons learned, areas of improvement, and future opportunities.

Chapter 1

An Overview of the Project

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.

—Dàodé Jīng: 64

千里之行始于足下。

—老子《道德经》第 64 篇

Introduction

How can a preacher make Sunday preaching stick with the audience? That is puzzling for most preachers. How can parents help make Sunday preaching stick with their children? That is also puzzling for most parents. Over the years, I tried with my children right after Mass, “What message did you hear from today’s homily?” The question was usually met with something like, “Well, let me think...oh, yeah, it’s about...” However, this “about” was often off the mark. I also asked parishioners this question when they walked to their cars after Sunday Mass. It was not uncommon to get an “Oh, sorry, I can’t remember.” Many parents today are worried about their children living in a world with so much misinformation and temptations, and they long for meaningful ways to instill proper values in their children’s upbringing. The question is, how?

Pope Francis regards Sunday preaching as “part of the offering made to the Father and a mediation of Christ's grace during the celebration. This context demands that preaching should guide the assembly, and the preacher, to a life-changing communion

with Christ in the Eucharist.”³ This “life-changing communion with Christ” should bear fruit in the daily life of the coming week. However, the challenge is that, often, Sunday preachings do not survive beyond the church parking lot. Many factors contributed to this, such as an increasingly secularized society, social media distraction, listeners’ shortened attention spans, busy lives, church scandals, and unattractive and irrelevant preachings. Most of these factors are beyond the control of a church community, except efforts to make preachings more relevant and attractive. Tremendous efforts have been made in the past decades to form better preachers; however, the role of the parents as partners of ordained preachers to bring the Gospel to their children is largely untapped. If “The entire people of God proclaims the Gospel.”⁴ is taken seriously, Christian parents must be formed to proclaim the Gospel in their homes. This project takes the approach of equipping the parents as Gospel carriers to their children at places that ordained preachers cannot reach; at times, ordained preachers are not present, and in real-life situations, where the Gospel message takes shape in concrete choices.

The word “carrier” often means a telecommunication service provider, like AT&T and Verizon in the United States or Bell and Rogers in Canada. It is well known in the industry that competition is at the last mile, from the switching hub to the homes where digital content is consumed. Compared with building a high-speed network connecting switching hubs in cities and towns, connecting every home to a switching hub

³ Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (November 24, 2013) (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2013) 138.

⁴ *Evangelii Gaudium* 110.

is much more complicated and cost-prohibitive. The one who owns the last mile owns the competitive advantage.

A local parish can be compared to a switching hub, where the Gospel is preached to the congregation. However, the effectiveness of Sunday preaching is measured not only by what happens at the switching hub but also by the “consumption” of the Gospel in the daily life of the parishioners. This project focuses on the “consumption” of the Gospel in the family, especially between parents and their school-aged children, aiming to extend the Sunday preaching beyond the church parking lot and arrive at the homes with the help of the parents. I would argue that what happens in the last mile—the homes, is the decisive factor in the effectiveness of Gospel preaching.

In the Old Testament tradition, the duty of passing down the faith was primarily given to the parents, “Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.”⁵ The Christian faith was practiced mainly in believers’ houses for the first three hundred years, and the role of the Christian parents was compared to the role of the bishop by the early church father, St. Augustine⁶. The approach of this project is rooted in this Judo-Christian tradition.

Title

The thesis project title is “Extending Sunday Preaching into Homes with the Help of Parents.” It develops a method that enables parents to be partners of the ordained preacher to extend the Sunday homily to their family life, especially with their children.

⁵ Duet. 6:7 (NRSVCE).

⁶ Augustine, *Sermon* 96.

The Christian household used to be called “the domestic church” by St. Augustine⁷ and “the little church” by St. John Chrysostom⁸ in the 4th century, and most recently formalized as “the domestic Church” in the Vatican II document *Lumen Gentium*.⁹ This title also implies the centrality of parents’ role in the context of the “domestic Church.”

Ministry Context

The ministry context for this thesis project is the Mandarin-speaking congregation at Savior of the World Chinese Catholic Church (SOTW) in Mississauga, a Canadian city adjoining Toronto with a population of seven hundred thousand. I have been serving as a Permanent Deacon at the parish since 2014, and our parish is made up of about one thousand families, half Cantonese-speaking, a quarter Mandarin-speaking, and a quarter English-speaking. Most Mandarin-speaking parishioners are middle-aged, well-educated, economically affluent first-generation immigrants with school-aged children. Most children were either born in Canada or came to Canada at a young age. From a language perspective, many families use both Mandarin and English at home; however, parents find it challenging to communicate ideas in-depth with their children in English, for example, the meaning and purpose of life, and children find it difficult to understand the readings and homilies in Mandarin during Sunday Mass.

The project participants were parents from our Mandarin-speaking congregation, with at least one school-aged child living with them. These parents recognize the

⁷ Augustine, *De Bono Viduitatis* 29.

⁸ Joseph C. Atkinson, *Biblical & Theological Foundation of The Family: The Domestic Church* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2014), 282.

⁹ Vatican Council II, Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium* (November 21, 1964), 11, https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html.

challenges in bringing their children up in the Catholic faith and the challenges due to differences between Chinese and Canadian culture.

The Problem

The issues preventing Sunday preaching from reaching the parishioner's homes are multifaceted. The quality of Catholic preaching has been concerning and has drawn significant attention in recent years. Peter Lovrick, a homiletic professor at St. Augustine Seminary in Toronto, articulates this problem with comprehensive survey data from the people in the pew, the priests, the deacons, and the bishops.¹⁰ However, the role of the parents has not been seriously discussed. This thesis concerns the parents as partners in preaching and will focus on forming parents to bring the Gospel to their homes.

For the Mandarin-speaking first-generation immigrants, the challenges are four-fold: 1. Faith practices of the parents - most are newly baptized, and the habit of practicing their faith has primarily not been established. 2. Children's limited Mandarin ability hinders their understanding of readings/preachings during the Mass. 3. Cultural differences between filial piety-oriented Chinese tradition and individual freedom-oriented Canadian norms contribute to misunderstandings between parents and their children. Parents find it challenging to answer faith-related questions, especially when their children reach their teenage years. 4. High expectations of first-generation immigrant parents on their children added undue pressure on the children and often negatively impacted the warmth of the family.

¹⁰ Peter Lovrick, *Proclaiming in a New Season: A Practical Guide to Catholic Preaching for the New Evangelization* (Toronto, ON: Novalis, 2016), 8-15.

Purpose

The purpose is to design a practical method to effectively extend Sunday preaching to the homes by 1. strengthening parents' faith through forming parent communities, 2. equipping parents as the first preachers to their children through community prayer and sharing, and 3. providing a platform for parents to share their faith with their children.

Hypothesis

If the method works as expected, Sunday preaching should go beyond the church parking lot and into parishioner's homes and their daily lives. Parent communities will help parents grow together in the faith, be more aware of their identity as parent preachers of the Gospel, and be more confident in discussing faith-related topics with their children. The measurable outcomes will be: 1. better faith practices of the parents; 2. stronger parent-child relationships; 3. greater readiness to share the faith with the children; and 4. improved warmth in the family.

The 3C Pilot Project

The thesis pilot project seeks to measure the effectiveness of the 3C method. Community refers to forming parent communities through gatherings called Parent Night. The community is made up of two groups, one for women and one for men, and each has no more than ten parents. These parents all have school-aged children living with them. The women's group meets on Tuesday night every two weeks, and the men's group meets on Thursday night every two weeks so couples can take turns coming to the gathering without worrying about babysitting. Communion refers to parents and their children attending Sunday Mass together. Commission refers to the parents holding a

Family Snack & Storytime with their children at home to bring the Gospel to their children. The pilot project is three months with a total of six cycles; each cycle includes a Parent Night, a Sunday Mass, and a Family Snack & Storytime.

Parent Night gathering starts at my home and rotates to participants' homes by invitation. The host takes responsibility for informing the group about the address and parking arrangements, preparing his/her home suitable for prayer and sharing, and providing snacks. The Sunday after the Parent Night, parents and their children attend Sunday Mass at SOTW, or a local English Church close to their homes. When the latter happens, the children usually understand the proclamation and preaching better than their parents. This two-way complimentary between parents and children enriches the parent-child relationship. Sunday worship provides the "passage" for Chinese immigrants to find the higher meaning of life through worship with the larger community. Their daily life participates in a "liturgy," a "spiritual sacrifice" to the glory of God.¹¹ Through this communion with God, the Universal Church, and brothers and sisters in the parish, the immigrant families are assured that they are not alone. Hearing the Word and the homily further prepares the parents and their children to engage in meaningful conversations about the Gospel message. That Sunday afternoon, when the parents and their children's memories are still fresh about Sunday's homily, parents hold their Family Snack & Storytime to read and listen to the Sunday readings, share the 1-Page Story, and discuss the questions.

¹¹ Louis-Marie Chauvet, *The Sacraments: The Word of God at the Mercy of the Body* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1997), 147.

Research Methodology, Data Collection, and Analysis

The project is based on the 3C method, which is informed by recent social, theological, and homiletic theory, implements a new practice, and measures its outcome. The summative evaluation method is adopted to “determine if a solution (policy or program) works.”¹² Two evaluation tools are employed: face-to-face interviews for the “gaze” data and questionnaires for “voice” data.¹³

Questionnaires under Appendix 4 is used to collect data from each participating parent before and after the three-month period. During the three months, semi-structured one-on-one interviews are conducted to collect data about the participant’s behavior, practices, relationships, and other artifacts. Interview questions are listed under Appendix 6.

Questionnaires are designed to collect five sets of data: 1. Parent faith growth, 2. Relationship between husband and wife, 3. Relationship between parents and children, 4. Faith sharing between parents and children, and 5. The warmth in the family.¹⁴ The data is used to measure against the hypotheses: 1) better parents' faith practices, 2) better parent-child relationships, 3) more ready to socialize the faith with their children, and 4) improved warmth in the family.

Data analysis is a process of reduction and inquiry¹⁵ toward measuring the effectiveness of the pilot project against the hypotheses. Each questionnaire question is

¹² Tim Sensing, *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Dissertations* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2022), 198.

¹³ Sensing, 251-252.

¹⁴ Bengtson, 71.

¹⁵ Kristin Luker, *Salsa Dancing into the Social Sciences: Research in an Age of Info-glut* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 198-199.

designed to have five choices following the Liskar scale, with a value of one to five. The mean is calculated to give the value of each section. A radar chart with five axes is developed to compare the results of the five data sets: faith practice of the parents, spousal relationship, parent-child relationship, parent-child faith sharing, and family warmth. This chart will visualize the overall effectiveness of the 3C Method against the hypothesis. The interview data will be analyzed for a better interpretation of the questionnaire data and to help identify the parenting style of the Chinese immigrant family, which will help fine-tune the 3C method in the future.

Proper procedures and techniques, for example, using code rather than individual names, are used to ensure anonymous data collection and unbiased analysis. This study is designed for Mandarin-speaking first-generation Chinese Catholic immigrant parents, mainly aged between their late twenties and fifties.

Assumptions and Limitations

This thesis project assumed: 1. Catholic parents are best suited to socialize the faith to their children; 2. Virtuous Christian family life is in the Middle Way (Golden Mean), and group wisdom is a path to it; 3. Conversation, witness, and storytelling allow parents to bring the Gospel to their children effectively; and 4. A self-driven, self-sustaining parent community with a shared mission can last.

Recognized limitations are at least two-fold: 1. Limited data on Chinese Catholic immigrant families in Canada due to a lack of research on this subject. This limitation is mitigated by studies in the United States, which tend to reflect a Western mainstream culture highly compatible with Canada. 2. The potential bias of the researcher as the minister. This limitation is mitigated by the fact that the DMin. degree is unrelated to the

pilot project's success, which is communicated to the participants to lift their burden from making their minister look good.

Chapter Outline

This first chapter describes the thesis project's genesis, title, problem, purpose, hypothesis, ministerial context, assumptions and limitations, and definitions.

Chapter 2, "Parents Are Best Suited for Passing Down the Faith." provides the thesis project's interdisciplinary framework, which is anchored on two complementary sociological studies on intergenerational faith transmission from 1970 to 2021 by the team of Vern L. Bengtson and the team of Christian Smith. Their study affirmed that faith continued to be passed down in the family, and parents played the most significant roles. Then, I discussed the importance of the parent community in the context of Chinese culture and insights from Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget's monumental work on child development. The chapter concluded with discussions on best practices on faith and parenting and explored the question of whether Christian parents can go beyond their cultural values when passing the faith to their children, which leads to the theological discussion in the next chapter.

Chapter 3, "Christian Family as Domestic Church." outlines the theological foundation for the thesis's project. This chapter begins by defining "Church" in the Roman Catholic tradition and describes how the Chinese Catholics in the GTA experience the "Church," which leads to the discussion on the Domestic Church from the dawn of Christianity to the early Church fathers to the Vatican II, and how the domestic Church is experienced, especially in the context of Chinese culture. The chapter

concluded with the roles of the Christian parents in the domestic Church in comparison with the roles of the pastor of a local parish.

Chapter 4, “Preaching in the Domestic Church,” articulates the thesis’ homiletic foundations: preaching as dialogue, preaching as witness, and preaching as storytelling in the context of the domestic Church. This chapter begins by defining “liturgical preaching” as formal preaching and parents’ preaching in their domestic Church as informal preaching. Then, I adapted the rich preaching tradition as dialogue, witness, and storytelling to the domestic Church and discussed feasible practices. The chapter concluded with Christian parents partnering with ordained ministers to become effective informal preachers to bring the Gospel to their domestic Church.

Chapter 5, “The 3C Parent Preacher Formation Program,” describes the formation program in detail, including the design of the ministerial pilot project, the forming of parent groups, and data collection through questionnaires and face-to-face interviews. The pilot project lasted three months with six cycles, two weeks each. Each cycle includes a Parent Night for community building at homes, Sunday Liturgy for participating in parish life, and the Family Snack & Storytime that parents hold with their children at home. The chapter then discusses the materials used in each cycle and concludes with the thesis’ ethical and data analysis procedures.

Chapter 6, “Results, Findings, and Opportunities,” presents the results from the 3C ministerial pilot project, which includes qualitative and quantitative data gathered throughout the twelve weeks. The chapter also discusses insights gained, lessons learned, and improvements to be made for future projects. The chapter concludes by acknowledging that this pilot project belongs to the first steps of a thousand-mile journey

and envisions that Christian parents, partnering with their ministers, will take up the 3C Program, adapt it to their specific settings, and labor to bring the Gospel to their homes - the domestic Church so that the good work the Lord has begun will bear good fruit in due time.

Chapter 2

Parents Are Best Suited for Passing Down the Faith

He will turn the hearts of parents to their children and the hearts of children to their parents.

—Mal.4:6

Introduction

There is congruence between Western and Chinese cultures in that parents have the primary duty of passing down fundamental values to their children. For parents with a specific faith tradition, these values are often clothed or expressed with terms from their faith tradition. Recent sociology studies, as cited in sections 2.1 and 2.2 below, show that today's parents continue to play the most significant role in shaping their children's faith. The crucial ingredients for successful faith transmission to the next generation are faith-practicing parents who are tolerant of differences and provide a warm home to their children. This largely agrees with the Chinese view that wisdom lies between extremes or the Golden Mean. This chapter discusses the feasibility of parents bringing the Gospel to their children at home from a sociological perspective and the importance of a supporting parent community.

Faith Transmission in the Family

Faith continues to be passed down in today's families. Dr. Vern L. Bengtson (1941 - 2019) and his team at the University of Southern California (USC) conducted a comprehensive study on this subject. Their project lasted over four decades from the

1970s and analyzed data from 3500+ people across four generations. To measure religious intergenerational transmission, the Bengtson team “examined the degree of religious similarity between parents and their young adult children in 1970 with that of young adults and parents three and a half decades later, in 2005.”¹⁶ They found that “there are higher rates of parent-child resemblance in religiosity than had been expected and that the degree of intergenerational transmission does not appear to have decreased over the past thirty - five years.”¹⁷

Figure 1¹⁸ shows the result of statistical significance, which measures similarity between parents and their young adult children between 1970 and 2005 in all four aspects of religiosity:

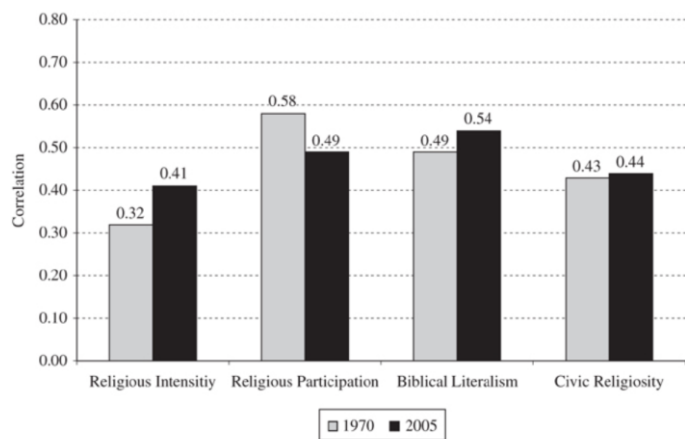


Figure 1 Similarity Between Parents and Young Adult Children on Four Dimensions of Religiosity, 1970 (G2-G3) and 2005 (G3-G4)

“religious intensity (“How religious would you say you are?”); religious participation (frequency of religious service attendance); agreement with a literal or conservative interpretation of the Bible; and agreement with the importance of religion in civic or public life.” The similarity shows that faith continues to be passed down in the family, and the success rate is not much different between 2005 and 1970, even though society has undergone significant changes.

¹⁶ Bengtson, 55.

¹⁷ Bengtson, 72.

¹⁸ Bengtson, 55.

The result is encouraging, and it is safe to say that overall, today's religious parents and their children are not much different from previous generations in that parents continue to value their faith tradition and have strong desires to pass it down to their children as part of their grow-up preparation as Bengtson's report recognized, "To religious parents, faith forms the core of what is most valuable to them in life, what has meant the most to them, and what they would like their children to live by. For these parents, the child's acceptance or rejection of their religious faith is a source of joy or sadness."¹⁹

However, the experiences of different faith traditions between 1970 and 2005 were not equal. As shown in Figure 2²⁰, Bengtson's report provided a picture of the rates of intergenerational transmission across different faith traditions.

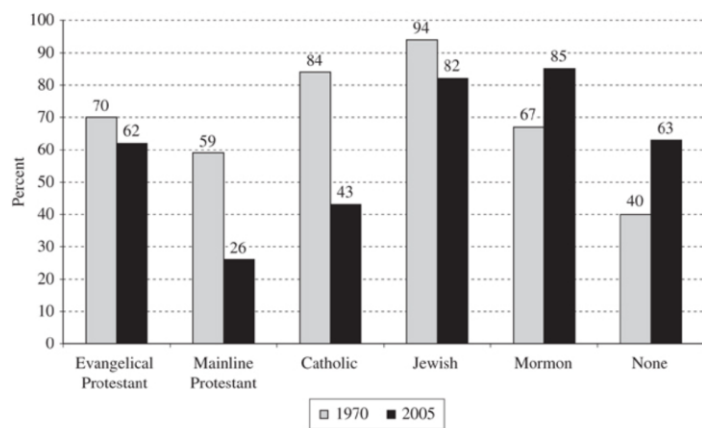


Figure 2 Percentage of Parents Whose Young Adult Children Have the Same Religious Tradition, 1970 (G2–G3) and 2005 (G3–G4)

During that period, Catholics and Mainline Protestants experienced a decline; Evangelical Protestants and the

¹⁹ Bengtson, 72.

²⁰ Bengtson, 57.

Jewish religion experienced a single-digit decline, while the Mormon and non-religious experienced decent growth.

Here, we need to address two phenomena. One is the decline in the number of faith-affiliated people and the increase in the number of non-religious people in the general population in the past fifty years. Ryan Burge, assistant professor of political science at Eastern Illinois University, analyzed that the non-religious population in the United States grew from 5% in the 1970s to 30% in 2023, based on the General Social Survey,²¹ and further arrived where this gain came from as shown in Figure 3. The two significant contributions were a better retention rate of no-religion today than in the 1970s and a constant contribution by the mainline Christians and Catholics from the 1970s until today. Bengtson's

report showed us the steady intergenerational faith transmission rate within the family from the 1970s to 2005; the statistical data tells us where the lion's share of the unsuccessful transmission arrived: no religion.

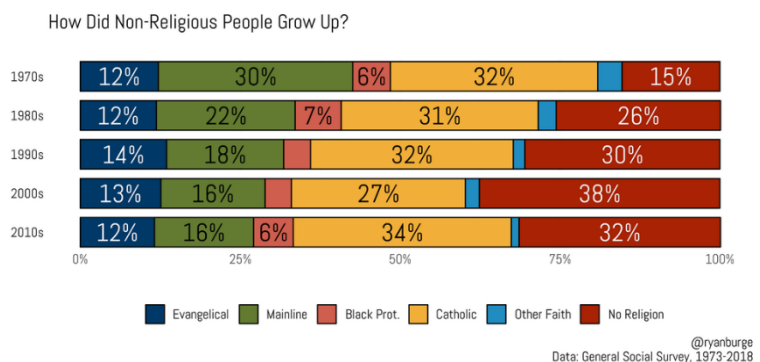


Figure 3 Non-Religion People Grow Up

The other phenomena that need to be addressed are the “Silent Exodus,” a term coined by Helen Lee in her 1996 article “Silent Exodus,”²² which refers to the mass

²¹ Ryan Burge, “How Many People Leave Their Childhood Religion?” Religion Unplugged, Institute for Nonprofit News, July 18, 2023, <https://religionunplugged.com/news/2023/7/11/how-many-people-leave-their-childhood-religion>.

²² Helen Lee, “Silent Exodus,” Christianity Today, Aug 12, 1996, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/1996/august12/6t9050.html>.

departure of second-generation Korean Americans from their ethnic churches once they reach adulthood. A 2015 study on thirty Chinese Christian churches across seven Christian denominations in the Vancouver area affirmed a similar phenomenon: the next-generation English-speaking Chinese young adults exiting their Canadian Chinese bicultural churches.²³ A 2001 Pew research based on the United States 2007 statistical data reported that 14% of raised Catholics are now unaffiliated, as shown in Figure 4, and “Almost half of Catholics who are now unaffiliated (48%) left Catholicism before reaching age 18.”²⁴

The phenomenon of the young dropping out of church seems pervasive; the question is whether they will come back at a later age. Based on his research at the CARA Center, Dr. Mark Gray, a senior research associate at Georgetown University, reported, “Only 13 percent said they were ever likely to return to the Catholic Church, ... absent any big changes in their life, they are probably not coming back.”²⁵ This is a timely warning to today’s parents and church community that much needs to be done to help today’s young people who are dropping out to return. According to Bengtson’s study, the most effective help comes from two areas:

Current Religion of Those Raised Catholic	
	%
Still Catholic	68
Now Protestant	15
Evangelical Prot. churches	9
Mainline Prot. churches	5
Hist. black Prot. churches	1
Now unaffiliated	14
Now other faith	3
	100
N	10,545
Source: 2007 “U.S. Religious Landscape Survey”	

Figure 4 Catholic Landscape

²³ Matthew Richard Sheldon Todd, *English Ministry Crisis in Chinese Canadian Churches* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2015), 1.

²⁴ “Leaving Catholicism,” Pew Research Center, last revised February 2011, <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2009/04/27/faith-in-flux3/>.

²⁵ Matt Hadro, “Why Catholics are leaving the faith by age 10 – and what parents can do about it,” CRUX, Dec 18, 2016, <https://cruxnow.com/cna/2016/12/catholics-leaving-faith-age-10-parents-can/>.

practicing parents and warm, affirming families. This 3C pilot project, if it works as designed, builds a parent faith community, encourages family warmth, and expects the prodigal sons and daughters to return in due time.

The parish I serve (SOTW) began to have the Mandarin Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) program in 2000. The program usually lasts about eighteen months and leads to baptism at Easter. The majority came to the RCIA program to have their children baptized to register into Ontario's Catholic school system. That system requires that students in primary schools must have been baptized in the Catholic Church. Chinese parents are very concerned about issues like drugs, sex, and school dropouts. Many Chinese immigrant parents believe that Catholic schools provide better morals and behavior education. A 2024 study on Catholic education's impact on non-Catholic Chinese immigrants in New York reassured what was experienced in SOTW RCIA classrooms that Chinese immigrant parents perceived that in Catholic schools, "students learned about commitment, respect for others, responsibility for their actions, self-discipline, and making good decisions based on the tenets of their faith.... had opportunities to put moral teaching into practice and lived experience."²⁶

In the past twenty years, SOTW baptized 424 adults (age 17+), 137 children (7 to 16), and 436 babies (<6). Today, most of these children, and some of the babies, have become young adults, and the city's overall population (Mississauga) has also been growing. However, every Sunday worship, the SOTW Mandarin-speaking congregation

²⁶ Huifu Hou, "The Impact of Catholic Education on Non-Catholic Chinese Immigrant Students," a dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education to the faculty of the School of Education at St. John's University in New York, January 2024, 79, accessed at <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:US:b14d8e88-36ad-4805-8b6c-e974fa417d82>.

has less than one hundred attendees, adults and their children included. Though almost all newly baptized would bring their children to get baptized and confirmed at the Catholic church, and many would only show up at Easter or church Christmas Party, the faith transmission to the next generation is a genuine concern.

The rate of the young adult English-speaking generation dropping out of church experienced in the four Chinese Catholic parishes in the GTA is also high. However, we must differentiate between people leaving the faith and the intensity of their faith practices, which is often measured by church attendance. The young generation might not attend church service as often as their parents would like; however, it is still rare in our congregation that young adults abandon the faith altogether. The seed of faith was planted; it is critical for the parents and the faith community to foster a warm and supportive environment so that someday, the seed will grow.

There is no research data available on the Chinese Mandarin-speaking Catholic intergenerational faith transmission rate and whether the young dropping out will return in the future. The statistical data discussed above and the field experience in all the Chinese parishes in the GTA should have provided enough reason for Chinese Mandarin-speaking Catholic parents to partner with their ordained ministers toward better faith transmission to their young.

The Significant Role of the Parents

How much influence do today's American parents have on shaping the religious outcome of their youth? A recent study by Christian Smith and his team from Notre Dame University conducted two hundred and thirty-five personal interviews across religious affiliates of white conservative Protestants, mainline Protestants, black

Protestants, white Catholics, Latino Catholics, Conservative Jews, Mormons, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and nonreligious parents in the United States, one of the most significant findings is that “the single, most powerful causal influence on the religious lives of Americans teenagers and young adults is the religious lives of their parents. Not their peers, not the media, not their youth group leaders or clergy, not their religious school teachers.”²⁷

Bengtson’s study supports Smith’s finding that “parents are the key to religious socialization.” It affirms that “religious socialization in most cases is reinforced and amplified through religious organizations, most of which have extensive programs and activities directed toward training children and youth in practices and beliefs. Still, parents are the key to religious socialization,”²⁸ The Smith report further affirmed that today’s parents also regard themselves as primarily responsible for passing down the faith to their children, “the primary responsibility for passing on religious faith and practice to children rests with parents; religious congregations are secondary and primarily supportive.”²⁹ A 2009 study on Asian American Adolescents’ Religiosity drew a similar conclusion that “the most important factor influencing Asian immigrant children’s religiosity is their parent’s religious practices and the concordance between parent and adolescent’s religious affiliations.”³⁰

²⁷ Christian Smith, Bridget Ritz, and Michael Rotolo. *Religious Parenting: Transmitting Faith and Value in Contemporary America* (New Jersey, NY: Princeton University Press, 2021), 5.

²⁸ Bengtson, 71.

²⁹ Smith, 168-169.

³⁰ Jiexia Elisa Zhang and Charles E. Stokes, “Ethnic, Family, and Social Contextual Influences on Asian American Adolescents,” *Sociological Spectrum* no. 29 (2009): 202.

Sociologists often use religious socialization to mean parents pass on to their children the fundamental values and knowledge that are important in preparing them for adulthood. The Bengtson report provided us with critical insight into the crucial factors for successful religious socialization, which is practicing parents with a “warm and affirming,”³¹ parenting style, “Parents who interact with their children during their formative years in a warm, affirming, and respectful manner are more likely to pass on their religious tradition, beliefs, and practices.”³² A 2020 study on intergenerational transmission among immigrant and native families in Germany arrived at similar findings, “Especially an authoritative parenting style – that is, a warm and supportive parent-child relation combined with high levels of involvement in children's life – and child's motivation to maintain customs and traditions of the heritage culture significantly influence the level of religious transmission.”³³

Bengtson's report provided us with another two insights: the significant role of the father, “for religious transmission, having a close bond with one’s father matters even more than a close relationship with the mother”³⁴ and the importance of a close relationship with one parent, if not two, which provides an anchor for the children to understand that “individual differences are accepted but remain committed to their

³¹ Bengtson, 73.

³² Bengtson, 79.

³³ Konstanze Jacob, “Intergenerational transmission in religiosity in immigrant and native families: the role of transmission opportunities and perceived transmission benefits,” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 46, no. 9 (2020): 1935, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2018.1515009>.

³⁴ Bengtson, 76.

parents' religious tradition and beliefs because they feel that the choice was theirs to make and would be respected.”³⁵

The Chinese culture has a long tradition of valuing harmony in the family, as expressed in a well-known saying, “家和万事兴” (“Jia He Wan Shi Xing”),” which means a harmonious family will thrive in every undertaking. However, the highly valued family harmony in the Chinese culture cannot be effortlessly translated into a “warm and supportive parent-child relation.” The Chinese and Canadian culture differences added another layer of complexity. A 2005 study on parental warmth among Chinese American immigrants shows that “not only that Chinese American adolescents perceive their parents as less warm than they desire compared to European Americans, but this parental ‘shortcoming,’ as perceived by the adolescent, has negative consequences for the behavioral adjustment of Chinese American, but not European American adolescents.”³⁶

Another factor that needs to be considered is that most Mandarin-speaking immigrant parents in GTA belong to a generation that experienced the Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) and its aftermath at a young age. The “Ten Years of Disaster” is marked by widespread violence and chaos with devastating effects on individuals, families, and society. During that period, children experiencing physical abuse by their highly stressed parents, siblings, and other kids on the street were typical, and the traumatic effects on the children, now adults as immigrants living in Canada, continue to play out in their family life. One common scene is the quickly heated-up arguments

³⁵ Bengtson, 97.

³⁶ Chunxia Wu and Ruth K. Chao, “Intergenerational cultural conflicts in norms of parental warmth among Chinese American immigrants,” *International Journal of Behavioral Development* 29 (6), (2005): 521, <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/pp/01650254.html>.

between parents and children; disagreement turns into belittling, raised voice turns into yelling, and what follows is physical violence, if not restrained. The far-reaching effect of the Chinese Cultural Revolution in the last century continues to be felt in today's Mandarin-speaking immigrant families.

In a series of studies, Chao (1994, 1996, 2000) showed how immigrant-Chinese parenting styles differ from American parenting styles based on the authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive typology. A Chinese parent employs a “training” model with elements of both authoritarianism and permissiveness, coupled with a high degree of emphasis on filial piety and parental warmth.”³⁷ “Filial piety” is parents-oriented, while “affirming and acceptance” are children-oriented; continued negotiation between the two in a Chinese immigrant family is the norm, and the key constructive or destructive factor is the personal identity the parents strive to establish in Canadian society.

First-generation Chinese immigrants face the challenges of learning a new language, a new set of codes of conduct, a new way of making a living, a new faith if converted, and making sense of the self in a dual-culture environment. In 1937, sociologist Everett V. Stonequist established the concept of “marginal person” as “the individual who through migration, education, marriage, or some other influence leaves one social group or culture without making a satisfactory adjustment to another finds himself on the margin of each but a member of neither. He is a “marginal” man

³⁷ Amado M. Padilla, “Developmental Process Related to Intergenerational Transmission of Culture: Growing Up with two Cultures,” in *Cultural Transmission: Developmental, Psychological, Social and Methodological Aspects*, ed. Ute Schönplflug (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 194.

(person).”³⁸ The “adjustment” should be understood as a journey instead of a state, and its destination is the “bicultural person,” a concept later defined by LaFromboise, Coleman, and Gerton in 1993 as “an individual who, by virtue of the socialization he or she received from their primary caretakers, is competent in two cultures....The person is equally at ease with members of either culture and can easily switch from one culture orientation to the other and do so often with native (or near-native) like facility.”³⁹ Recent research by Su Yeong Kim and Yang Hou suggested a tridimensional acculturation model that “immigrants can orient toward a subculture in the host country that may capture characteristics of both the ethnic culture and the mainstream culture.”⁴⁰ This new development opened the horizon toward a subculture, which could be an authentic Christian culture marked by compassion, truthfulness, solidarity with the marginalized, hope, and grace.⁴¹ This Christian subculture can dialog and elevate both the ethnic and mainstream cultures of the land and enables a dignified identity of the immigrant parents and their children. From a sociological perspective, this subculture approach can be a possible pathway between a “marginal person” and a “bicultural person,” with Christian faith playing a crucial role.

³⁸ Everett V. Stonequist, *The Marginal Man: A Study in Personality and Culture Conflict* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1961), 3.

³⁹ Padilla, 190-191.

⁴⁰ Su Yeong Kim, and Yang Hou, “Intergenerational Transmission of Tridimensional Cultural Orientations in Chinese American Families: The Role of Bicultural Socialization,” *Empirical Research* no. 45 (2016): 1453.

⁴¹ Orlando O. Espin, *Idol and Grace: Traditioning and Subversive Hope* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2014), 123-128.

SOTW Mandarin-speaking congregation has at least two things in common with each other. One is that everyone is on this journey, no matter whether one is a newcomer or has been living in Canada for thirty years; the other is that almost all parents put a high priority on their children and are willing to make significant sacrifices, which was often the reason they chose to immigrate to Canada, and the reason becoming a Catholic so that their children can attend Catholic schools. The Chinese saying “养不教，父之过”⁴² (“Yang Bu Jiao, Fu Zhi Guo”) means the father (parents) is to blame if the child is raised without a good education. That concept puts the duty of passing down the values, and for the purpose of this thesis, the faith, squarely on the parents. Here, we find the congruence between Chinese culture and Western social study on intergenerational faith transmission regarding parents' significant role.

The Importance of the Community

The African proverb “It takes a village to raise a child” means that the wider community, including extended family, friends, and local religious institutions, also influences a person's development. Immigrant parents are not alone but are associated with different communities, which provide opportunities for them to make friends, to know the Canadian way of living, and to have a sense of belonging. The UN Refugee Agency's Integration Handbook includes a chapter on promoting integration through social connections, which is also relevant to Chinese immigrants in Canada. The Handbook states, “The benefits of social support are well established. Studies in a number of countries indicate that individuals with supportive relationships in their family

⁴² Wang Yinglin, “The Three-Character Classic (‘三字经’),” the thirteenth century, accessed February 15, 2025, <https://www.en84.com/dianji/mengxue/200912/00000599.html>.

and community have better physical and mental health than those with limited or lesser quality support.”⁴³

Everett V. Stonequist called modern large cities “real melting-pot” of culture⁴⁴ because foreign immigrants streamed into these cities. The GTA is home to over six million people from over two hundred ethnic origins, and about half of the population is born outside Canada. It is credible to view GTA as a super-sized culture melting pot. Its democratic society values human freedom, and Canada’s embracing of multiculturalism made it possible for Chinese immigrants to preserve their cultural heritage while establishing their Canadian identity. In 1982, multiculturalism was recognized by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the Canadian Multiculturalism Act was subsequently enacted in 1988.

Canada’s multiculturalism aims to promote “the full and equitable participation of individuals and communities of all origins in the continuing evolution and shaping of all aspects of Canadian society.”⁴⁵ This is good news for Chinese immigrants on one side, but it is also a concern for parents, educators, and religious ministers on what goes into the “pot” on the other side.

From a sociological perspective, faith groups can significantly influence this melting process and positively impact intergenerational faith transmission in the family.

⁴³ The UN Refugee Agency, Promoting Integration Through Social Connections, last updated March 9, 2024, accessed Feb 14, 2025, <https://www.unhcr.org/handbooks/ih/social-connections/promoting-integration-through-social-connections>.

⁴⁴ Stonequist, 213.

⁴⁵ “About the Canadian Multiculturalism Act,” Government of Canada, last modified June 3rd, 2024, <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/about-multiculturalism-anti-racism/about-act.html>.

The three groups that stand out in Bengtson's reports are Mormons, Jews, and born-again Evangelical Christians.⁴⁶ They share at least three sociological characteristics in common. First, their families are members of the same religious community and actively involved in community worship, service, and mission. Second, they view themselves as an oppressed minority group against the dominant secular world and need to “band together for mutual encouragement or protection.”⁴⁷ Third, their “religious practices are highly interconnected with family activities, and there is a high value placed on families and family continuity.”⁴⁸ For example, Mormons have Family Home Evening every Monday and Early Morning Seminary every weekday for the youth; Evangelicals stress Daily family prayer and Bible reading. In practice, these tight-knit religious groups are inevitably leaning toward a stricter stand on those who refuse to conform, and punishment can be from shunning away by family to straight ex-communication.

In the two thousand years of Catholicism, the three sociological characteristics mentioned above have been practiced to different degrees from one age to another or from one group to another. The Vatican II Council in the 1960s ushered in a new era for Catholics. One of the most significant changes was the shift from Latin to vernacular languages in worship, allowing congregations to participate more actively, empowering the laity for evangelization, and encouraging intercultural dialogue that broadened the Church's perspective beyond its traditional European roots. The Church's image of a

⁴⁶ Bengtson, 166.

⁴⁷ Bengtson, 166.

⁴⁸ Bengtson, 166.

mother embracing all her children opened a new horizon for faith practices and significantly influenced the faith practices in the Chinese churches in GTA.

All four Chinese Catholic parishes in GTA were built after Vatican II. The three common sociological characteristics mentioned above are visible but not dominant. The parishes desire all family members to be practicing Catholics. However, non-practicing family members are not to be shunned but welcomed whenever and if ever they come, hoping that one day they will return to the regular practice of the faith. The mentality of “we, the small oppressed people of God,” against “they, the corrupted secular world,” continues to be held by some and shows up in homilies from time to time; however, the primary attitude has been the open arms reaching out to the world, as symbolized by the “sending” at the end of Mass, “go into the world, glorifying the Lord by your life.”

It is typical in the Chinese immigrant families in GTA that family members are mixed with baptized and non-baptized. These families are mission grounds and rich soil for evangelization. Non-baptized family members are welcomed to church activities. Marriages between a Catholic and a non-Catholic are celebrated in the church, and a priest or deacon witnesses their marriage. Children from mixed marriages are baptized in the church, as is the norm. Successful programs developed after Vatican II in the Universal Church were adopted in the Chinese Catholic parishes, such as Marriage Encounter Weekend Retreat, geared toward strengthening marriage, with an adaptation that also accepts the non-baptized spouse to participate. LifeTeen is a youth program for teens to gather after Mass at the church basement to listen to a faith-related talk, share, and pray together, and Edge, a simplified LifeTeen version for 7-8 graders, has been

adopted by some Chinese Catholic parishes. All these programs are offered as a church resource to the families, not a mandate.

The challenge facing all Chinese Catholic parishes in the GTA is the low Mass attendance of the Mandarin-speaking parishioners. Every year, the four Chinese parishes baptize hundreds of adults; however, more than 80% would drop out within a year.

To help people in the RCIA process establish a new habit of going to church every weekend, the Mandarin RCIA usually runs for one and a half years instead of the mainstream standard six months program in the Archdiocese of Toronto. During these one-and-a-half years, friendships among RCIA members begin to form, and a belonging community would emerge. An eight-week period of mystagogy follows baptism to deepen the understanding of the sacraments, and marks the end of the RCIA process. From then on, the warm RCIA community is absorbed into the large congregation. Though the class would try to have a reunion once in a while, the warmth of the RCIA community would gradually disappear when the newly baptized showed up in the pew at a Sunday Mass with few familiar faces around them. One question often asked after their baptism was, “Can we continue the RCIA class as in the past?” Their longing for continued RCIA class was a desire for community, where they could share their ups and downs in life, learn from each other to face their challenges, find encouragement in the faith, and know they were not alone. This desire for community is also expressed in another way. When the Chinese parishes hold Christmas parties, Chinese New Year parties, or Mother’s Day Night, even charging a fee, tickets often get sold out.

When it comes to child raising, traditional Chinese wisdom pays significant attention to the community a family lives in. A well-known saying from the ancient was “

昔孟母·择邻处” (“Xee Meng Mu, Ze Lin Chu”), which calls the story of Lady Meng moving twice to provide a better learning environment for his son, Ke Meng, who became one of the founding figures for Confucianism. Today, better education in a more trustworthy society for their children is still one of the significant reasons Chinese parents choose to immigrate to Canada. The number one reason to purchase or rent a property for many Chinese immigrants is whether it is within the boundary of a reputable school. Christian faith-based communities with parents and their children’s benefit at the center have the potential to appeal to Mandarin-speaking parents. The community value is a strong rationale for the 3C methodology with its small group delivery model. Currently, the Toronto Diocese does not have such well-designed and well-functioning communities. Faith-based groups in our parishes in the GTA are either Sunday Mass oriented, for example, liturgy group, choir; or charity oriented, for example, Knight of Columbus, Legion of Mary; or follow-up groups after a weekend retreat of a movement, such as Marriage Encounter and “Cursillo.” Usually, these follow-up groups gather once a month right after the life-changing weekend; however, gradually, the gathering lost its appeal to its group members and became less frequent.

Faith and Parenting - Best practices in passing down the faith

The two most significant factors for successful faith socialization to the next generation are practicing parents and parenting styles. This section discusses faith in the context of parenting and parenting in the context of faith from a sociological perspective.

Faith in the context of parenting

Faith is often expressed in the context of prayer, Bible reading, personal devotion, and church attendance. Here, using Catholic tradition as an example, faith in the context

of parenting refers to parents and their children praying the Rosary together, going to Sunday Mass together, and reading the Bible together, among other practices. The popular saying, “A family that prays together stays together.” tells the importance of faith-related activities in family life. However, the effectiveness of a best practice lies in the wisdom of the Golden Mean. There is always a point of “too little” and “too much.”

One example of “too much”: Joan grew up in a Catholic family in a remote village in China, where most villagers were Catholics for generations. The most unpleasant memory of her faith was the daily family Rosary time after dinner when kneeling on the ground; whenever her posture or voice was not up to the expectation, her mother would use a stick to hit her. Even living in Canada now, she had a hard time praying the Rosary; the resentment toward her mother, as well as toward the Virgin Mary, often made her feel guilty. Another example of “too little”: Mark was a first-generation Catholic baptized in our church and dropped out of church soon after baptism. Family faith-related practices were close to none. What he paid the most attention to was his son’s grades at school, and the constant tension between the two damaged their relationship. The son has grown up and moved out. Mark is now returning to church and hoping his son will also attend church someday.

The Bengtson study also reported many cases of failed intergenerational faith transmission; the term “apostasy” for the Mormons, “backslider” for the Southern Baptists, and “disaffiliation” for other conservative Protestants refer to those who rejected their parent's faith,⁴⁹ and often due to overzealous parents with too strict rules on church

⁴⁹ Bengtson, 132.

attendance and too much involvement in church-related activities, as one “apostasy” said, “too much of a good thing.”⁵⁰

The Chinese philosophy of “The Golden Mean” (“中庸” “Zhong Yong”) has a long history rooted in Confucianism and Taoism. It refers to living a balanced life in harmony with the natural order of things. Catholicism values a similar concept, living in accord with the Natural Law, which in practice often means living a virtuous life. Early Church father St. Gregory of Nyssa says, “Who grasps the middle point between doing too little and doing too much has hit the distinction between vice and virtue.”⁵¹ If adequately formed in the Catholic faith, Chinese Catholic parents will find vast common space for their faith and culture. Faith in parenting practice could mean God’s grace, as well as our efforts to fulfill the law; praying to God, as well as doing our work; worshipping God, as well as taking good care of each other; teaching children to give thanks to God, as well as recognizing personal achievements; striving to do God’s will, as well as admitting and allowing failures; giving alms to the poor and needy, as well as recognizing the need of their own family. A balanced approach of faith in parenting should contribute to the warmth of the family and result in a better success rate in faith transmission to the next generation.

Balanced faith socialization must also adapt to the natural order of children's development. For children to grow into adulthood, they must establish their identity through making more and more decisions about their own lives, including choices about

⁵⁰ Bengtson, 135.

⁵¹ Matthew Levering, ed., *On Marriage and Family: Classic and Contemporary Texts* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), 39.

faith practices. In this process, the proper quantity and quality of parental guidance on faith-related topics is much needed and appreciated, as it helps the child “anchor” their identity. Both “too little,” like the non-practicing Mark, and “too much,” like Joan’s mother, missed the opportunity to socialize faith with the next generation effectively.

It is difficult to define the correct quantity and quality of faith content in the context of parenting to each child; however, studies on children's cognitive development give us helpful guidance. Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget (1896-1980) showed that children are not simply smaller versions of adults; their way of perceiving and thinking was qualitatively different from adults. Therefore, children were not less intelligent than adults—they simply think differently. “Reality” perceived by children is significantly different from what is perceived by adults due to the lack of established logical hierarchy in children’s minds.⁵² Piaget helped us to see that there are both qualitative and quantitative differences between the thinking of young children and that of older children. He suggested that children grow through four stages of learning: The sensorimotor stage (0-2) – explore the world through basic actions such as looking, sucking, and sensations; the Preoperational stage (2-7) – learn and use language to think symbolically about objects seen or unseen; the Concrete operational stage (7-11) – thinking becomes more logical and organized regarding concrete objects; and the Formal operational stage (12+) – begin to use abstract reasoning following deductive logic to solve hypothetical problems.⁵³ His insights could guide parents to adjust the quantity and quality of faith-related content to fit each of their children better.

⁵² Jean Piaget, *Judgement and Reasoning in the Child*, trans. Marjorie Warden (London and New York: Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2002), 247.

⁵³ Piaget, 246.

The Mandarin-speaking parents at SOTW were mainly unaware of studies in the field of child development because most of them came to Canada as professionals, a class for much-needed skilled workers in Canada, mainly in the field related to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). The education systems in China were highly specified and siloed, and STEM students rarely had opportunities to learn art outside of their fields. Bringing awareness to Mandarin-speaking parents in church ministry related to parenting can alleviate parents' frustrations and help them adjust the quantity and quality of their faith socialization with their children.

Parenting in the Context of Faith

Complementing Piaget's theory of cognitive development, which primarily focused on how children think, learn, and perceive the world, German-American psychologist and psychoanalyst Erik Erikson (1902-1994) developed his psychosocial development theory, emphasizing social and cultural

Table 1 Erikson Psychosocial Development Stages

Stage	Psychosocial Challenge	Description
Infancy (0-1 year)	Trust vs. Mistrust	Trust (mistrust) their caregivers whether their basic needs (nourishment and affection) are met.
Toddlers (1-3 years)	Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt	Develop independence by doing things themselves, or doubt their abilities
Play Age (3-6 years)	Initiative vs. Guilt	Take initiative and plan activities, or feel guilty when met with failure or boundary overstepped
School Age (6-12 years)	Industry vs. Inferiority	Develop self-confidence by mastering new skills, feel inferior when failing to measure up.
Adolescents (12-18 years)	Identity vs. Role Confusion	Explore and form a personal identity, or become confused about who they are.
Young adults (19-29 years)	Intimacy vs. Isolation	Establish close relationships and intimate love, or feel isolated and alone.
Middle Age (30-64 years)	Generativity vs. Stagnation	Nurture things that will outlast them, often by contributing to society or having children; or feel a lack of purpose.
Old Age (65+ years)	Ego Integrity vs. Despair	Reflect on their lives, feel a sense of fulfillment or experience regret and despair.

factors in human development. Erikson proposed that personality development goes through eight stages of psychosocial development throughout one's life, as shown in Table 1⁵⁴. At each stage, the person experiences a psychosocial challenge that could positively or negatively affect personality development. These challenges are

⁵⁴ Saul Mcleod, "Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development," SimplyPsychology, last updated on January 25, 2024, <https://www.simplypsychology.org/erik-erikson.html>.

psychosocial because they involve conflicts between an individual's psychological needs and the needs of society.

When these complementary theories are put into practice, it means, on the one hand, the faith element in parenting needs to be concrete when the child is young and, at the same time, has the potential to go more deeply to communicate a concept or nuanced principle when their children grow up; on the other hand, the social challenges from the society the child faces at different stages of his/her psychosocial development must also be taken into account. Storytelling is one of the best-fitting vehicles for effective parenting in the context of faith. A good story has many layers of meaning, like an onion. One good example is the Biblical account of Adam and Eve, which allows the parents and their children to explore the meaning of their own lives at many different levels.

Storytelling has been widely used in different faith traditions and civilizations throughout the ages to pass down beliefs, values, and wisdom about life. The five thousand years of Chinese civilization have condensed many of these stories into about five thousand idioms, usually made up of four Chinese characters. Many of these idioms are widely used in writings and daily conversations. For example, “Ke Zhou Qiu Jian” (“刻舟求剑”) tells the story of the Warring State Period (~400-200 BC) about a warrior who lost his sword into the water while passing a river on a boat. He quickly marked the spot on the boat where his sword was lost. His companions were shocked and reminded him that he would lose his sword; however, the warrior responded, “No worries, I already marked the spot. Once the boat reaches the shore, I'll retrieve it.” When a Chinese parent teaches his/her child the idiom of the language, inevitably, the story would be told to bring not only a good moment of laughter but also to facilitate a discussion about issues

facing their lives today, “The time has changed, am I still trapped in the past?” A purposeful parent would use this moment to share a personal story and invite the child to join, “Does this remind you of anything similar you have experienced?”

The Jewish tradition has a vast body of literature called Midrash Aggadah, which came from the oral tradition and employs creative interpretations to explore the deeper meanings of the Scripture with stories, parables, and homilies to fill in gaps in the biblical narrative, offer moral lessons, or resolve apparent contradictions in the text. Catholics have the stories of the Saints, and they continue to be inspirations in our time. For Chinese Catholic immigrant families, the stories in the Bible, the lives of the Saints, the Chinese idioms, and Midrash Aggadah provide rich resources for purposeful parenting in the context of faith.

Beyond these other people’s stories, each individual’s life is a rich story, and that story needs to be explored, reflected, and communicated, especially with our loved ones. A fascinating example in the Scripture was how Joseph re-told his story to his brothers after being sold into slavery by these brothers many years ago, “I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. ... God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God.”⁵⁵

Parents' personal stories, retelling them to their children through the lens of faith, cannot only effectively socialize parents’ faith but also strengthen the parent-child bond. Many first-generation Chinese Catholic immigrant parents can resonate with Joseph’s

⁵⁵ Gen. 45:4-8.

story, which opens their eyes to see God's plan leading them to a new country and being baptized into a new faith.

However, two tendencies that lead to failure in storytelling must also be addressed. One is telling the story without exploring its meaning; the other is rushing to moral principles without connection with a child's life experience. If Piaget is correct, parents can not take for granted that their child must have known the apparent meaning of a story. Something obvious to an adult is not necessarily obvious to a child, who is not a smaller version of an adult. The meaning must be adapted and communicated, fitting a child's capacity for understanding. Sometimes, allowing children to provide their interpretations provides parents with insight into that capacity. A father needs to explain to their children why their mother did this or that to help the children recognize their mother's love or sacrifices, and a mother should do the same for the father.

Regarding moral principles, the same principle can mean many different things to different people or the same people but in different situations. For example, after telling the "marking the boat to search for a sword" story, the mom told her child, "Remember, son, the moral of the story is that we must adapt when the situation changes." Her seven-year-old son would wonder whether mom meant that after her having a bad day, he should not expect his new pair of running shoes, keep quiet about things happening at school, or both.

Passing Down the Faith or Value?

What are religious parents passing down to their children? Smith's study proposed that a "Real Culture Model" existed in the parents' minds across religious beliefs, though expressed differently. Their analysis was to reconstruct the

approximations and arrive at the analytic “culture model,” which assembles the assumed Real Culture Model.⁵⁶ The parents’ language describing this Real Culture Model is “values” (93% of parents) instead of “virtues” (7% of parents).⁵⁷ What parents care to pass down to the next generation is a set of values instead of religious beliefs.⁵⁸ A similar conclusion was drawn from a 2014 study of Asian and East European immigrant families in the Lombardy region of Italy, “Parents consider the transmission of more general values as important and let the children be free to live their religiosity as they want.”⁵⁹ The difference between values and virtues is that values are broader across different religions and cultures, for example, living a happy and good life, success at work, doing the right thing, independence, enjoying family and friends, and helping others. Virtues are Greek philosophical and Christian theological terms, such as love, faith, hope, fortitude, and temperance.

The assumption of the Real Culture Model is audacious, and the research approach of finding the common denominator of what is passed down in the family across different religious practices is not unquestionable. For example, a Christian parent says, “Love God, do good, and be diligent at work.” A Buddhist parent says, “Do not kill living things, and do not cut corners at work.” A Confucian parent says, “A noble person does not seek to fill his belly or comfort, but be diligent at work, and disciplined with

⁵⁶ Smith, 14.

⁵⁷ Smith, 58.

⁵⁸ Smith, 269.

⁵⁹ Elena Caneva, and Sonia Pozzi, “The Transmission of Language and Religion in Immigrant Families: A Comparison Between Mothers and Children,” *International Review of Sociology* 24, no.3 (2014): 446, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03906701.2014.954330>.

words.” (“君子食无求饱·居无求安，敏于事而慎于言”)⁶⁰ The Culture Model will catch the denominator of doing honest work and filter out the rest; it does not provide a holistic picture of what Christian parents pass down in their families. However, the proposed Culture Model provides a basis for different faith traditions to build upon and give meaning to a specific value in the context of a specific tradition.

For example, the values identified under Smith’s Culture Model include living a happy and good life, which means enjoying success and happiness and doing what is morally right.⁶¹ However, “happiness” and “morally right” were not defined and could mean different things in different belief systems. The proposed Culture Model provides ample space for Catholic parents to define its meaning in the Catholic tradition. The Catholic Church teaches the lifelong formation of the human conscience,⁶² which helps our Chinese Catholic parents to provide meaning to these value concepts in the light of the Gospel in the context of their family life. Learning through sharing among parents and sharing with children through the family’s lived experience, appropriately done, can become the most effective way to help parents “to practice their own personal religious faith, naturally, for its own sake and as role models for their children.”⁶³

Conclusion

Parents are at the center of intergenerational faith transmission, as I discussed in this chapter: 1. Studies in social science show that today’s families continue to be the

⁶⁰ The Analects of Confucius (“论语”) 1:14.

⁶¹ Smith, 15.

⁶² CCC 1783.

⁶³ Smith, 179.

crucial vehicle for passing down the faith; 2. Christian parents can play vital roles by practicing their faith and providing a warm, affirming family environment. 3. Storytelling is especially compelling for children, and parents should use it to pass down their Christian faith, taking into account the qualitative differences between adults and children's thinking, and 4. The Golden Mean finds support in social studies, church teachings, and Chinese philosophy. Parents should consider it in their family's faith practices.

I further discussed the challenges facing Chinese Catholic immigrant parents and how a supporting community can benefit them. However, passing faith to the next generation is never just a social project. Church teaching and theologian's work provides further insights and support, which is where the next chapter will turn.

Chapter 3

Christian Family as Domestic Church

The word of God is not only good news in a person's private life but also a criterion of judgment and a light in discerning the various challenges that married couples and families encounter.

—*Amoris Laetitia* 227.

Introduction

“The Parish is our home; there is no division among us” (“堂区是我家，不分你我他”) is the slogan of the Chinese Catholic Churches in the GTA, and it often shows up at the top of the bulletin board in the church lobby. When parishes are called home, pastors are regarded as parents. However, rarely are families called churches, and parents are viewed as pastors of faith and morals in their family.

This chapter lays the theological foundation for parents to be pastors in their own families and carry their primary duty of bringing the Gospel to their children at home. This chapter will start with the essential elements of the Church: community, communion, and commission, followed by how the Chinese Catholics in the GTA experience the Church; then explore the relationship between the domestic Church and the local parish; and finally, proceed to examine the roles of the parents in the domestic Church.

Church and Experiencing Church

The word “church” (“ekklēsia” in Greek) appears 116 times in the New Testament. When Jesus said, “And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build

my church,”⁶⁴ he meant a people who responded to the call of God to believe that he is the Son of God. Below is how the Catechism of the Catholic Church defines “Church,”

The word “Church” (Latin *ecclesia*, from the Greek *ek-ka-lein*, to “call out of”) means a convocation or an assembly. It designates the assemblies of the people, usually for a religious purpose. *Ekklesia* is used frequently in the Greek Old Testament for the assembly of the Chosen People before God, above all for their assembly on Mount Sinai where Israel received the Law and was established by God as his holy people. By calling itself “Church,” the first community of Christian believers recognized itself as heir to that assembly. In the Church, God is “calling together” his people from all the ends of the earth.⁶⁵

The three elements that stand out in this definition are community, communion, and commission. The “assembly” is a community of believers who come together to communion with Christ and each other and are commissioned to continue God’s “calling together” to all people at all times. This “calling together” is realized in Christian baptism, understood as the birth of a Christian or “the basis of the whole Christian life.”

⁶⁶ However, the Christian identity obtained through baptism is both individual and corporate because “baptism makes us members of the Body of Christ....one people of God of the New Covenant.”⁶⁷ Early Christians gathered in communities and lived the reality as one People of God through Communion — “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.” and were commissioned to bring the Gospel to the world.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Matt. 16:18.

⁶⁵ CCC 751.

⁶⁶ CCC 1213.

⁶⁷ CCC 1267.

⁶⁸ Matt 28:20.

The legalization of Christianity in the Roman Empire during the fourth century (Edict of Milan in 313 AD by Roman emperors Constantine I and Licinius and Edict of Thessalonica in 380 AD by Emperor Theodosius I) were crucial moments in history that shifted Christianity from a persecuted faith to the favored religion of the Roman Empire. Properties confiscated during previous prosecution years were returned to the Christians, permissions to build churches were granted, and the fundamental shift of Christian worship places from houses to much larger church buildings, as we know today, began. However, the side effect of the legalization was that baptism could also be a convenience due to political or economic reasons. Since then, the baptized have been coming together to worship in church buildings and to form communities called parishes. In Roman Catholic tradition, “church” is understood as a hierarchical system that operates at four levels: the local parish; the diocesan, a group of parishes under the leadership of a bishop; the national, an episcopal conference that brings together the bishops of a particular country or region; and the last is the universal, a global institution with the Pope as the supreme leader. The fundamental building block is a local parish, and it is here that the people of God break bread (Communion), form a community, and are sent on a mission: glorifying God through their lives.

Experiencing Church: For most Chinese Catholics in the GTA, “Church” means the four Chinese parishes in the region. Our Lady of Mount Carmel (OLMC⁶⁹) in downtown Toronto; Chinese Martyr Catholic Church (CMCC⁷⁰) in Markham, northeast

⁶⁹ Church website: <https://olmountcarmel.archtoronto.org/en/>

⁷⁰ Church website: <https://chinesemartyrs.archtoronto.org/>

of Toronto; St. Agnes KouYing Tsao Catholic Church (SATCC⁷¹) in Richmond Hill, north of Toronto; and Savior of the World (SOTW⁷²) in Mississauga, west of Toronto.

OLMC is the oldest Chinese Catholic church in the GTA, serving Chinese immigrants since 1967. The Gothic-style church was built in 1870 and served the Italian Catholics from 1908 to 1965. It became a

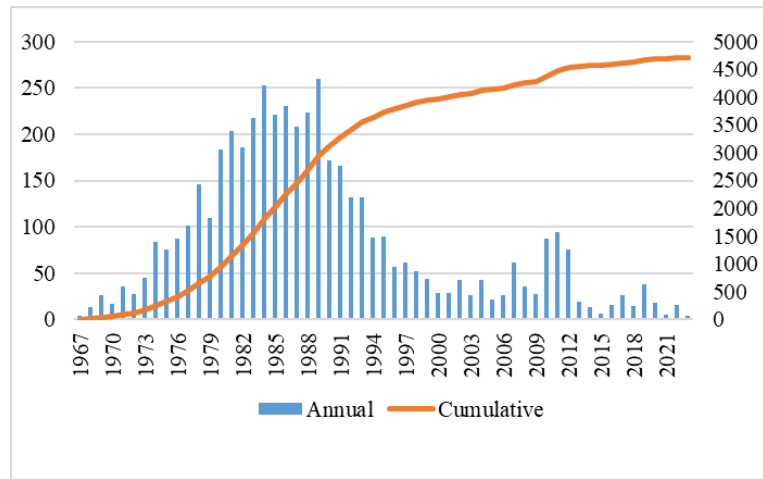


Figure 5 OLMC Baptism 1967-2023

Portuguese parish from 1965 to 1969 and has been a Chinese parish since 1970. There was a wave of immigrants from Hong Kong in the late 1960s and 1970s due to political unrest following the 1967 riots. Several thousand immigrated to Canada each year.

OLMC experienced significant growth in that decade, as shown in Figure 5. From 1967 to 2023, over 4,700 Chinese immigrant adults and children were baptized at OLMC.

Today, the parish has about 500 registered families, mainly Mandarin-speaking immigrants from Fujian, a province on the southwest coast of China with a long history of Catholicism dating back to the Ming dynasty (1368–1644).

⁷¹ Church website: <https://stagneskouyingsao.archtoronto.org/>

⁷² Church Website: <https://www.sotwccc.com/>

North America's largest Chinese Catholic church is CMCC, and it has 6000+ registered families. The church started in 1987 and was built in 1994 to meet the needs of immigrants from Hong Kong in the 1990s when many Hongkongers were worried about the future after 1997 when the British would return Hong Kong to China. About 5% of the seven million population in Hong Kong are Catholics, which is much higher than 0.7% in mainland China and 1% in Taiwan. After 2000, the lion's share of newly baptized people at CMCC were Mandarin-speaking immigrants from mainland China. From 1987 to 2023, over 12,000 Chinese

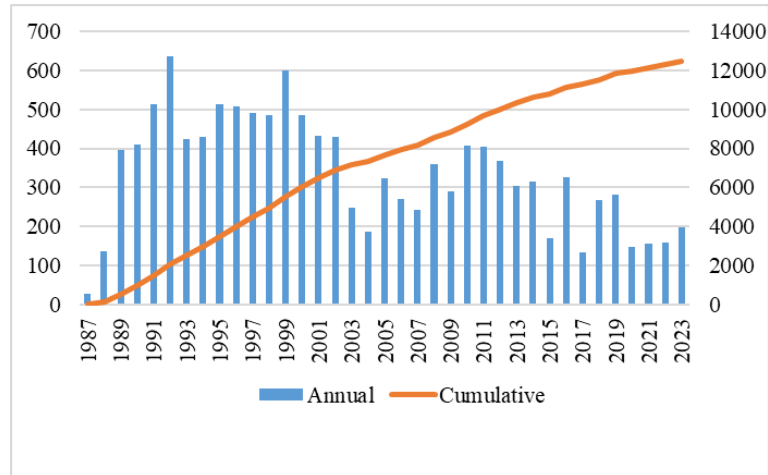


Figure 6 CMCC Baptism 1987-2023

immigrant adults and children were baptized at CMCC, as shown in Figure 6. Today, CMCC is the home of first-class relics of twenty Chinese Martyrs⁷³ and is served by four Chinese priests, one Permanent Deacon, two religious Sisters, and hundreds of volunteers in various ministries. The priests belong to the Congregation of Saint John the Baptist (CSJB), a religious Order founded by Belgium missionary Fr. Vincent Lebbe (1877–1940) in China in 1928.

⁷³ There are a total of 121 Chinese Martyrs (87 Chinese and 34 foreign citizens), Pope John Paul II canonized 120 of the 121 in year 2000.

SATCC is the 2nd largest of the four Chinese Catholic churches, with 5,000 registered families. The church started in 1992 and was built in 2001. It was named after the Chinese Martyr St. Agnes KouYing

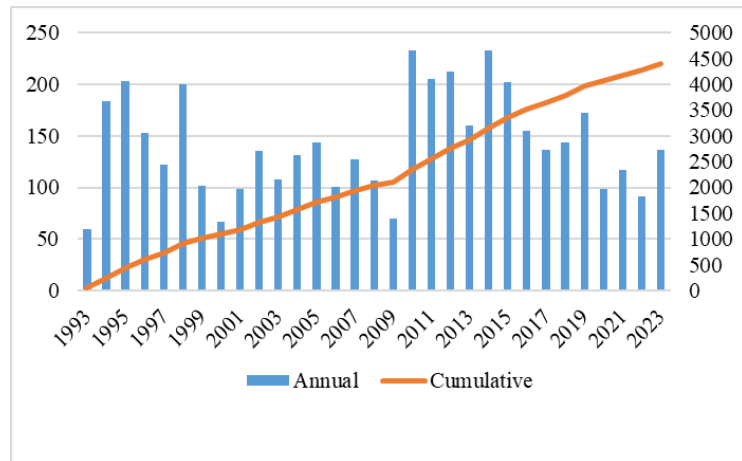


Figure 7 SATCC Baptism 1993-2023

Tsao, who was tortured to death in 1856 and was canonized by Pope John Paul II on October 1, 2000. Over 4,400 Chinese immigrant adults and children were baptized at SATCC from 1992 to 2023, as shown in Figure 7. Today, the church is served by four Chinese priests (two from Malaysia, two from mainland China), one retired Permanent Deacon, two religious Sisters, and hundreds of volunteers. The priests belong to the Congregation of the Disciples of the Lord, a religious Order founded in China in 1927 by Cardinal Celso Costantini (1876-1958), the Apostolic Delegate to China.

SOTW was the latest addition to the Chinese Catholic churches in the GTA. The church started in 1995 and was built in 2004, with 800 registered families. Over 2,100 Chinese immigrant adults and

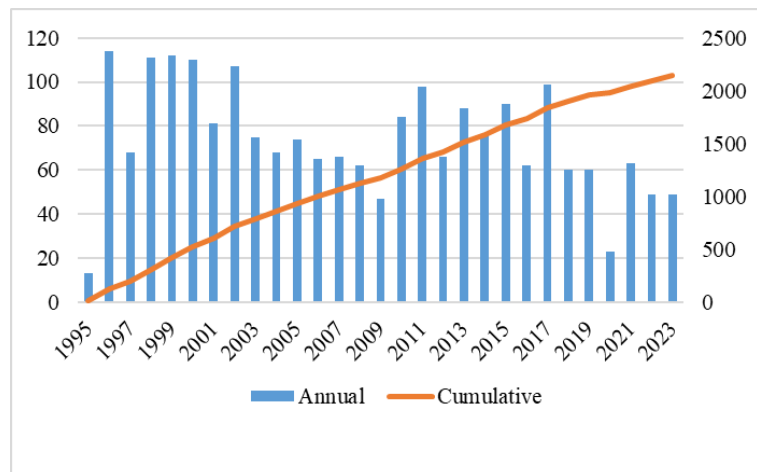


Figure 8 SOTW Baptism 1995-2023

children were baptized at SOTW from 1995 to 2023, as shown in Figure 8. One priest and one Permanent Deacon serve as ordained ministers.

Since 1970, over 23,000 Chinese immigrants and their children have been baptized in the Chinese Catholic churches, and the number continues to grow, as shown in Figure 9. There were several waves of Chinese immigrants in the past fifty years. The

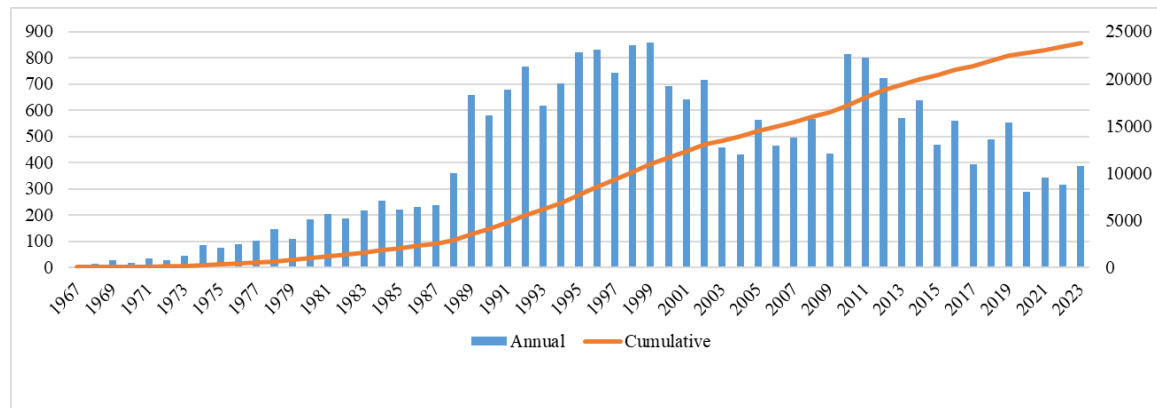


Figure 9 GTA Chinese Catholic Churches Baptism 1967-2023

first wave was Cantonese-speaking Hongkongers from 1967 to 1980, the second was Hongkongers in the 1990s, and the third was Mandarin-speaking from mainland China in the 2000s and the 2010s. We have been in the middle of the fourth wave of Hongkongers since 2020 when the national security law was passed in Hong Kong. Currently, two Chinese missions toward church building are underway. One is the Sacred Heart Chinese Catholic Mission (SHCCM) in the Scarborough area (Northeast of Toronto), which started in 2014, and the Chinese Martyr North Region Mission at New Market (far north of Toronto and an area experiencing significant Chinese immigrant inflow in recent years), which started in 2019.

The four Chinese parishes and the two missions have a strong sense of togetherness, and they formed a Chinese Pastoral Council, which includes all ordained ministers, religious brothers and sisters, and executives of Chinese Catholic lay

ministries. The council holds regular meetings and organizes joint events, for example, the annual Memorial Mass at Ching Ming, the traditional Chinese season of venerating the ancestors, and annual pilgrims to the Shrine of Canadian Martyrs (a two-hour drive north of Toronto).

For Chinese Catholics living in the GTA, community is mainly experienced through participating in parish life. Programs successfully developed in one Chinese parish are often shared with other Chinese parishes. For example, the Marriage Encounter and Cursillo programs organized by CMCC and SATCC have been shared with other Chinese parishes. Communion means attending Sunday Mass, and Commission is expressed at the end of Mass by sending the faithful to glorify God in their life, which is often understood as doing good to others, supporting church-related charities, and participating in parish activities.

Within a parish, various communities are formed for different ministries, such as the choir, the liturgy group, the altar server group, the prayer group, and Bible study groups, among others. They gather regularly to rehearse, learn, share, pray, study, and socialize. The communion with each other is expressed by being present and supportive at a personal level. The mission of the groups is centered on a specific church ministry. Chinese parishes also encourage interest-oriented groups to draw people's participation, such as Tai Chi groups and ping-pong groups.

In his recent study on parish, William A. Clark, associate professor at Weston Jesuit School of Theology, concluded that the most crucial and original character of a parish is "its sense of community and mission.... without their connection to community

and mission were becoming the death of parish.”⁷⁴ Before Vatican II, rarely anyone would link the mission of a parish to transforming a Christian family into a domestic Church, and the church experience within the family is a largely unexplored area. In his 2021 book *Evangelizing Today's Domestic Churches: A Theological and Pastoral Approach to the Family*, Robert J. Hater (1934 -), a diocesan priest in Cincinnati, wrote, “Before Vatican II, no one spoke of the family as a domestic church.”⁷⁵ However, in the past fifty-plus years after Vatican II, meaningful research and practices about the domestic Church have been explored. Now, we’ll turn our discussion to the concept and experiences of the domestic Church.

Domestic Church and Living the Domestic Church

The term “domestic Church” or “Ecclesia domestica” finds its origin in the early Church, when Christians “broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people.”⁷⁶ This home-based worship and community life can be seen as the foundation for today’s Christian family as a domestic Church, where Christian faith is nurtured and practiced.

The practice of faith in the Christian household is an ancient tradition that dates back to the Old Testament time, particularly in the story of Abraham. God’s call to Abraham established a covenantal relationship with his entire family, not just with him as an individual. The Covenant blessings and promises passed through the generations,

⁷⁴ William A. Clark, *A Theology of the Parish: The Face of the Church in Challenging Times* (New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2022), 145.

⁷⁵ Robert J. Hater, *Evangelizing Today's Domestic Churches: A Theological and Pastoral Approach to the Family* (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 2022), 22.

⁷⁶ Acts 2:46-47.

forming the basis for the corporate identity of the Hebrew people. The family of Abraham became the primary context in which faith was lived and transmitted.

This corporate identity—the sense that the family, as a unit, participates in God’s covenantal life—was carried into the New Testament and became a foundational principle for the Christian understanding of the family. Joseph C. Atkinson, associate professor of Sacred Scripture at the Catholic University of America, concludes, “It is only the corporate understanding of the human person that allows the family to become the domestic church.”⁷⁷ In this framework, the family is more than a collection of individuals; it is a single, united body that shares in the life of faith and, through baptism, participates in the broader body of Christ, the Church.

St. Paul deepened the notion of the domestic Church when he acknowledged the sanctifying power of marriage, even when one spouse is not baptized or does not yet share in the faith, “The unbelieving husband is consecrated through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is consecrated through her husband.”⁷⁸ This teaching suggests that the Christian household has a sacramental and transformative power that extends beyond individual baptism. Even an unbaptized spouse is, in a mysterious way, “consecrated” or sanctified through the believing partner’s participation in the Church, the body of Christ.

This understanding emphasizes that love—a gift from God—has the power to sanctify and transform everyone within the household, even those who do not yet fully participate in the Christian life. The family becomes a place where God’s grace operates

⁷⁷ Joseph C. Atkinson, *Biblical & Theological Foundation of The Family: The Domestic Church* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2014), 226.

⁷⁸ 1 Cor. 7:14.

powerfully, faith is nurtured, and the “domestic church” becomes a tangible expression of the larger Church.

Early Church fathers St. Augustine and St. John Chrysostom shared profound insights regarding the Christian family as a foundational place for living and witnessing the Gospel. Their writings reflect a deep appreciation for the Christian family’s role in the context of the mission of the Church, although they use different terms. Augustine refers to the Christian family as the “domestic church” (or “domestic ecclesia”), emphasizing that the family, like the Church, is a sacred community where faith is lived and passed on. Augustine “situated both the nature and the structure of the Church in the family itself in such a concrete way that the reality of the Church became a tangible reality within domestic life.”⁷⁹ For Augustine, the family was not merely a social or biological unit but a spiritual reality where God’s grace was at work. Augustine’s comparison of the father’s role to that of a bishop⁸⁰ further highlights the profound duty of the parents in the Christian family. Just as a bishop oversees and shepherds the Church, the parents are called to be spiritual leaders within the family, guiding their household in faith and moral living. In this sense, Augustine recognized family life’s sacramental and pastoral dimensions, elevating it to a sacred ministry akin to church leadership.

Similarly, Chrysostom refers to the family as the “little church” (or “micra ecclesia”)⁸¹, highlighting the sanctity and spiritual responsibility in the Christian

⁷⁹ Atkinson, 271.

⁸⁰ Augustine, *Sermon* 44.

⁸¹ Atkinson, 282.

household. Chrysostom views the Christian family as a training ground for virtues. In his teachings, the family is where charity, prayer, sacrifice, and other virtues are cultivated and practiced, laying the foundation for family members to live an authentic Christian life.

In both Augustine's and Chrysostom's thought, the Christian family goes beyond a place where faith is practiced but a microcosm of the Church itself. The Christian family is seen as a sacred community where God's presence is felt and where the values of the Gospel are lived. This view highlights the sacramental nature of family life, the significance of the parent's role, and the profound dignity of the Christian household as a Christian witness to the world.

However, since Christianity became the state religion of the Roman Empire in the early fourth century, and the rise of monastic practices, family life, as a way of holiness, gradually disappeared from Western Catholicism as Joseph C. Atkinson concluded,

Although the Church had never formally denied that marriage and family were ways to holiness, consecrated celibacy had become, at least culturally, the recognized state in which the perfection of holiness could be attained. Marriage and family life were seen, at best, to be second-rate and the default choice of those who could not attain the rigor of holiness required by celibacy.⁸²

It was not until Vatican II in the mid-twentieth century that the term “domestic Church” was resurrected in one of the most critical Vatican II documents, *Lumen Gentium*, “The family is, so to speak, the domestic Church. In it, parents should, by their word and example, be the first preachers of the faith to their children; they should

⁸² Atkinson, 270.

encourage them in the vocation which is proper to each of them, fostering with special care vocation to a sacred state.”⁸³ Pope Paul VI elaborated on this concept in his 1975 *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, “the family has well deserved the beautiful name of ‘domestic Church.’ This means that there should be found in every Christian family the various aspects of the entire Church. Furthermore, the family, like the Church, ought to be a place where the Gospel is transmitted and from which the Gospel radiates.”⁸⁴

In his discussion about the order of nature, Thomas Aquinas affirms that the human family is of divine origin in his discussion on the perseverance of species (ST 98), the condition of the offspring as to the body (ST 99), and the reason for the judicial precept (ST 107 Article 4 – whether the Old Law set forth suitable precepts about the members of the household). Mortimer J. Adler summarized Aquinas’ view on family in his Great Book essay: “Not only is it founded on the sacrament of matrimony, but the express commandments of God dictate the duties of care and obedience which bind its members together.”⁸⁵ Since Vatican II, the importance of the Christian family has gradually gained attention from theologians and the Church Magisterium. Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis further developed the concept and practices of the domestic Church through their 1981 and 2016 Apostolic Exhortations. Pope John Paul II wrote, “The Christian family constitutes a specific revelation and realization of ecclesial communion, and for this reason, too, it can and should be called “the domestic Church.”⁸⁶ This term

⁸³ *Lumen Gentium* 11.

⁸⁴ Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (December 8, 1975) (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1975), 71.

⁸⁵ Mortimer J. Adler, *The Great Ideas: A Lexicon of Western Thought by Mortimer J. Adler* (New York, NY: Encyclopædia Britannica, 1992), 224.

⁸⁶ *Familiaris Consortio* 21.

was repeated another seven times in his *Familiaris Consortio*. Pope Francis continued this term eleven times in his *Amoris Laetitia*. Under the Sacrament of Matrimony of the 1995 Catechism of the Catholic Church, a whole section was devoted to “The Domestic Church.”⁸⁷ Today, the Catholic Church teaches that the Christian family is, in a real sense, a “domestic church.” The Catechism of the Catholic Church refers to the family as the “first school of Christian life”⁸⁸ where children first encounter and experience God. In this context, parents are seen as the primary educators of the faith, and the home is the primary place where the faith is lived, practiced, and passed on.

The recognition of family as a vital unit of the Church, especially post-Vatican II, has been a significant development in Christian theology and practice. Vatican II emphasized that the Church is not just a building or a hierarchical institution but a living community with the family at its core. The resurrection of the “domestic church” concept has profound implications for how the essential elements of community, communion, and communion are understood and lived within the family. Today, the domestic Church remains the frontier of theology study, especially with ecclesiology.⁸⁹ However, theology never grew out of a vacuum; instead, it was always born from lived experience. At this point, surveying various practices or suggested frameworks to realize the domestic Church will be helpful.

Living the Domestic Church

⁸⁷ CCC 1655-58, 1666.

⁸⁸ CCC 1656-1657.

⁸⁹ Florence Caffrey Bourg, “Domestic Church: A New Frontier In Ecclesiology,” *Horizons* 29, no. 1 (2002): 52.

Since Vatican II, new programs and movements have enriched and continue to enrich Catholic family life. I suggest putting them into two categories; the first category of programs focuses on evangelizing a member (s) of the family, for example, the couple, the young adult, or the teen; the aim is to have better-catechized individuals, through whom the Church teaching reaches to a broader world, which could mean the family, the workplace, the society at large.

The second category of programs focuses on life in the family – the domestic church, which engages the parents and their children toward authentic Christian living through their daily choices. Catholic parents and their children are at the center; the aim is to live the Gospel through family life, where God’s grace can flow more freely within the family and through the family (a domestic church in particular) to the world.

An example in the first category of programs is Marriage Encounter (ME), which started in Spain in the 1960s to help Catholic couples live their calling of married life and has become a worldwide movement. ME centers on a weekend couple retreat that includes sharing by leading couples, dialogue between participating couples, and guidance from the spiritual director. Regular gatherings of the participating couples would follow after the retreat weekend. The Chinese parishes in the GTA started Cantonese ME in the late 1990s and Mandarin ME in the 2000s. ME strengthens the relationship of married couples and forms a vibrant group in the parish. However, the regular gatherings after the ME weekend usually fade within a few months after the retreat weekend.

For young adults, the Chinese Catholics in the GTA have been organizing an annual camp called Eastern Canada Chinese Catholic Living Camp (ECCCLC), held on

the Labor Day long weekend (first in September) since 1977. It is an intensive weekend organized by the youth with an ordained minister as the key speaker. The weekend is packed with catechesis talks, overnight adoration, confession, sharing, and youth activities.

The Chinese Catholic parishes in the GTA also adopted LifeTeen, EDGE programs for teens and 6-8 graders, and Totus Tuus summer camp for younger children. Toronto Diocese has held the Steubenville Youth Conference in Toronto since 2014, and the Chinese parishes organize their sizable youth groups to attend each year. Similar to ECCCLC, the conference is an intensive weekend of catechesis, adoration, confession, sharing, and worship, led by a ministry team made up of both the ordained and the lay.

Several Catholic movements with international reach have also found expressions in Chinese Catholic parishes in the GTA, such as the Charismatic Renewal, the Cursillo, the Knight of Columbus, and the Legion of Mary. These movements help foster spiritual growth, community engagement, and a deeper relationship with God. The programs in the first category share common characteristics:

- Meetings (gatherings) are held outside of homes, usually at retreat centers, campsites, convention centers, or church buildings.
- The experts are at the center – ordained ministers, trained public speakers, seasoned sharing couples, skilled retreat organizers, or well-trained catechists.
- The highlight is the intensive religious experience, usually through a weekend offsite event toward a transformative experience. Supporting an ongoing lived experience afterward through regular follow-up group gatherings is a second thought by design.

Regarding the second category of programs, which involves family members and focuses on practices within the domestic church, I have not found a popular program. However, we have tools suggested by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops on how to build a domestic church.⁹⁰ These tools listed religious practices that Christian families can adopt into their family lives, for example, praying the Rosary, reading the Bible, welcoming clergy and religious to their home, visiting shrines, participating in church activities, and following the liturgical calendar.

Scholars proposed principles for families to live as a domestic Church. Julie Rubio, professor of Christian Social Ethics at the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University in Berkeley, California, proposes to keep the balance between the “nurture of children with a willingness to take the work of Christ in the world” as one of the most important principles for Christian parents.⁹¹ Here, the work of Christ in the world refers to charity work the family can involve toward building a more just world. Stephen G. Post, professor at Stony Brook University School of Medicine, argued that “familial love is placed at the very center of the entire spiritual universe.”⁹² American ethicist and theologian Lisa Cahill would emphasize that “the social mission of

⁹⁰ The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, n.d. “Tools for Building a Domestic Church,” accessed September 05, 2024, <https://www.usccb.org/resources/Tools%20for%20Building%20a%20Domestic%20Church.pdf>.

⁹¹ Julie Hanlon Rubio, “The Dual Vocation of Christian Parents,” in *Marriage: Readings in Moral Theology* No. 15, ed. Charles E. Curran and Julie Hanlon Rubio (Mahwah, New York: Paulist Press, 2009), 203.

⁹² Stephen Post, *More Lasting Union: Christianity, the Family, and Society* (Grant Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 62.

compassion and service in the spirit of Christian love”⁹³ makes families a domestic church.

At the 2019 Catholic Family Life Symposium at the University of Notre Dame, Gregory Popcak and other scholars suggested a framework for domestic church spirituality called the 3Rs, aiming to fulfill the new identity in Christ as a priest, prophet, and king through Christian family life. The 3R refers to the Rite of Attachment, the Rite of Rituals of Connection, and the Rite of Reaching Out. The Rite of Attachment means the priestly mission of loving sacrifice in the family toward “secure attachment” among family members; The Rite of Rituals of Connection means the prophet’s mission of living as disciples to proclaim Christ through family rituals of praying, working, talking and playing together. The Rite of Reaching Out means the royal mission of being “the primary engine of evangelization and positive social change.”⁹⁴

A family, a microcosm of the Church, is a community of family members sharing intimate relationships and grounding those relationships in love, mutual support, and the teachings of Christ.

Communion in the family extends the Sunday sharing of the Eucharist into everyday life when dialogue, care, support, and forgiveness happen among family members and when family meals, prayers, and other activities become a thanksgiving.

⁹³ Lisa Sowle Cahill, *Family: A Christian Social Perspective* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000), 129.

⁹⁴ Gregory K. Popcak, Lisa A. Popcak, and David McCloy, “Come and Be Formed! The 3R’s in the Liturgy of Domestic Church Life,” in *Renewing Catholic Family Life: Experts Explore new Directions in Family Spirituality and Family Ministry*, ed. Gregory K. Popcak (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2020), 455.

This familial communion is an integral part of the communion within the local and the Universal Church.

The church mission, understood as spreading the Gospel to the world, is enriched by adding the family dimension. After Vatican II, the Christian family is viewed as not only a recipient of the Church's mission but also an active participant. Parents are the primary educators of the faith to their children, and their home becomes a field of evangelization. The Christian family's mission includes living the Gospel in daily choices, witnessing Christ through their relationships, and reaching out to others in love and service. This mission-oriented approach encourages families to see their everyday lives as opportunities to contribute to the Church's broader mission of spreading the Good News.

Living the Domestic Church in the Context of Chinese Immigrant Families

The tools, principles, and frameworks suggested for building a domestic church must be expressed in a specific cultural context. The experience of community, communion, and commission in a Chinese Catholic family is in constant negotiation between Christian principles and Chinese cultural norms such as filial piety, family relationship hierarchy, and harmony in the family.

Filial piety (孝, xiào)—reverence for parents and ancestors—is a core virtue deeply embedded in Chinese family life. Children are expected to contribute to the welfare of their parents, upholding values such as advancement in education, respectable careers, and success, which are often viewed as bringing honor to the family. Filial piety can be compatible with the Christian call from the fourth commandment to honor one's parents, and academic and career success might also go beyond bringing honor to the

family and be understood as a Christian duty to serve others and contribute to God's kingdom.

One of the common expressions of filial piety among Mandarin-speaking immigrants in the GTA is to sponsor their parents immigrating to Canada to enjoy life (“享福” “xiang fu”). When three generations live under the same roof, respectful dialogue and loving care toward each other are crucial to living in harmony. Christian family ethics prioritize the relationship between husband and wife, established through sacramental marriage, and a foundation for all other family relationships. Chinese culture emphasizes the relationship between parents and children. The classic work of Confucius, *The State of Equilibrium and Harmony*, puts five critical human relationships in the following order: “sovereign and minister, father and son, husband and wife, siblings and friends.” (“天下之达道五，所以行之者三。曰：君臣也，父子也，夫妇也，昆弟也，朋友之交也。”)⁹⁵

This family relationship hierarchy is visible at the Chinese family dinner table. When the husband sits at the host's seat, it signifies the spousal relationship; when the grandpa or grandma sits at the host's seat, it implies the importance of the role of grandpa or grandma in the extended family. A Chinese domestic church should respect family relationship hierarchy while emphasizing that all family members are equally loved by God. This love is demonstrated through serving each other and making sacrifices out of love, following the example of Christ. It is unnecessary to have one model to fit all; however, for a family to be a domestic church, Jesus Christ must be the head of the

⁹⁵ Disciples of Confucius, “The Doctrine of the Mean (“中庸”),” chapter 20, the fifth century BC, trans. A. Charles Muller, accessed February 15, 2025, <http://www.acmuller.net/con-dao/docofmean.html>.

family, which means essential family decisions should always be made through prayer. When family members learn to love and respect each other, and the one who sits in the host's seat at the dinner table is faithful and prudent, family harmony and happiness are the fruits; otherwise, friction and tension can be expected.

Chinese family ethics emphasize collectivism over individualism and place significant value on harmonious relationships among family members, respect for elders, and maintaining strong family bonds. These can be aligned with Christian virtues like charity, humility, and service. Chinese Catholic families could frame their domestic church as harmonizing Confucian family ethics with Christian spirituality. This does not necessarily mean finding Christian elements in the traditional Chinese culture or layering Christian practices (prayer, Bible reading) on top of Chinese tradition, for example, turning the mid-autumn festival tea and mooncake time into Bible study. Recent work by Peter Lovrick, homiletic professor at St. Augustine Seminary in Toronto, showed that “insights from Chinese lines of thinking, images, metaphors, and concepts are useful not primarily for converting people to Christianity, but for Catholic Christians to better reflect upon their faith.”⁹⁶ For example, the goodness of human nature, the conscience cultivation agreeable with the natural order (“中庸” Zhong Yong), or the Will of Heaven (“天命” “Tian Ming”), the spiritual path of awe – awe of the will of heaven, extraordinary people, and the words of the saints. (“畏天命、畏大人、畏聖人之言”)⁹⁷

Building a domestic Church in a Chinese Catholic family requires constant and respectful negotiation between Christian principles and Chinese cultural norms. Rather

⁹⁶ Peter Lovrick, *A Theology Made in China: Confucian Insights for Catholicism* (forthcoming), 3.

⁹⁷ Lovrick, 7.

than seeing these as competing forces, harmonious integration with mutual enrichment is possible, allowing the family to maintain its cultural heritage and religious identity. When the primary identity of Christianity is understood as compassion expressed in words and deeds of hope in Christ, we come to the essence of the definition of the Church as Orlando O. Espin, former Professor of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of San Diego, arrived, “It is always in concrete, contextual, *cotidianos* (daily lived reality in its historical and cultural context⁹⁸) that the fools may be identified as a People, not by what they claim or doctrinally explain but by the subversive hope that has led them demonstrably to bet their lives together for a world built on compassion, justice, and dignity for all. That is the Church.”⁹⁹

In this context, finding faithful expressions of Christianity that honor the rich Chinese cultural tradition in the domestic Church of Chinese Catholic immigrant families becomes possible. The experience of the Church within the family, especially in light of Vatican II, reaffirms the integral role that the family plays in the life of the Church. By living out the elements of community, communion, and commission within the family, Chinese Catholic Christians can bring together the teachings of the Church and their rich cultural tradition into their daily lives, making the family not just a part of the Church but a foundational expression of it. This understanding enriches the Church's life as a whole, ensuring that the faith is not confined to the parish but is deeply rooted in the very fabric of everyday life.

⁹⁸ Orlando O. Espin, *Idol and Grace: Traditioning and Subversive Hope* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2014), 114.

⁹⁹ Espin, 132.

Church and Domestic Church

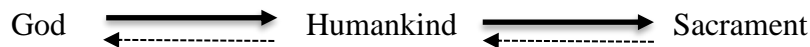
The relationship between a local church (or parish) and Christian families (the domestic church) continues to be a rich field of study among theologians, ministers, and the lay faithful. Understanding Christian worship will shed light on this relationship. Louis-Marie Chauvet (1942-), the French Catholic theologian, pointed out that the deciding factor is the “inter-connection, essential in every sacrament, between the action of the living God of Jesus Christ and the human action of the church.”¹⁰⁰ The understanding of this “inter-connection” evolved through the ages, and the differences in the Christian world continue to enrich each other.

Chauvet summarized the understanding before Vatican II into two models: the objective model, proposed mainly by Thomas Aquinas in the twelfth and thirteen centuries and adopted by the Catholic Church, and the subject model, proposed by Karl Barth, following the Reformer’s tradition, especially John Calvin, and mainly adopted by the reforming Christian churches. Chauvet illustrated the two models as below:¹⁰¹

The objective model:



The subjective model:



The emphasis of the objective model is on the upper arrow, “God sanctifies and saves human beings through the sacraments; these are primarily *means* of salvation. In

¹⁰⁰ Louis-Marie Chauvet, *The Sacraments: The Word of God at the Mercy of the Body* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1997), xiii.

¹⁰¹ Chauvet, xvi-xix.

return, humans can make of their whole daily lives a '*spiritual offering*' they present to the glory of God in the sacraments; these are then *signs* of salvation, that is to say, of God's grace present in daily life."¹⁰² For Catholics, the image of Sacraments is an "instrument" that produces grace, a "remedy" that restores spiritual health, and a "channel" that flows God's grace into human life. In practice, the local church (the parish) is the center of salvation where the Sacraments happen, especially baptism and the Eucharist. Catholic families gain God's grace by participating in the Eucharist at a local church and remaining on the periphery of the landscape of salvation.

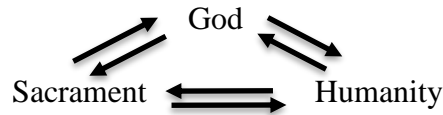
The emphasis of the subjective model is also on the upper arrow, "God acts freely, through the Spirit of the risen One, in the lives of human beings; the sacrament is the festival expression of this action. Where the objectivist model understood the sacraments as an instrument of *production* of grace, this model understands it as an instrument of *transmission* of grace, already given by God, into daily life. As indicated by the lower arrow, this function of recognition of what God has done allows humans, in return, to regard the sacrament as an expression of gratitude for what God has done."¹⁰³ From this understanding, the Reforming churches gather mainly to celebrate rather than gain God's grace, which is already given, and it has been "the source of an authentic missionary zeal,"¹⁰⁴ and a theological foundation for the flourishing of Christian house churches all over the world, especially in regions where new church building is restricted and the use of existing church facilities is curtailed.

¹⁰² Chauvet, xvi.

¹⁰³ Chauvet, xix-xx.

¹⁰⁴ Chauvet, xxiv.

Both models recognize the sacraments as an “instrument,” and the Vatican II model brought *production* and *transmission* together, “The liturgy (Eucharist) is the summit toward which the activity of the church is directed (transmission through celebration); it is also the source (production) from which all its power flows.”¹⁰⁵ Chauvet illustrated the model below:



This enlightened understanding upholds the primary location of the Universal Church, visible as a local church (parish), and acknowledges God’s free act through the Holy Spirit in the lives of the faithful (such as their family life). The result is the renewed energy in the Catholic Church to enable Christian families to be domestic churches, receivers of God’s grace from the Sacrament of the Liturgy, and a giver of Thanksgiving for family life to be celebrated and transformed in the Liturgy. This enables new initiatives in ministry toward bringing the liturgy (Communion) and the Christian families (Community) together and empowers the Christian parents to live the Gospel in their family (Commissioned). There have been three Synods specifically dedicated to family-related topics after Vatican II. “The Christian Family in the Modern World” in 1980 under Pope John Paul II, “Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of Evangelization” in 2014, and “The Vocation and Mission of the Family in the Church and Contemporary World” in 2015 under Pope Francis. The 2016 Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* put it this way, “The Church wishes, with humility and

¹⁰⁵ Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (December 4, 1963), no.10, https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html.

compassion, to reach out to families and ‘to help each family to discover the best way to overcome any obstacles it encounters.’ This goes beyond a generic concern for the family in pastoral planning toward enabling families to take up their role as active agents of the family apostolate calls for ‘an effort at evangelization and catechesis inside the family.’”¹⁰⁶ The image of a local church (parish) has become a “family of families, where small communities, ecclesial movements, and associations live in harmony.”¹⁰⁷

Inadequate seminary training is acknowledged: “it became clear that ordained ministers often lack the training needed to deal with the complex problems currently facing families.”¹⁰⁸ Missionary mentality is initiated: “Nowadays, pastoral care for families has to be fundamentally missionary, going out to where people are. We can no longer be like a factory, churning out courses that for the most part are poorly attended,”¹⁰⁹ and a calling for resources beyond local parishes is also extended,

Parishes, movements, schools, and other Church institutions can help in a variety of ways to support families and help them grow. These might include meetings of couples living in the same neighborhood, brief retreats for couples, talks by experts on concrete issues facing families, marriage counseling, home missionaries who help couples discuss their difficulties and desires, social services dealing with family problems like addiction, infidelity, and domestic violence, programs of spiritual growth, workshops for parents with troubled children and family meetings.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ Francis, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* (March 19, 2016) (Vatican: Vatican Press, 2016) 200.

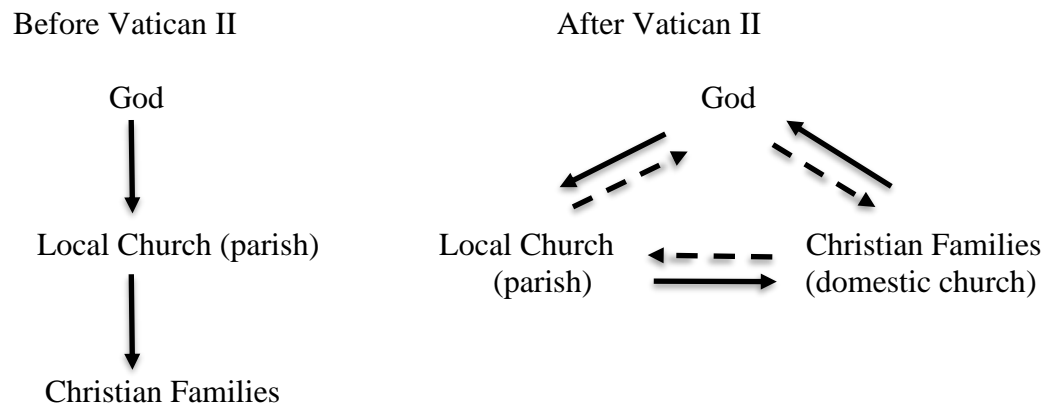
¹⁰⁷ *Amoris Laetitia* 201.

¹⁰⁸ *Amoris Laetitia* 201.

¹⁰⁹ *Amoris Laetitia* 230.

¹¹⁰ *Amoris Laetitia* 229.

Following Chauvet’s model of the flow of God’s grace, in the Catholic world, the relationship between local churches and Christian families in the economy of salvation can be illustrated in the diagram below,



The theological understanding of the Christian family has evolved from a pure receiver of God’s grace through the local church before Vatican II to a church by itself, and the family’s daily life becomes an integral part of church activity, leading to salvation after Vatican II. Robert J. Hater, a diocesan priest in Cincinnati, suggests schematizing the Catholic Church in five aspects: “the domestic, parish (local), diocesan, national, and universal,” as shown in Figure 10,



Figure 10 The Five Aspects of the Catholic Church

with the domestic church at the center, “The domestic church (family) is at the core of the Church. Here, faith is born and nourished. Family faith is incomplete, however, without a parish and the diocese to sustain it.”¹¹¹

¹¹¹ Robert J. Hater, *Evangelizing Today's Domestic Churches: A Theological and Pastoral Approach to the Family* (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 2022), 23.

Today, except in those areas where the function of the parish is severely hindered due to persecution, our lived experience would have the parish at the center, where the Sacraments are celebrated. The vision of family as a domestic church not only calls today's Christian family to extend the reach of the Gospel from the parish to the family life but also calls the parish to enable the parents by putting the Christian family at the center of its service.

The Role of the Parents in the Domestic Church

The role of the parents comes with a long list of duties hardly any other occupation can compare, from ensuring their children's basic needs of food, clothing, shelter, medical care, hygiene, and attending school to many others relating to emotional support, moral and ethical guidance, intellectual and educational support, and spiritual or cultural guidance. How these duties are fulfilled fundamentally impacts their children's well-being. A Christian family as a domestic church does not mean additional activities; instead, it means enlightening, elevating, and enabling parents to fulfill these duties as disciples of Christ. In this context, the role of the pastor could shed light on the role of the Christian parents in their domestic church.

The person entrusted to care for a parish is called a pastor, a term from the Latin word "pastor," which means "shepherd." This reflects the imagery and language used, especially in the New Testament, where spiritual leaders are compared to shepherds who care for their flock.¹¹² In his 1981 Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, Pope John Paul II called Christian parents "to share in the very authority and love of God the Father

¹¹² John 10:11; 1 Pet. 5:2-4; Eph. 4:11.

and Christ the Shepherd.”¹¹³ In the Pastor Installation Rite in the Roman Catholic tradition, seven duties are called out: ministering to people’s rebirth in Christ,¹¹⁴ facilitating people’s reconciliation with God,¹¹⁵ taking special care of the sick and the dying,¹¹⁶ preaching the Word of God,¹¹⁷ praying for the people,¹¹⁸ and gather the congregation regularly to celebrate by Praising and Giving Thanks (Eucharist) to God.¹¹⁹

The first heralds of the faith

Just as a pastor is a minister to people’s rebirth in Christ, Christian parents are “the first heralds of the faith with regard to their children.”¹²⁰ This rebirth in the domestic Church means parents bring their children to baptism and raise them in the Christian faith. Christian baptism is considered rebirth because “Man are made, not born, Christians.”¹²¹ as the prolific second-century Christian author Tertullian (160 -240 AD)

¹¹³ John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio* (November 22, 1981) (Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1981), 38.

¹¹⁴ “Be a faithful minister of holy baptism, so that all who approach the Church in faith, and the children of your parish may be reborn in Christ. Will you instruct and prepare them for their confirmation and first Eucharist?”

¹¹⁵ “By ordination, you have been appointed minister of Christ’s reconciliation in the sacrament of reconciliation and the care of your people. Will you carefully carry out these duties?”

¹¹⁶ “Will you take special care for the sick and the dying, bring them the healing power of Christ by prayer and the Sacrament of Anointing, and offer them the Viaticum of Christ’s Body and Blood?”

¹¹⁷ “This book (the Bible) enshrines the Word of God. Will you regularly meditate upon it and preach it to your people?”

¹¹⁸ “Will you pray the Liturgy of the Hours with due attention and devotion, for your people, and with them, as opportunity allows?”

¹¹⁹ “The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life. It is your duty to preside at the Eucharist to make present Christ’s sacrifice. With you, all your people give praise and thanks to God and are united in love by the Holy Spirit as they partake of the Body and Blood of Christ. Will you gather your people regularly to celebrate this mystery of faith?”

¹²⁰ *Gaudium et Spes* 48.

¹²¹ Tertullian, *Apology*, chap. 18.

put it. This “made” implies continued efforts, and the Roman Catholic Church entrusted that duty to the parents through the infant baptismal rite, “You have asked to have your child baptized. In doing so, you are accepting the responsibility of training them in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring them up to keep God’s commandments as Christ taught us by loving God and our neighbor. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?” Pope Francis articulated the parents’ duty in his *Amoris Laetitia*, “Faith is God’s gift, received in baptism, and not our own work, yet parents are the means that God uses for it to grow and develop.”¹²² St. Augustine compares a Christian father's role to a bishop's role in raising their children in the faith and protecting them from harm.

The Listener for Family Reconciliation

Relationships between family members break down when members fail to listen to each other, and broken relationships can be restored when true listening happens. If a pastor is appointed minister of the sacrament of reconciliation to reconcile humans and God, parents are called to bring reconciliation among family members. The ministry of listening in the domestic church can be compared with the ministry of reconciliation in the confessional by an ordained minister. When this listening is understood and carried out as a means for God’s grace to flow into family life, it becomes a sacrament where participants experience the presence of God and grow closer toward God and each other. Jesus is a compassionate listener; he listened to the cry of Bartimaeus, a blind beggar (Mark 10:46-52); he listened to the story of a woman who had been suffering from a bleeding disorder for twelve years (Mark 5:25-34); he listened to the inquiry of Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews, at night; (John 3:1-10); he listened to Mary and Martha

¹²² *Amoris Laetitia* 287.

in their grief of the passing away of their brother Lazarus (John 11). There is a ministry called “Jesus-the-Listener” started by Fr. Claudio Piccinini, a Passionist priest, in Teopoli, Ontario, a two-hour drive north of Toronto. The ministry gives out a specially designed crucifix called “Jesus-the-Listener” for families to place in a visible place of honor in their homes to remind them that Jesus, even though he is bearing great suffering on the Cross, has the will to listen to our prayers. Following Jesus-the-Listener means family members, especially the parents, truly listen to each other and their children, even in a busy life, and carry it out as a ministry, which elevates our daily conversations in the family to experience God’s presence. Pope Francis goes the extra lengths to stress the importance of married couples listening to each other,

Take time, quality time. This means being ready to listen patiently and attentively to everything the other person wants to say. It requires the self-discipline of not speaking until the time is right. Instead of offering an opinion or advice, we need to be sure that we have heard everything the other person has to say. This means cultivating an interior silence that makes it possible to listen to the other person without mental or emotional distractions. Do not be rushed, put aside all of your own needs and worries, and make space.¹²³

Christian parents, as ministers of Christ's reconciliation, would cultivate good listening as a critical element in their family life, not only between husband and wife but also between parents and their children. For children at a young age, parents’ listening helps them to build self-esteem and find better solutions together with less resistance; for children at an older age, parents’ listening shows respect and efforts toward mutual understanding. When parent preachers carry out their listening as a means toward reconciliation, they set an example for their children to learn to listen to each other, the path toward reconciliation when disagreement arises among them. Pope Francis says,

¹²³ *Amoris Laetitia* 137.

“The family is the primary setting for socialization since it is where we first learn to relate to others, to listen and share, to be patient and show respect, to help one another and live as one.”

The Care Giver for the Young and Old, the Sick and Dying

Taking special care of the sick and the dying in the domestic church means being with and caring for a family member who is dying or suffering from illness. Being with is the ministry of presence, and caring for someone is the ministry of service. Anointing of the sick and dying by an ordained minister is a sacrament or “symbol” of God’s healing. That symbol is expressed through family members' constant loving sacrifices when caring for a suffering member. Most parents can recall the long wait with their child in a hospital emergency room and those sleepless nights at the bedside of their sick kid; also, many struggle between demanding work and caring for aged parents in today's increasingly aging society. The sacrifices parents make to care for the elderly members of the family set an example for their children, which also resonates with the Chinese value of filial closeness.

A Person of Prayer

In the context of the domestic church, the pastor’s duty of praying for the people means parents praying for family members and gathering family members to pray as a community. We have the example of Job, the “blameless and upright” man, praying for his children in the Old Testament. He “would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them (his children) all; for Job said, ‘It may be that my children have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts.’”¹²⁴ Pope Francis encouraged

¹²⁴ Job 1: 1, 5.

spouses “to find time for prayer alone with God since each has his or her secret crosses to bear” and family to pray together since “the family that prays together stays together,” a saying coined by Patrick Peyton (1909-1992), a Catholic priest of the Congregation of Holy Cross, and founder of the Family Rosary Crusade. Praying the Rosary together each night was a routine in the Peyton household. Fr. Peyton devoted his priestly life to spreading the devotion to Mary and encouraging family prayer, especially the Rosary. Today, some devoted Catholic families in our congregation continue this practice. However, the leadership parents demonstrate does not have much to do with setting up rules for every family member to gather at specific times at specific places; instead, it has everything to do with becoming a person of prayer him/herself. “Family pray together” can mean praying before family meals and before children go to bed, praying on special occasions like birthdays, and praying when facing challenging situations. Family prayer time should also not be a time for parents to correct their children on a specific issue; instead, it is a time for every family member to have humility in front of God and learn to trust God.

A person of Thanksgiving

Parents giving thanks to God and family members in everyday life extends Sunday Eucharist celebration to daily life. The number one duty of a priest in the Old Testament is to give thanks to God on behalf of the people, “The priests are ‘appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.’”¹²⁵ That priesthood is completed in Jesus Christ, and every Christian inherited the priesthood of Christ through baptism, “The baptized, by regeneration and the anointing of the Holy

¹²⁵ CCC 1539.

Spirit, are consecrated to be a spiritual house and a holy priesthood.”¹²⁶ When an ordained minister celebrates the Eucharist at the altar, he is not on behalf of the congregation as in the Old Testament time; instead, he is presiding over the celebration and giving thanks to God together with the congregation, as Louis Chauvet puts it, “One presides; all celebrate.”¹²⁷

When Christian parents and their children come to Sunday Mass to give thanks, they bring the fruit of their labor and offer them as gifts at the altar, symbolized in the rite of the offertory. When the gifts are offered through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, their labor, joy and sorrow, success and failure, and everyday family lives are enveloped in the offering Jesus offered on the Cross. When we eat and drink the consecrated bread and wine, we are made the Body of Christ to be sent into the world, into the ordinary life to make it extraordinary. In this context, Christian parents exercise their holy priesthood at the altar of daily life and the altar of the Church. Through their holy priesthood, they transform their daily life into the Eucharist, the Thanksgiving in Christ.

The First Preachers of the Faith to Their Children

This is the title Christian parents receive from Vatican II, “The family is, so to speak, the domestic Church. In it, parents should, by their word and example, be the first preachers of the faith to their children; they should encourage them in the vocation which is proper to each of them, fostering with special care vocation to a sacred state.”¹²⁸

¹²⁶ CCC 784.

¹²⁷ Chauvet, xxiii.

¹²⁸ *Lumen Gentium* 11.

Biblical tradition put the duty of passing down the faith to the next generation to the parents, “Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.”¹²⁹ To bring the universal Gospel to a particular life situation, parents indeed have the advantage of making the Gospel relevant to their children and best suited for this mission.

Due to the language barrier children experience in the Chinese parish, parents bringing the Gospel to their children is particularly relevant. The Chinese parishes in the GTA hold Sunday Mass in three languages – Mandarin, Cantonese, and English. Most Mandarin-speaking parents would bring their children to the Mandarin Mass; however, the young generation, who either came to Canada at a young age or was born in Canada, is having difficulty understanding the readings and homily in Mandarin. At home, communication can be achieved through using a mix of both English and Chinese. Here, parents’ help is crucial to communicate the Gospel message to their children after Sunday Mass. This goes beyond simply reading the Scripture in English but to communicate the Gospel message fitting to their children’s age and relevant to their life experience, as Pope Francis suggests:

Parents always influence the moral development of their children, for better or for worse. It follows that they should take up this essential role and carry it out consciously, enthusiastically, reasonably, and appropriately....¹³⁰ Moral formation should always take place with active methods and a dialogue that

¹²⁹ Deut. 6:4-7.

¹³⁰ *Amoris Laetitia* 259.

teaches through sensitivity and by using a language children can understand. It should also take place inductively so that children can learn for themselves the importance of certain values, principles, and norms rather than by imposing these as absolute and unquestionable truths.¹³¹

The way Christian parents preach the Gospel at home can be quite different from an ordained minister preaching from the ambo at a congregational gathering. Preaching in the family is not primarily about doctrine but about the choices family members make when facing a dilemma. Sometimes, it means the parent preacher needs to show a child that “it is in his (her) own interest to do what is right.”¹³² Sometimes, it means constant efforts to help the children form a habit of gratitude or forgiveness from the basics of saying “Please,” “Thank you,” and “Sorry.”¹³³ For the parent preacher, behaviors in the family are not simply social conventions but grow out of our relationship with God and Church teachings.

Parents are natural preachers preaching a message to their children through words and deeds. If the Gospel of Jesus Christ is not preached, something else is preached, and what is preached could profoundly impact the lives for future generations.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed: 1. Extending Sunday preaching into the homes with the help of parents finds its theological foundation in the domestic church, a fruit of Vatican II; 2. Christian parents are best suited for passing down the faith to their children, and 3. To achieve this, parents and their children must be at the center of the mission.

¹³¹ *Amoris Laetitia* 264.

¹³² *Amoris Laetitia* 265.

¹³³ *Amoris Laetitia* 266.

Chinese immigrant families pay tremendous attention to their children's education and well-being. The local parish, experienced as community, communion, and commission, can significantly meet this heart's desire in the context of authentic Christian living. The theological development of the domestic Church after Vatican II encourages creating small parent communities where Chinese Catholic immigrant parents can learn, grow, and support each other through prayer and sharing, welcoming parents and their children attending Sunday Mass / Sunday school as a family, and empowering Christian parents to bring the Gospel to their children as "the first heralds of the faith."¹³⁴

The Chinese Catholic population continues to grow in the GTA, and the shared resources and sense of togetherness strengthen the image of Chinese parishes as "family of families." The role of the parents in the domestic church is a natural extension of the role of the pastor in the parish to bring the Gospel into concrete family lives. The Church's vision of Christian families is beautifully expressed in Pope Francis's *Amoris Laetitia*, "All of us should be able to say, thanks to the experience of our life in the family: 'We come to believe in the love that God has for us' (1 Jn 4:16). Only on the basis of this experience will the Church's pastoral care for families enable them to be both domestic churches and a leaven of evangelization in society."¹³⁵

¹³⁴ *Gaudium et Spe*, 48.

¹³⁵ *Amoris Laetitia* 290.

Chapter 4

Preaching in the Domestic Church

Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.

—Deut. 6:6-7

Introduction

Christian parents are in a privileged position to bring the Gospel to their children; however, many are unaware of their God-given duty. As demonstrated in Chapter 3, for the first time since the early Church fathers, Vatican II elevated the Christian family to a “domestic Church,” where Christian parents are natural preachers. The partnership between ordained ministers and parents is essential to extend Sunday preaching to the homes. The preaching methods developed through the centuries for ordained ministers can also be adapted into domestic Church preaching. This chapter discusses a framework for domestic Church preaching as dialog, witness, and storytelling.

Parent preachers are privileged in the domestic Church

This chapter uses “liturgical preacher” or “formal preacher” to mean an ordained minister who preaches to a congregation at the liturgy; “preacher,” “parent preacher,” or “informal preacher” to mean Christian parents who communicate toward persuading others to believe in a particular belief or follow a particular way of life. This communication can be a conversation with their child, a witness through their life

choices, and a shared story among family members. In his 2013 *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis says,

Today, as the Church seeks to experience a profound missionary renewal, there is a kind of preaching which falls to each of us as a daily responsibility. It has to do with bringing the Gospel to the people we meet, whether they be our neighbors or complete strangers. This is the informal preaching which takes place in the middle of a conversation, something along the lines of what a missionary does when visiting a home. Being a disciple means being constantly ready to bring the love of Jesus to others, and this can happen unexpectedly and in any place: on the street, in a city square, during work, on a journey.¹³⁶

When parents bring the Gospel to their children and communicate Christ's love through their words and deeds at expected and unexpected times and places, our parents become the preachers of the domestic Church.

The Vatican II document *Lumen Gentium* emphasizes parents' primary role as transmitters of faith to their children, "parents are the first preachers of the faith to their children." Parents are privileged to play their unique and irreplaceable role in nurturing and teaching the faith within the family, and the Church's recognition of parents as preachers reinforces their vital missionary role in their families. Christian parents partner with Church ordained ministers to fulfill their duty as the first witnesses of the Gospel to their children.

When liturgical preachers give homilies, they are always aware of their duty and prepare accordingly with prayer and study, with reflections on the personal life and the lives of the congregation; however, one of the challenges they face is how they can touch the hearts of many when many have different characters and are in different life situations. Gregory the Great (540-604 AD) called liturgical preachers to "edify all in the

¹³⁶ *Evangelii Gaudium* 127.

one virtue of charity, ought to touch the hearts of his hearers out of one doctrine, but not with one and the same exhortation.”¹³⁷ He further identified thirty-six pairs of opposite characters that preachers must be aware of, such as “Men and women; the poor and the rich; the joyful and the sad; ... the wise of this world and the dull; the impudent and the bashful; the forward and the fainthearted; the impatient and the patient; the kindly disposed and the envious; the simple and the insincere; the whole and the sick; ...”

The awareness of different characters in the audience can help the liturgical preacher grasp the complexity of preaching; however, there is no guarantee it will automatically lead to better preaching, measured by whether people’s hearts are moved toward God. Well-equipped and well-intentioned liturgical preachers must be aware of three obstacles: the one-way communication, the absence of life witness, and the irrelevant context. When a liturgical preacher talks over the congregation, it is a one-way communication; outside church services, an ordained minister’s life is largely unknown to the congregation, it weakens his/her witness and the context the liturgical preacher chooses to communicate the Gospel is often irrelevant to individual’s specific life as pointed out in *Fulfilled in Your Hearing*, “what is communicated is not what is said, but it is what is heard, and what is heard is determined in large measure by what the hearer needs or wants to hear.”¹³⁸

Parent preachers are privileged to overcome those obstacles facing liturgical preachers; however, they often preach various messages to their children through their

¹³⁷ Gregory the Great, “Catalog of Hearers,” in *The Company of Preachers: Wisdom on Preaching, Augustine to the Present*, ed. Richard Lischer (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2002), 356.

¹³⁸ Bishops’ Committee on Priestly Life and Ministry, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Fulfilled in Your Hearing* (Washington, DC, USCCB, 1982), 4. Hereafter *FIYH*.

words and actions without awareness. To become preachers, parents must be aware that their words and actions are constantly engaged in the art of preaching, and their family is not only a natural human community but also a domestic church, the Body of Christ.

The primary mode of preaching in a domestic church is a dialog between two individuals, a two-way communication that makes mutual understanding possible. The life of the parents, their joy and sorrow, desires and fears, and their way of conducting daily business are seen by their children. The parent preachers' witness to the Gospel, or not, is visible in the family. Every situation facing the family or the family's story can be a practical window (or portal) for the Good News. However, most Christian parents today are inadequately prepared and find it challenging to bring their children up in the faith and guide them in challenging situations.

Parent preachers' privileged position with their children, if coupled with liturgical preachers' strength in Scripture, theology, and philosophy, will help the Gospel message find effective ways into the homes. The partnership of formal and informal preachers is essential for fruitful preachings in the domestic Church.

Preaching as Dialogue in the Domestic Church

Home is often where Jesus preached, and his preaching is often a dialogue. At home, he engaged in dialogue with Nicodemus, Martha and Mary, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the scribes, and the lawyers. He conversed comprehensively with the Samaritan woman at the well (the source of water to the household), using a two-way dialogue instead of a monologue.

This chapter refers to dialogue as communication between two or more persons using words; often, the topic is serious, and the parties involved hold different opinions.

First, how words function in human communication needs to be addressed. Aristotle said, “Spoken words are the symbols of mental experience, and written words are the symbols of spoken words. Just as written letters are not the same for all people, spoken words are not the same for all people, but the mental experiences that these words symbolize are the same for everyone, as are the things these mental experiences are images of.”¹³⁹ This same mental experience made it possible for people to communicate with each other with words; however, it is critically important to understand the difference between a physical word (a spoken sound or a written letter) and a mental word (the mental experience of an idea, an image, or a feeling). The same physical word can have different mental experiences with different people; different people can express the same mental experience with different physical words. The path to establishing understanding between two minds is dialogue, which makes clarification possible. Their words establish communication only when the dialogue partners agree they have the same mental experience.

Preaching as dialogue is a well-established concept in liturgical preaching. In his 1988 Apostolic Letter *Dies Domini*, Pope John Paul II wrote, “The liturgical proclamation of the word of God, especially in the eucharistic assembly, is not so much a time for meditation and catechesis as a dialogue between God and his people, a dialogue in which the great deeds of salvation are proclaimed and the demands of the covenant are continually restated.”¹⁴⁰ In his 2013 Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope

¹³⁹ Aristotle - *On Interpretation*, Chapter 1, Section 16a.

¹⁴⁰ John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Dies Domini* (May 31, 1998) (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1998), 41.

Francis used the word “dialogue” 59 times and compared liturgical preaching to a mother’s conversation with her child, “It reminds us that the Church is a mother, and that she preaches in the same way that a mother speaks to her child, knowing that the child trusts that what she is teaching is for his or her benefit, for children know that they are loved.”¹⁴¹

In his 2016 Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*, Pope Francis elaborated on the question, “Where are our children?” and asked, “Do we seek to understand ‘where’ our children really are in their journey? Where is their soul? Do we really know? And above all, do we want to know?”¹⁴² To answer these questions, dialogue must happen, and happen under the light of the Gospel of hope, love, and faith. In this context, preaching in the domestic church needs to be a dialogue, a two-way communication rooted in concrete life experience that brings forth the Gospel message.

Preaching as dialogue to exercise the will, the claim, and the meaning exchange

In his discussion about God and humans, Herbert Farmer (1892-1981), theologian and former professor of Divinity at Cambridge, argued that God “never enters into personal relationship with a man apart from other human persons.”¹⁴³ In this context, preaching became an “I-Thou” personal encounter with other human beings in which participants exercise their will, articulate claims, and share meaning. However, “a claim

¹⁴¹ *Evangelii Gaudium* 139.

¹⁴² *Amoris Laetitia* 261

¹⁴³ H.H. Farmer, “The I-Thou Encounter,” in *The Company of Preachers: Wisdom on Preaching, Augustine to the Present*, ed. Richard Lischer (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2002), 143.

only conditions my will by being understood. I am free to accept or reject it, but I can only accept or reject it by first understanding it.”¹⁴⁴

In the domestic church, almost every conversation bears the three marks: the will, the claim, and the meaning exchange, which either affirm or alternate choices in a particular situation. Examples include what time to go to bed, which clothes to wear, and what dishes to have for dinner. In other words, almost every conversation in the domestic church has the potential to be a moment of preaching as a dialogue. However, without that awareness, these conversations often become a power play instead of a dialogue. Understanding and freedom are at the center of Farmer’s insights about preaching as an “I-Thou” dialogue. First, dialogue partners must make efforts to understand each other, which means their mental ideas are in sync. Second, dialogue partners must be free to accept or reject each other’s claims without worrying about the consequences.

I use ordering food at a Chinese restaurant as an example. When the family takes their seats at the table, the mom or dad takes the menu and orders every dish for the family because the mom or dad knows the budget and what the children like to eat, then there would be no dialogue. On the other hand, if everyone is allowed to order a dish he/she likes for the family to share, the result is not only no dialogue but also can end up with too much dessert without meaningful food or too much meat without vegetables, and likely over budget. In the domestic church, this food ordering can be a moment of preaching starting with an inquiry of the wills, “What would you like to eat?” followed by clarification to reach an understanding, “Do you mean this one in the picture?” “We had chicken at lunch. Are you sure you'd like to order chicken again?” Here, meaning

¹⁴⁴ Farmer, 144.

sharing is to reach a consensus through reasoning and caring, which allows participants to freely accept or reject, “Jonny, this dish is quite chewy; Julie just had her teeth fixed yesterday. Do you mind if we change it to a less chewy one?” “Mark, the lobster is quite expensive today; however, their shrimp is on sale at a very good price; how about we order shrimp instead of lobster?” “Edward, how about we order crab tofu soup instead of shark fin soup? Recently, I read an article about shark finning that contributed to the decline of many shark species.”

No matter which approach a family takes, a message is preached. The first scenario was that mom and dad know best, respecting authoritative figures, and children’s opinions do not matter. The second scenario is that individual choice is most valued, even if that means the family as a whole is worse off. The third scenario involves dialogue, exchange of ideas, compromise with freedom, and reaching a solution that everyone could be better off by enjoying a variety of dishes. The entire conversation did not have “God said” or “What would Jesus do?” However, it is preaching in the domestic church when it was carried out purposefully. Each person has the chance to exercise his/her will; the process respects each participant’s freedom to put their ideas forward and to accept or reject others’ claims freely. The meaning is exchanged through reasoning and goodwill. The value of dialogue and cooperation is embedded in the process; respect for individual opinion is demonstrated, and compromises for the family's good as a whole are exercised.

Preaching as dialogue to reveal the subtext of family life

Every life situation can open a window to experience Christ, but not without effort. M. Craig Barnes, former professor at Princeton Theological Seminary, regards a

liturgical preacher as a “minor poet”¹⁴⁵ who cooperates with the Poet (God) to provide meaning that is a subtext of things evident at the surface. This subtext is often revealed through dialogue in the joy and sorrow experienced in daily life. Let us go back to the topic of meals. Family eating together is part of Chinese custom, and most Chinese Catholic immigrant families regularly eat together. If the meal is regarded as a chance for parents to ensure their children are getting enough nutrition, we can expect a lot of words to be exchanged about food, such as “Eat your vegetable.” “But I do not like veggies!” “Finish your meal,” “I am already full.” If meal time is regarded as a chance for parents to ensure their children are on track with their studies, what can be expected would be scrutiny about grades, “How was your math test today?” “How come you missed that question?” “How is your mark compared with your classmates?” “Have you finished your homework yet?” “Stop listening to music when you are doing your homework.” “How many times I have told you...” However, if the family meal is regarded as a family communion time, dialogue can be expected, such as, “How was your day?” “That was a tough situation. How did you handle that?” “Thank you for hearing me out. I feel much better now.” Now we see that a family meal is like a window that can lead the family to food, to school work, or to family communion. Parents, as “minor poets,” could purposely use this window to reveal the subtext of their daily life as a Thanksgiving through meaningful dialogue. When family members go through challenging times, for example, losing a job, being diagnosed with an illness, or suffering from a failed relationship, the preacher, as a minor poet, brings the subtext of hope into their family life through meaningful dialogue among family members.

¹⁴⁵ M. Craig Barnes, *The Pastor as Minor Poet: Texts and Subtexts in the Ministerial Life* (Grand Rapids, Michigan / Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans, 2009), 24.

Preaching as dialogue as two-way listening-speaking-listening

Fred B. Craddock, former professor of preaching in the Candler School of Theology at Emory University, in his *As One Without Authority*, argues that the Gospel “is not a self-contained entity out there or back there that is narrated in its purity for ten minutes, with a final ten minutes devoted to milking lessons from it for us today. Those who hear are not just an audience; they are participants in the story.”¹⁴⁶ He uses “listening-speaking-listening” to describe the nature of liturgical preaching, “Word belongs to communication, and communication is listening-speaking-listening. It is in the sharing that the Word has its existence.”¹⁴⁷ His insight on liturgical preaching also applies to preaching in the domestic church. Parents and their children are participants in daily life, which is a story enriched through the listening-speaking-listening or dialogue process, nuanced by the different characters of each family member. Even when dealing with similar issues, the words adopted can differ. The parent preacher engages in dialogue with one child, “I got a call from your teacher today...could you tell me why would you do that?” but with the other, “How was your day at school? Was there anything that bothered you?” The effect of the words on each child is the same, but the words and the tunes are nuanced to fit each child’s character. The significant challenges liturgical preachers face in a congregation with many different characters can now be addressed individually in a domestic church through dialogue - the two-way communication of listening-speaking-listening.

¹⁴⁶ Fred B. Craddock, *As One Without Authority* (St. Louis, Missouri: Chalice Press, 2001), 59.

¹⁴⁷ Craddock, 59.

Karl Barth (1886-1968), the Swiss theologian, viewed liturgical preaching as an interactive engagement, and preachers should be in deep dialogue with the Scripture and the congregation. In his book *The Renewal of Preaching*, David J. Randolph, professor of theology at Olivet University in San Francisco, California, emphasized that preaching should be less monologue and more dialogue. He believed that effective preaching involves the preacher and the congregation participating in a shared exploration of God's message. John McClure, professor of homiletics at Vanderbilt Divinity School in Nashville, Tennessee, advocates a dialogue preaching style as "roundtable conversation,"¹⁴⁸ which incorporates the voices of others through feedback from the congregation and turns preaching into an ongoing dialogue rather than a one-sided address. In her *Preaching as Local Theology and Folk Art*, Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, Professor of Homiletics at Yale Divinity School, promotes a dialogical relationship between the preacher and the community and encourages preachers to listen closely to the context and culture of their congregations, making the sermon a response to people's lived realities.¹⁴⁹ In Catholic preaching, *Fulfilled in Your Hearing* suggests that "out of that dialogue between the Word of God in Scriptures and the Word of God in the lives of His people, the Word of God in preaching begins to take shape."¹⁵⁰

When applied to domestic Church preaching, liturgical preaching as a dialogue implies that parent preachers need to engage in dialogue with the Scripture, with other

¹⁴⁸ John S. McClure, *The Round-table Pulpit: Where Leadership & Preaching Meet* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995), 48.

¹⁴⁹ Leonora Tubbs Tisdale. *Preaching as Local Theology and Folk Art* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1997), 143.

¹⁵⁰ *FIYH*, 10.

parents, and with their children. Dialogue with the Scripture does not mean that parents need to take courses on Scripture, be fluent in the historical criticism method, and can exegesis Jesus. Instead, it means parent preachers attend Sunday Mass, listen to the Word proclaimed, pay attention to the homily, and ponder the meaning of the Gospel in their life situations. Dialogue with other parents is to expand the horizon to include other possibilities in a given life situation. Dialogue with their children is to find proper words, tunes, and occasions to engage in meaningful conversation to bring the Gospel to them in their concrete life experience. Liturgical preachers are encouraged to form a Homily Preparation Group so that through listening and sharing the Gospel, the preacher “is able to point in concrete and specific ways to the difference that the hearing of the good news can make in the lives of those who hear it.”¹⁵¹ Similarly, community listening and sharing prepares parent preachers more effectively to bring the Gospel to their concrete family life.

Liturgical preaching as a dialogue means bringing the congregation's questions, concerns, and feelings into the homily so they hear their concerns articulated and responded to. In the domestic church, the parent preacher, through dialogue, brings in the children's questions, concerns, fears, and ideas into their conversation so that it is not just a parent's monologue.

Preaching as Witness in the Domestic Church

A witness is someone who sees an event, and a valid witness requires this someone to tell the truth of what he/she saw. Preaching as a witness goes back to the very

¹⁵¹ *FIYH*, 38.

beginning of Christianity, and the Apostles were called witnesses, “You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”¹⁵² The first preaching of the Church given by St. Peter on the Pentecost was a witness preaching, “This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses.”¹⁵³ Similar preaching was given at the conversion of Cornelius’ family, “We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree.”¹⁵⁴ When the Apostles decided to choose someone to take the place of Judas, the criteria was “one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection.”¹⁵⁵

St. Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, was challenged by the early Christian community about his authority because he never met Jesus when Jesus lived among the people, except for a mysterious personal encounter with the risen Lord on his way to Damascus, and to make his case more complicated was that in that encounter he did not see the risen Lord but only heard his voice. Was that encounter enough to qualify St. Paul as a witness? The answer was no, and St. Paul knew that. To establish the authenticity of his witness that Jesus was indeed alive, he argued the effect of that encounter - his dramatic life change from a Christian persecutor to a preacher of the Gospel and the suffering he endured,

¹⁵² Acts 1:8.

¹⁵³ Acts 2:32.

¹⁵⁴ Acts 10:39.

¹⁵⁵ Acts 1:21-22.

Five times I have received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I received a stoning. Three times I was shipwrecked; for a night and a day I was adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from bandits, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers and sisters; in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, hungry and thirsty, often without food, cold and naked. And, besides other things, I am under daily pressure because of my anxiety for all the churches.¹⁵⁶

Further, he took pains to convince his audience that his witness was not secondhand but from the Lord directly,

For I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel that was proclaimed by me is not of human origin; for I did not receive it from a human source, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. ... But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with any human being, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were already apostles before me, but I went away at once into Arabia, and afterward I returned to Damascus.... Then after three years I did go up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days; but I did not see any other apostle except James the Lord's brother. In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie!¹⁵⁷

With the passing of the Apostles, eyewitnesses ceased, and the Catholic Church recognizes this fact, "In the office of the apostles, there is one aspect that cannot be transmitted: to be the chosen witnesses of the Lord's Resurrection and so the foundation stones of the Church."¹⁵⁸ However, it was St. Paul who laid the foundation for an authentic Christology, which fundamentally expanded the understanding of Jesus and made it possible for all future generations of Christians to become witnesses,

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether

¹⁵⁶ 2 Cor. 11:24-28.

¹⁵⁷ Gal. 1:11-24.

¹⁵⁸ CCC 860.

thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead so that he might come to have first place in everything. ¹⁵⁹

Apostle Paul died a martyr's death for his belief that Jesus was alive (resurrected from the dead), and his witness with his life is no less credible than an eyewitness.

Eyewitnesses focused on what Jesus did and said and backed it up with the fact that they were there to see, hear, and experience. Life witnesses also focused on what Jesus did and said but backed it up with their lives shaped by that belief. In his 1975 apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (On Evangelization in the Modern World), Pope Paul VI said: "Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses."¹⁶⁰ The difference is that teachers can only talk about Jesus, while witnesses not only talk about Jesus but also back up their words with their lives.

The lifestyle of a liturgical preacher consists of his/her commitment to prayer, study, and living as a witness to what he/she preaches. St. Augustine regards a preacher's life as "an eloquent sermon,"¹⁶¹ and the Dominican tradition emphasizes "proclaiming and living the gospel and engaging the world in service to others."¹⁶² Living daily life as a Christian witness is essential to credible preaching and has been stressed by theologians and Church magisterium through the ages. Preaching as a witness has a long history

¹⁵⁹ Col. 1:15-18.

¹⁶⁰ *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 41.

¹⁶¹ Michael Pasquarello III, *We Speak Because We Have First Been Spoken: a Grammar of the Preaching Life* (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 2009), 58.

¹⁶² Pasquarello III, 85.

that goes back to the Apostles' time and applies to anyone who wants to bring the Gospel to others, whether liturgical preachers in a local parish or parent preachers in their domestic church.

Preaching as a witness in the domestic Church has three levels: Level One - Preaching as a witness to a good God through the goodness of life and conducting daily dealings accordingly; Level Two - Preaching as a witness to the Catholic faith through prayer, study, and service; Level Three - Preaching as a witness to Christ in adversities.

Preaching as Witness to the Goodness of Life

The goodness of life and conducting daily dealings with integrity is a witness to the good and trustworthy God. This witness is universal because all human beings are made in the image of God, made through Christ, for Christ, and sustained in Christ. This witness lays a credible foundation for the next two levels of witnesses. Humbert of Romans (1200 - 1277 AD), the fifth master general of the Dominican Order, talks about the requirements for a Dominican Preacher, "Goodness of life is necessary for every preacher." He further defines this goodness of life as a holy conscience, a reputation beyond reproof, austerity, public witness, the integrity of words and actions, and an attractive manner. He concludes with a quote from St. Gregory, "If a man's life is despised, it will follow that his preaching too is despised."¹⁶³ For men and women living a family life, goodness of life can mean non-violence and treating each other with sincerity, kindness, and integrity.

¹⁶³ Humbert of Romans, "Treatise on The Formation of Preachers," in *Early Dominicans Selected Writings*, ed. Simon Tugwell (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1982), 215-16, 224.

Jesus' question to the rich man - "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone," directs every goodness to God. Reflecting on this encounter, Pope John Paul II developed a Christian morality through his 1993 Encyclical *Veritatis Splendor*, which emphasizes the urgency of living the Christian faith in actions,

It is urgent to rediscover and to set forth once more the authentic reality of the Christian faith, which is not simply a set of propositions to be accepted with intellectual assent. Rather, faith is a lived knowledge of Christ, a living remembrance of his commandments, and a truth to be lived out. A word, in any event, is not truly received until it passes into action, until it is put into practice. Faith is a decision involving one's whole existence.¹⁶⁴

The Judeo-Christian tradition has a long history emphasizing the importance of ethical conduct in daily life. Shabbat 31 in the Talmud describes questions a person will face after death when standing before the Heavenly Court. One of the first questions is: "Nasata v'natata b'emunah?" (נִשְׁאַתָּ וְנִתַּתָּ בְּאֵמוּנָה) - "Were you honest in your business dealings?" (or literally, "Did you conduct your business with faithfulness?") The point is that before religious observance, a person is judged on how he/she conducts everyday dealings, especially in buying and selling. Integrity in daily dealing is seen as a reflection of one's spirituality, which is the relationship with God.

A family went to an all-day-breakfast buffet after Sunday Mass. Knowing the restaurant charges full price for twelve and above, the mom told the daughter, who celebrated her twelfth birthday two weeks ago, "If anyone asks, just say you are eleven." The daughter was nervous throughout the meal, and what a relief when she finally walked out of the restaurant. No one ever asked; however, she remembered this stressful meal even years later, though she could not remember anything about what was preached at that Sunday Mass. That Sunday, the mother preached a message, loud and clear, to her

¹⁶⁴ *Veritatis Splendor* 88.

daughter, no matter what was preached in the church. These seemingly minor events were preached in such volume that when looking back, many might have a hard time remembering what was preached in the Church but have no difficulty recalling the messages embedded in those minor events.

What if the mother was aware she was the parent preacher, a witness to the Gospel preached in the Church? Here is the possible alternative version: on their way to the restaurant, the daughter asked, “Mom, I wonder what I should say if someone asks about my age.” The mom asked, “What do you think?” “Well, my gut tells me twelve, but another thought says eleven; two weeks do not make much difference; you and Dad have been working hard.” “Thank you for being so thoughtful; you know God always provides. Do what your gut tells you; Mom is proud of you.” This time, the mother preached a message of following one’s conscience to do the right thing, though that meant she would have to pay more. The daughter will grow up and face life dilemmas herself; the mother’s witness will give her strength to do the right thing, even if that costs her more.

Preaching as a Witness to the Catholic Faith

This Level Two witness provides the reason to the Level One witness and bears fruit in the Level Three witness. Parent preachers must have visible signs of practicing their faith and be apparent to other family members, especially the children. Practices by liturgical preachers through the ages provide guidance for parent preachers, who also must strive to be persons of prayer, study, and service. A person of prayer in the domestic church is a person who prays regularly, who prays when facing important decisions, and who invites other family members to pray. Pray regularly, such as first thing in the

morning and last thing before sleep, or at a regular place, such as a prayer corner at home. The fruit of a prayer life is reflected in everything the parent preacher conducts, especially when making important choices. However, the reasons for making a specific choice are often not apparent to the children. Sometimes, it is helpful for the children's faith when the parent preacher shares his/her reasoning. Sometimes, out of humility, the reasons could not be shared; however, the other parent can provide his/her insight to the children, "Do you know why mom/dad chose to.... It is because...." When children live with both parents, the parents should take this advantage to help their children understand the witness to a Christian living the other spouse makes.

There should also be communal prayer in the domestic Church, which means a family prays together. However, it should be extended as an invitation instead of a rule so that family members are free to join or not join. According to Bengtson's report in Chapter Two, the two most critical factors for intergenerational faith transmission are practicing parents and a warm family. Being a person of prayer, study, and service, the parent preachers' faith practice speaks volumes to their children. Family prayer, when organized as an invitation, respects everyone and keeps the warmth of the family. Usually, when children are young, they are happy to cuddle with mom and dad at family prayer time, and multiple research reports suggest that family prayer promotes children's well-being and a sense of security, such as the 2004 Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinic study suggests, "Spiritual and religious traditions emphasize the place of the person in a created and spiritual order. Through stories, traditions, and sacred scriptures, individuals have an identity in a spiritual context and are not seen as the product of time

and chance—the purely secular view.”¹⁶⁵ However, reciting the Rosary gradually loses appeal when the children grow into their teenage years. Welcoming them to join for even part of the prayer preaches a better message than demanding them behave as they were younger. Short prayers before meals as routine and intensified prayers when the family is facing significant challenges are also effective witnesses as a family.

Many Chinese Catholic immigrant families in the GTA have only one of the parents and their children baptized. It is common that the baptized and unbaptized, especially with visiting grandparents, live under the same roof. The witness of the Christian life should draw the unbaptized closer to God through charity and humility rather than push them away due to arrogance. The attitude Pope Francis suggests for the mature in the faith to have toward the immature is also insightful for the baptized to treat the unbaptized,

It is important for Christians to show their love by the way they treat family members who are less knowledgeable about the faith, weak, or less sure in their convictions. At times, the opposite occurs: the supposedly mature believers within the family become unbearably arrogant. Love, on the other hand, is marked by humility;¹⁶⁶

What often went wrong in the Level Two witnesses is the temptation of thinking I have done something valuable for God or increased my deposit in the bank in heaven and feel more righteous than others. Therefore, the Level One witness, even the unbaptized could achieve, is viewed as rudimentary and not much value. However, without Level One as the foundation, Level Two witness becomes a castle in the air. There is a Chinese

¹⁶⁵ Allan M. Josephson and Mary Lynn Dell, “Religion and spirituality in child and adolescent psychiatry: a new frontier,” *Child Adolesc Psychiatric Clin N Am* 13 (2004): 9.

¹⁶⁶ *Amoris Laetitia* 98.

idiom called “空中楼阁”(“Kong Chong Lou Ge”), which tells the story of a rich man who asked an architect to build a three-story house for him. When the first and second stories were completed, the rich man said to the architect: “What I want is the third story, not the first and the second.” “But how can I build the third story without the first and second?” the architect shook his head while packing his things up and left,

Jesus was adamant about rejecting this kind of religious practice when he put three heavy woes onto the Pharisees, “But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and herbs of all kinds, and neglect justice and the love of God; it is these you ought to have practiced, without neglecting the others. Woe to you, Pharisees! For you love to have the seat of honor in the synagogues and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces. Woe to you! For you are like unmarked graves, and people walk over them without realizing it.” Once, an unbaptized husband complained to me, “Before my wife was baptized, she would say, ‘Go away!’ when she was upset with me. Now she would say to me, ‘Go hell, you, the son of Satan!’ I wonder what good her newfound faith has brought to my family?”

Preaching as a witness in the domestic Church goes beyond the family and into the larger community, such as involvement in Church ministries and supporting Christian charities for the good of the larger society. In the city where I live, there is an ecumenical Christian charity called the OpenDoor, which runs a Saturday lunch program for church groups to bring in homemade meals and serve 30-40 drop-in homeless. Every year before Christmas, Tony, his wife Sarah, and their four children would come to offer and serve their home-cooked meal. The children would set up napkins/cutleries, and serve the meal with Tony and Sarah for the drop-ins sitting at the table as guests. After all the guests are

served, Tony, Sarah, and their children fix their plates of food and sit with the guests to share a meal together. The children learn to give, serve, and respect everyone, and the Gospel message of loving God and loving your neighbor finds its concrete expression. Another parishioner, Anthony, is a corporate executive with a hectic working schedule; however, every Easter, he would take his children to Walmart and ask them to fill the big Walmart cart with food and donate them to a local food bank; they call it their family fill-a-cart project. At check out, one of the children would get the longest receipt of the year and get to keep it as a souvenir. For this Christian family, the meaning of a food drive has gone beyond bringing a can of food to school. Anthony preached sharing with generosity with an action that would bring the Gospel message to the children's hearts and instill a memory they could cherish when they grow up.

The relationship between the two levels of witnesses is this – the Level One witness found its meaning in the Level Two witness, and the Level Two witness is not a witness without the Level One as its foundation. There are modern Pharisees fluent in Level Two languages without the foundation of Level One practices. Brian Clough, a former professor of Canon Law at St Augustine's Seminary, during his class in 2009 spoke of a Catholic man who had a hard time holding his job due to constant absence from work without good reasons, not interested in earning a living and providing for the family, however, every Sunday, he would gather his wife and their three daughters to study the Bible and read Pope encyclicals. Another case is the Shephard in Flannery O'Connor's *The Lame Shall Enter First*. This man was diligent at work and had a big heart for saving a street boy; however, he completely ignored the needs of his own

teenage son when his wife, also his son's mother, passed away. The result was that he not only could not save the street boy but also lost his son.

The good medicine for the Pharisee disease is a healthy dose of humility as Apostle Paul once reflected, "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate."¹⁶⁷ Repentance and asking forgiveness can be genuine witnesses when the parent preacher falls short from time to time. Pope Francis wrote,

In the family, "three words need to be used. I want to repeat this! Three words: 'Please,' 'Thank you,' and 'Sorry.' Three essential words!" "In our families when we are not overbearing and ask: 'May I?'; in our families when we are not selfish and can say: 'Thank you!'; and in our families when someone realizes that he or she did something wrong and is able to say 'Sorry!'; our family experiences peace and joy" Let us not be stingy about using these words, but keep repeating them, day after day. For "certain silences are oppressive, even at times within families, between husbands and wives, between parents and children, among siblings."¹⁶⁸

The genuine witness is not cheap grace, a term coined by the German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer to mean witness costing nothing in our context, but costly grace, which is always underlined by sacrifices, often in the face of adversity, and leads one to transformation.

Preaching as a Witness to Christ in Adversities.

This Level Three witness is the fruit of Level Two witness and addresses the fundamental question, "What witness is uniquely Christian?" The answer lies in the risen Christ, who gives the reason to choose hope in hopeless situations, to choose forgiveness in unforgivable circumstances, and to choose to have compassion for all.

¹⁶⁷ Rom. 7:15.

¹⁶⁸ *Amoris Laetitia* 133.

Non-Christian religions or traditions, such as Judaism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, all expressed the importance of compassion and take a non-retaliation and non-hatred stand. Confucianism makes “compassion” (“仁” – spells “Ren”) as its cornerstone and is well known for its Golden Rule, “Do not impose on others what you do not desire for yourself.” (“己所不欲 · 勿施于人”) However, none would go that far to “love your enemy and pray for those who persecute you.”¹⁶⁹ The Christian Golden Rule is not passive as in Confucianism, but active, “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.”¹⁷⁰

Further, this Christian compassion is not just a moral teaching but fulfilled throughout Jesus’ ministry, especially in forgiving those who crucified him on the Cross, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”¹⁷¹ This compassion to all is rooted in the trust that God, the Father, loves all people and desires their good, “He (God) makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous.”¹⁷²

Family is a place of love. However, wounds do happen in the family; sometimes, the infliction goes deep, and in some hopeless situations, reconciliation seems impossible. If not managed prudently, the economic, cultural, and behavioral challenges facing Chinese immigrant families in the GTA could cause significant harm to the family.

¹⁶⁹ Matt. 5:44.

¹⁷⁰ Matt. 7:12.

¹⁷¹ Luke 23:34.

¹⁷² Matt. 5:45.

Many Chinese immigrants face the dilemma of living in Canada with a lower-paying job or living in China with a lucrative and prosperous career. Some couples decide to have one parent live with their children in Canada and the other live and work in China to meet the family's financial needs. However, the cost is at least twofold: an absent parent (usually the dad) when the children need him the most in their growing up years and the gradual distanced relationship between the husband and wife. The issues of a fatherless generation are well-documented by David Blankenhorn in his 1995 book *Fatherless America: Confronting Our Most Urgent Social Problem*. When the parent preacher is a single parent in this situation, besides practicing the Level One witness to set a good example for the child and Level Two witness to find reason and strength in the faith, her choice to include the absent spouse in their child's life such as birthday celebration, milestone achievements, and find solutions together on issues their child facing at school, among many other things (thanks to today's virtual meeting technology that has made all these possible). The kind of onshore parent's actions speak a life of hope, making present the absent spouse and safeguarding their marriage.

The pressure from Chinese cultural norms, especially filial to the parents, is another challenge Chinese immigrants face. The issue is not about the principle but its expression, often understood as sponsoring the parents to immigrate to Canada. It is not unusual for Chinese immigrant families in the GTA to have three generations living under the same roof. The different views on the primary relationship within the family between parent-child in the Chinese tradition, as explained in Chapter Three, and husband-wife in the Christian tradition, could cause friction in the family and, in some cases, severe damage to the marriage. The parent preacher's witness in such a situation is

to find creative ways to reconcile differences between the two traditions with respect and compassion before conflicts escalate; however, when things turn the wrong way, a Christian witness is to choose kindness and forgiveness, not to lose hope but trust the God of compassion has the power even to bring good out of evil.

As discussed in Chapter Two, most Mandarin-speaking immigrants to GTA after 2000 belong to a generation that experienced the Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) and its aftermath at a young age. The impact of the “Ten Years of Disaster” is not only the widespread violence and chaos with devastating effects on individuals, families, and society but also the problematic values system taught in schools and its propaganda through slogans, songs, and literature. One well-known slogan by Zedong Mao is, “If you do not bother me, I will not bother you; if you bother me, I must fight you back.” (“人不犯我，我不犯人；人若犯我，我必犯人”) This is far from the traditional Chinese value of “仁” (Compassion). Another example is “The one with the gun rules” (“枪杆子里面出政权”), which legitimates violence and coercion.

Once they came to Canada, the Chinese immigrant parents found they must unlearn and relearn the values, especially after converting to Christianity. However, it takes time for the old system to fade away before the new can be established. This could be one of the most challenging adversities the parent preacher must face. The parent preacher witnesses Christ by decisively saying no to violence, which includes physical violence, verbal abuse, emotional manipulation, and coercive control. When the parent preacher chooses compassion and forgiveness when facing adversity, outside and inside, he/she safeguards the warmth of the family, which is critical for faith transmission to the next generation. However, the parent preacher must also understand that falling short

occasionally is not hopeless; instead, striving to establish the new Christian habit and working toward reconciliation in the face of personal failure is a witness to the risen Christ.

Orlando O. Espin, the emeritus professor of theology and religious studies at the University of San Diego, calls the Christian hope “subversive” or “radical” hope because it “flows as demand from a trust in the credibility of Jesus’ message regarding the dawn of the Reign of God”¹⁷³ against the apparent unjust and suffering world. It is in this context that Christians are a people of hope, “It is always in concrete, contextual *cotidianos* (daily life) that the fools may be identified, as a People, not by what they claim or doctrinally explain but by the subversive hope that has led them demonstrably to bet their lives together for a world built on compassion, justice, and dignity for all.”¹⁷⁴

Pope Francis talks about this Christian witness in very challenging family situations, “The Christian ideal, especially in families, is a love that never gives up. I am sometimes amazed to see men or women who have had to separate from their spouse for their own protection, yet, because of their enduring conjugal love, still try to help them, even by enlisting others, in their moments of illness, suffering, or trial. Here, too, we see a love that never gives up.”¹⁷⁵

Every Chinese immigrant family who came to the GTA bet on the hope that the future would be better for the family in Canada. However, things do not always turn out the way expected. The domestic church preacher is the one who, in the face of many

¹⁷³ Espin, xvi.

¹⁷⁴ Espin, 132.

¹⁷⁵ *Amoris Laetitia* 119.

adversities, chooses to trust God and never lose hope for his/her family and society at large through his/her words and actions.

Preaching as Storytelling in the Domestic Church

Human beings are storytellers and the only storytellers on this planet. Storytelling is embedded in our human nature and helps us to establish our individual and collective identity, connect with others, and make sense of the world around us. Before moving forward, the common perception that a story means it is not real must be addressed. When we describe reality from our observations using our chosen language, we tell a story from our perception. Facing the same reality, ten people can have ten different stories to describe it. In essence, the relationship between story and reality is reciprocal and interwoven in that reality fuels the creation of stories, while stories, in turn, help us interpret, cope with, and even transform reality.

The Bible is a book telling the stories about God, and about humanity through the lens of God. The first book of Genesis starts with the story of Adam and Eve to explore the fundamental questions about human identity, relationship with God, with each other, with the created world, and with the deceitful and destructive forces. This story reveals a reality beyond any individual human experience and touches the essence of our collective reality as human beings. We can rightly say, “This story is more real than any real human life experience.”

Storytelling also has the power to transform a perceived reality. An extraordinary example is given by the dreamer Joseph. Years after being sold into slavery by his siblings, now second only to Pharaoh in the land of Egypt, Joseph retold his story to these same siblings, “I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be

distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. “¹⁷⁶ Joseph’s retelling of his story successfully transformed a human tragedy into a story of God’s providence. The ultimate story ever told is Jesus’ resurrection story (reality perceived by the eyewitnesses and reported first in Aramaic, then Greek, then many other languages), which has decisively transformed the perceived reality of our existence.

Jesus was a marvelous storyteller who told stories from people’s daily life experiences to effectively communicate the Kingdom of God, even to the point that “without a parable, he told them nothing.”¹⁷⁷ For example, the story of the prodigal son, the master entrusting a large sum of wealth to the servants before going away, the master “unfairly” paying the hired laborers for his vineyard, and the story of letting the good seeds and weeds grow together. The rich meaning of these stories transcends time and continues to speak to us today.

The Jewish tradition of storytelling as an effective way of passing down the faith can go back to the Exodus when parents were asked to recount the Exodus story to their children at the Passover meal. ¹⁷⁸ Volumes of stories, parables, and moral lessons (Haggadic Midrashic texts) were developed based on the first Five Books of the Bible and used as teaching tools for generations to help the young form their Jewish identity. Centuries of Chinese civilization provided large volumes of stories with which Chinese

¹⁷⁶ Gen. 45:4-5.

¹⁷⁷ Matt. 13:34.

¹⁷⁸ Exod. 12:24-27.

parents are familiar. Preaching as storytelling in the domestic church is to retell our stories through the resurrected Jesus Christ and transform them into God's story.

This chapter uses the word "story" to refer to fiction and non-fiction narratives, including tales, parables, idioms, metaphors, and factual and non-factual narratives. Resources include Jewish family parsha stories, Christian children's literature, wisdom literature, Chinese idioms and sayings, personal and family stories, and Biblical stories. For discussing preaching as storytelling in the domestic Church, stories are summarized into three categories: 1. collective wisdom stories, 2. our own stories, and 3. God's story.

Telling collective wisdom stories as preaching

Telling collective wisdom stories as preaching is based on the universality of Jesus Christ. This wisdom of God is embedded in every culture and is expressed and passed down in stories. The Chinese language has over five thousand commonly used idioms, each with a story behind it. The vast body of ancient and modern Chinese literature provides numerous stories parent preachers can share with their children. One masterpiece that stands out is "Journey to the West" (西游记—Xi You Ji) by Wu Cheng'en in the sixteenth century, which tells the journey of a Buddhist monk Tang Sanzang, accompanied by heavenly figures of the Monkey King, the Pigsy, the Monk Sandy and the White Dragon Horse, traveled thousands of miles to the west to retrieve sacred Buddhist texts. The journey was filled with hardships, temptations, and dangers; however, heavenly interventions always came to the rescue in hopeless situations, turning chaos into order and defeat into triumph. Human experiences allegorized through these characters (the rebellious yet upright Monkey King, the indulgent and selfish Pigsy, the loyal but dumb Monk Sandy, and the compassionate but weak Tang Sanzang) resonate

universally. Parent preachers can highlight the values of perseverance, growth, and redemption by telling fascinating stories and discussing them with their children. Other popular Chinese wisdom books for children include “Three Character Classic” (三字经, Sānzījīng) and “Standards for Being a Good Student and Child” (弟子规, Dìzǐguī), which provide an excellent platform for parent preachers to talk about the fundamental values in human life.

Parent preachers can also use wisdom stories from other cultures and religions, especially from Judaism, for example, “Stories for Children” by Isaac Bashevis Singer, “A Kid's Mensch Handbook” by Scott Blumenthal, and the Family Parsha stories by Nesanel Yoel Safran. These stories help children to establish a healthy worldview that goodness exists in different cultures and religious traditions. God can use symbols outside of European Christian culture to communicate, and this is especially important in today’s world, where people from different religions and cultures live as neighbors and work together as co-workers. This also helps our parent preachers grow in profound humility against the modern Pharisee disease.

Telling our own stories as preaching

The 2nd generation in Chinese Catholic immigrant families in GTA are either born in Canada or came at a young age. Sociologist Amado M. Padilla pointed out that this generation's challenges are that they “learn about the parents’ culture in a social vacuum with little environmental support.”¹⁷⁹ However, there are universal values that transcend cultural differences, and parent preachers must be aware of the differences between doing

¹⁷⁹ Padilla 197.

something and the value underneath that doing. Preaching in the domestic church transmits the value, not the specific doing.

Mrs. Lee grew up in northern China and came to Canada in her 30s with two young children, and now the two children are in their teenage years. At the dinner table, Mrs. Lee has the habit of persuading her children to eat more and constantly use her chopsticks to add food to their plates, which the children do not always appreciate for two reasons: first, the food they do not like gets onto their plates, second, the food in their plates is more than they can finish. The reason for Mrs. Lee's habit was that her mom used to do that at family mealtimes when she was young, a time when Chinese people's food was rationed, and parents were always worried that their children did not get enough nutrition. Her mom's love for the children was expressed through adding food to the children's bowl, even though there was not much left for herself.

This family story of making personal sacrifices for the good of others would have been lost if Mrs. Lee had not shared the story behind her behavior. When the story is shared and discussed, Mrs. Lee understands that her love for her children could be expressed by passing the plates so they could choose what they like and how much they like. Living in a land of plenty, mom's hospitality that respects each person's choice is a better way to express love. Sometimes, Mrs. Lee forgets the new norm and returns to her old habits, and the children accept it with a smile; it's mom's expression of love, and it's accepted as such.

The parent preachers, as first-generation immigrants, when sharing their personal and family stories, provide their children with a framework to make sense of their lives

and establish their own identities. Telling family stories is one of the most effective ways for parents to transmit values to the next generation.

Besides family heritage stories, the parent preachers' personal stories as immigrants in the new land hold great value to the children. The mistakes and lessons learned, the disappointments and successes, the hardships and goodness of people. These stories carry a message, a value, a moral, a lesson that enriches their children's lives. The children will grow up and might face similar issues their parents faced, and these shared stories will draw the family closer.

Chinese Catholic immigrant parent preachers need to be watchful when sharing their stories to avoid overly stressing values such as filial piety (the expectation of honoring and supporting one's family), hard work, perseverance, and educational success. Studies show that Chinese immigrant parents who come to a new country for a better life for their children tend to see their children's success as a justification for their sacrifices and put undue pressure on their children. A typical pattern I often hear is, "How can you fail to...? Mom (or Dad) had given up so much to come to Canada for you." The parent preachers need to reflect on avoiding these tendencies and become a channel to bring The Good News to their children and ignite inspiration in their lives.

A parent community with a good mix of different ages and life experiences can be of help as well. A mistake made by one parent, when shared, can be a warning to others. Parents struggling with their teens help to prepare the others whose children are still young. I still remember when we celebrated our son's two-year birthday, a friend whose children were all grown-ups came and brought two gifts, one for my son and one for my

ten-year-old daughter. That day, I learned that there was a thing called sibling rivalry, and my children enjoyed the benefit of the lesson our friend learned with her children.

Preach God's Story in the Domestic Church

The Bible provides many stories from Abraham to Moses, the prophets, and the many interesting characters like Daniel, Samson, Debra, and Ruth, as well as stories and parables Jesus told. Parent preachers are encouraged to read Bible picture books (plus the VeggieTales books if available) with their children at a very young age, then replace the picture book with the Beginner's Bible when the children are at elementary school, and further to the Youth Bible when they reach teenage years. However, just like any story, the Bible story can also be taken in different directions, and parent preachers should read and discuss these stories with their children. When the children are young, the parent preachers need to provide the meaning; however, when the children grow older, parents need to welcome them to gradually provide their understanding, especially when they reach their teenage years. Parent preachers' role is to guide by sharing their authentic interpretation of the Bible story while allowing their youth to interpret differently, even if their interpretation sometimes does not seem orthodox enough. The reason is that truth will prevail, and parent preachers can have faith in the Holy Spirit and leave space for the youth to reach the truth freely through God's grace and their own efforts. Theologian Karl Rahner wrote about Christians' attitude toward non-Christians to assume "the Christian values all that is wholesome in a man and all that is healed in holiness in him as the fruit of the grace of his Christ. ... and considers the non-Christian a Christian who has not yet reflectively awakened to himself."¹⁸⁰ Parent preachers can learn to have similar

¹⁸⁰ Karl Rahner, "Christianity and Non-Christian Religious," in *A New Look at The Church: Readings in Theology*, ed. Weigel, Gustave (New York: P.J. Kenedy & Sons, 1963), 135.

attitudes toward their youth and regard them as already wholesome in Christ, though this wholesome has not yet awakened in themselves. This is the path of faith and profound humility for the parent preachers, for it permits God to be greater than themselves. Allowing everyone who participates in this story interpretation to freely speak what is on their minds without worrying about being ridiculed is essential.

According to the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur (1913-2005 AD), every time a story is told, the “surplus of meaning” is enabled through the teller and the audience at that specific time, place, and their subjective perspectives. These meanings can be taken in different directions during the interpretation process.

There is an interesting example in *Fiddler on the Roof*. Tevye, the father of the Jewish family and a poor village milkman, humorously used the story of Jacob and Laban¹⁸¹ to complain to God about the hard work he endured day in and day out, though most unlikely to enjoy good fortune as Jacob did. By likening himself to Jacob, Tevye is framing himself as a man of perseverance and continues to trust the steadfast love of God. However, Perchik, a young university student from Kiev and the tutor for Tevye’s daughters, interpreted this story as an example of labor exploitation and social injustice. By interpreting Jacob as a laborer exploited by an unjust employer (Laban), Perchik drew people’s attention to systemic inequality. Perchik, engaged with Tevye’s second daughter and did not see any need to obtain the father’s permission, left the village to join the workers marching in Kiev. At the same time, Tevye continued to struggle between tradition and a fast-changing world. Tevye found consolation in the same Jacob/Laban story, while Perchik found inspiration. Their shared interpretation opens new horizons for

¹⁸¹ Gen. 31.

each other and, at the same time, allows each person to let the Bible story speak to them differently through the lens of their own life experience.

Here, the concern about today's parents' feasibility of becoming parent preachers of the Gospel needs to be addressed. Trained neither in Scripture nor theology, would parent preachers water down the Gospel? The answers are threefold. First, parents interpreting Scripture to their children through their words and actions is a reality, with or without guidance. When parents are sent as preachers of the Gospel to their children in their domestic church, they will be more likely to study the Bible, attend Sunday Mass, and be partners of ordained ministers to bring the Gospel to their family life. Second, if Paul Ricoeur is correct, many possible interpretations can be valid; however, they are not all preferable. To reach a preferable interpretation, two things must come together: the authentic understanding of the Bible and real-life experiences. Parent preachers are more likely to partner with Church ministers to find a preferable interpretation. Third, there is a popular Chinese saying, "Three cobblers are better than one Zhuge Liang." Mr. Zhuge was a chief war strategist in the 3rd century and regarded as one of the wisest men in Chinese history. Compared to interpreting the Bible by one parent to his/her children at home with his/her own preference, a group of Christian parents sharing the Bible and their lives could significantly reduce errors. Here, we can have faith in the Holy Spirit as Jesus promised, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." ¹⁸²

There are different kinds of water-down the Gospel; the one Pope Francis is concerned most with is not with the lay but with ordained ministers: "At times we find it

¹⁸² Matt. 18:20.

hard to make room for God's unconditional love in our pastoral activity. We put so many conditions on mercy that we empty it of its concrete meaning and real significance. That is the worst way of watering down the Gospel."

Now, I turn to telling God's story through our stories, including the collective wisdom stories passed down to us and our own life stories. Usually, a wisdom story contains one central moral teaching with multiple minor points; the parent preacher needs to guide their children to explore these meanings under the light of the Gospel.

The Way-to-Emmaus¹⁸³ set an excellent example when it comes to telling God's story through our own life story. It started with the two disciples "talking with each other about all these things that had happened." They were sad, hopeless, and puzzled. Sad, because Jesus, "the prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people," was crucified. Hopeless because they "had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel," and now he is dead. Puzzled because Jesus' body disappeared, and some disciples had "seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive," which was beyond their understanding. Unrecognizable by the disciples, the risen Lord joined their walking and started a conversation, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?"

Our own life has sad stories when losing a loved one, a friendship, a property, or a name; hopeless stories when contracting an incurable disease, stuck in a career without a future, or suffering damage beyond repair; and puzzled stories when bad things happen to good people, good things happen to people without merit. These stories should be shared among the parent preachers as the two disciples shared with each other. Jesus would come and join the conversation, even unnoticed. If Herbert Farmer is correct in saying

¹⁸³ Luke 24.

that God enters a relationship with us only through other human beings,¹⁸⁴ the sharing itself could be a channel through which Jesus joins the conversation.

It must have been a long conversation when Jesus “interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.” However, the two disciples could not recognize who this man talking to them was except feeling their hearts were burning. The day came to its end, and Jesus was ready to move on without revealing himself because the risen Lord would not take away the disciples’ freedom. If the risen Lord came to the disciples by His will, now it’s the turn for the disciples to exercise their will to invite him to stay. At the breaking of the bread, “their eyes were opened, and they recognized him.” This awakening completely reversed the direction of where the two disciples were going. They returned to Jerusalem through the dark night because there was light in their heart. Their sad story became a joyful story, their hopeless story became a victorious story, and their puzzling story became the story of truth.

The personal stories shared among parent preachers follow a listen-speaking-listen process, and it is never a persuasion to quickly reach the correct answer to a question. Even if the awakening moment does not happen, parent preachers are encouraged to continue their sharing and faith practice, especially attending the Sunday Mass (Breaking Bread). The awakening will come at due time. When that happens, our sad story will become a joyful story, our hopeless story will become a victorious story, and our puzzling story will become the story of truth. The parent preachers will no longer run away from the place that used to make them sad, hopeless, and puzzled, and ready to face it because there is light in their hearts.

¹⁸⁴ Farmer, 143.

Some guidelines could help create a safe environment for our Chinese Catholic parent preachers to share personal stories. First, the home is a better gathering place than the church building for group warmth; second, trust needs to be built before intimate personal story sharing; third, time for each sharing needs to be guided to avoid one person occupying too much of the time; fourth, God's story should come naturally without pressure to remove the burden that parents might feel obligated to get to the God's story quickly. It is perfectly fine that some parents get to God's story and some do not, which gives freedom for those who need to stay a bit longer on "Easter Saturday" without feeling rushed.

Conclusion

Christian parents preaching in the domestic Church is not only feasible but also preferable, and their partnership with Church ministers will help them to bring the Gospel to their children effectively.

Following the Church tradition of preaching as dialogue, witness, and storytelling, this chapter adapted these concepts to the domestic Church. Preaching as dialogue in the family through 1. Family members' free exercising of their will, claim, and meaning exchange; 2. Revealing the subtext of family life, and 3. A two-way listening-speaking-listening practice. Preaching as a witness in the family is expressed in three levels: 1. The goodness of life through kindness toward each other and conducting daily dealings with integrity; 2. Practicing the Catholic faith through prayer, learning, and service, and 3. Choosing compassion, forgiveness, and hope in adversities. Preaching as storytelling in the family is to reach God's story through collective wisdom stories, Biblical stories, and personal life stories in the family and in the parent preacher community.

Chapter 5

The 3C Parent Preacher Formation Program

Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith.

—James 2:18

Introduction

I believe the key to successfully extending Sunday preaching beyond the church parking lot and into the homes is with the Christian parents. I designed a parent formation program called 3C to test the hypothesis that parents can be partners of ordained ministers to become effective preachers to their children in their families.

The 3C pilot program has six cycles and one cycle every two weeks. Each cycle includes a Parent Night for parent community building at one of the participants' homes, Sunday Liturgy for participating in parish life, and Family Snack & Storytime that parents hold with their children to discuss a 1-Pager Story related to the Sunday preaching. I introduced the program to the Mandarin congregation at SOTW and recruited two groups of people – nine moms and six dads. The mom's group met on Tuesday night, and the dad's group met on Thursday night. Parents are encouraged to attend Sunday Mass with their children and hold Family Snack & Storytime at home. The same questionnaire is used before and after the six cycles to measure and test the hypotheses.

This chapter describes the pilot project in detail; first, it discusses the

preparation required for the formation program, including candidate recruitment, community guidelines, and communication norms; then, I describe the six cycles of Parent Night, Sunday Mass, and Family Snack & Storytime; finally, I will discuss the data collection methods, analysis, and ethical procedures.

The Ministerial Pilot Project

The 3C Program was introduced to our Mandarin-speaking congregation in December 2023, and two groups of participants were recruited. We met every two weeks on weekday nights for six cycles. The following describes the activities in detail.

Announcement and Invitation

I made the church announcements (Appendix 1) on November 25, December 2nd, and 9th, 2023, after 5:30 pm Mass to the Mandarin-speaking congregation from the ambo at SOTW, and invited those interested to see me after Mass at the church foyer or email me to leave their contact information. I would follow up to provide more detailed information and answer their questions. The announcement was also emailed to about two hundred people through our Mandarin-speaking group email.

Eleven women and eight men were interested to know more. I set up multiple groups and one-on-one Zoom meetings to provide more information about the 3C Program, walk through the Consent Form (Appendix 2), and answer their questions.

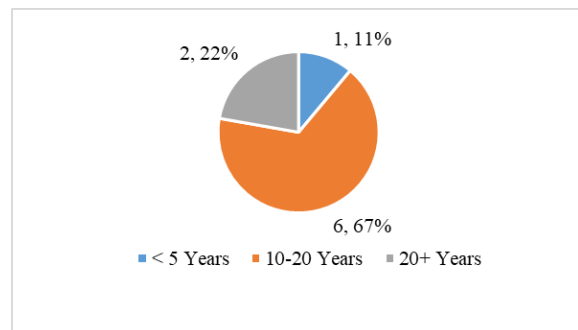


Figure 11 Women Group Years Living in Canada

Nine women and six men decided to join and signed the Consent Form. They are first-generation immigrants from mainland China, with school-aged children living with them.

There are three couples in the two groups:
The wives attended Tuesday evenings,
while the husbands attended Thursday
evenings. The rest joined the program
without their spouse (mainly due to conflict
with their spouses' work schedules), and
three single parents were in the groups.

Demographic of participants

Women's Group - Figure 12 shows
the demographic data for this women's
group. Five aged between 50-59 represent
56%, three aged between 40-49 represent
33%, and one aged between 30-39 represent
11%. Two, or 22%, had lived in Canada for
over twenty years; six, or 67%, for 10-20
years, and 1, for less than five years, as
shown in Figure 11.

Figure 13 shows that the age group
between 50-59 has ten, or 63% of the total
number of children of the group living with
them; four, or 25% of children living with
mothers aged between 40-49; and two, or
12% of children living with a mother aged between 30-39. Out of the total sixteen

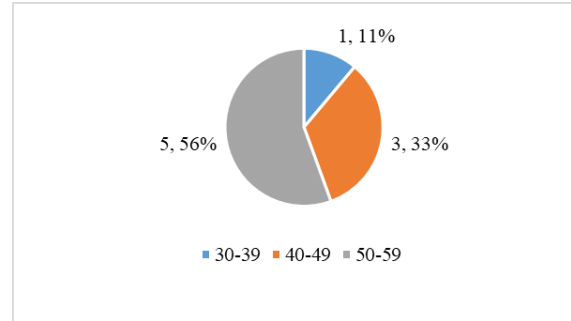


Figure 12 Women Group Ages

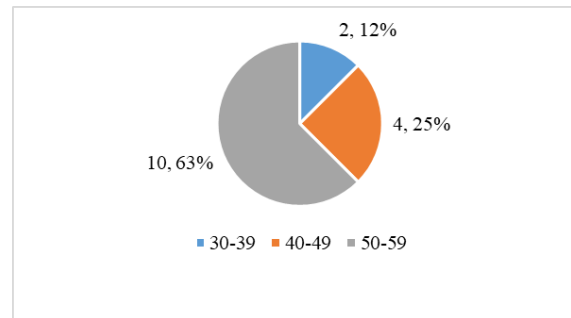


Figure 14 Children by Age Group

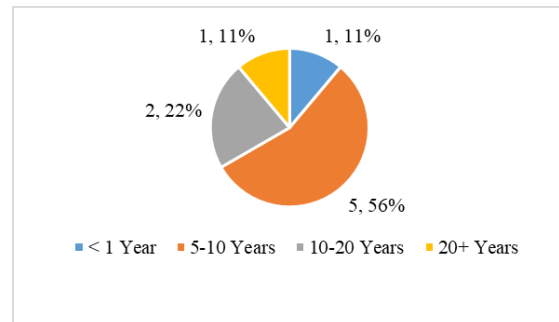


Figure 13 Parent Years of Baptism

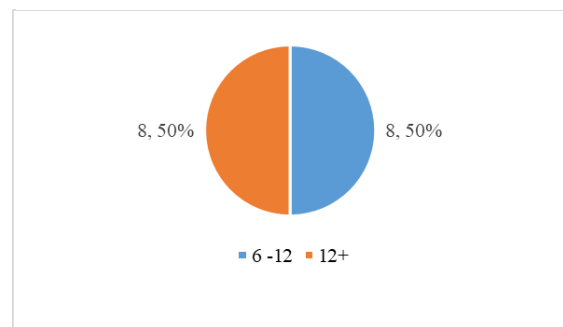


Figure 15 Children's Age

children, half are between 6 and 12 years old, and the other half are over 12 years old, as shown in Figure 14.

Figure 15 shows that five women, or 56%, were baptized between 5-10 years ago, two, or 22%, between 10-20 years ago, one person was baptized within a year, and one person was baptized over twenty years ago. All the women are fluent in Mandarin but have different capacities in English. Five identified themselves as fluent in English; three had some capacity, and one with limited ability, as shown in Figure 16.

Men's Group - Figure 17 shows the demographic data for this men's group. Four aged between 50-59 represent 67%, and two aged between 30-39 represent 33%. One, or 17%, has lived in Canada for over twenty years; three, or 50%, for 10-20 years; one, or 17%, for 5-10 years; and one, for less than five years, as shown in Figure 18.

Figure 20 shows that the age group between 50-59 has nine, or 82%, of the total number of children of the group living with them; two, or 18%, of children living with

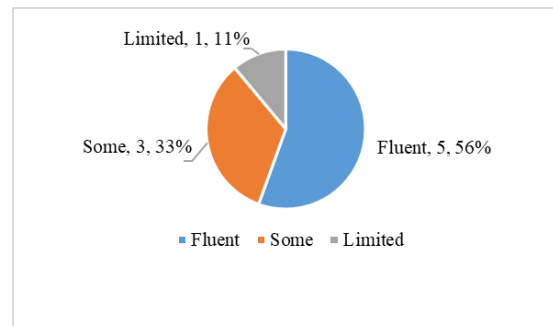


Figure 17 Parent English Fluency

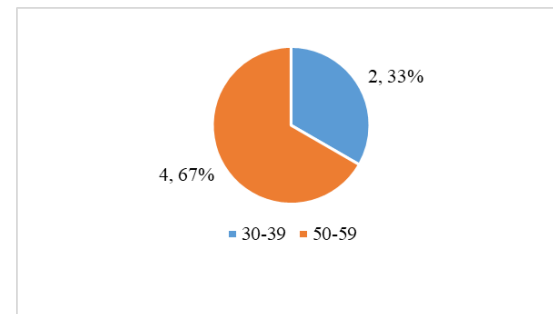


Figure 16 Men's Group Age

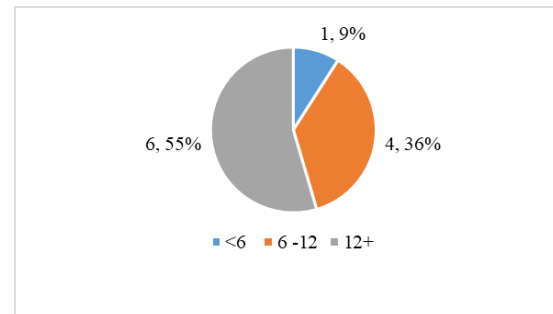


Figure 18 Children's Age

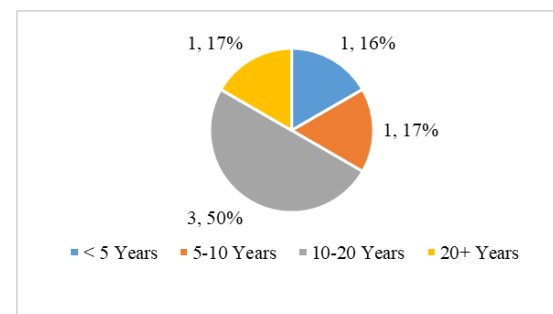


Figure 19 Years Living in Canada

fathers aged between 30-39. Out of the eleven children, six, or 55%, are older than twelve, four, or 36%, between the ages of six and twelve, and one, or 9%, below the age of six, as shown in Figure 19.

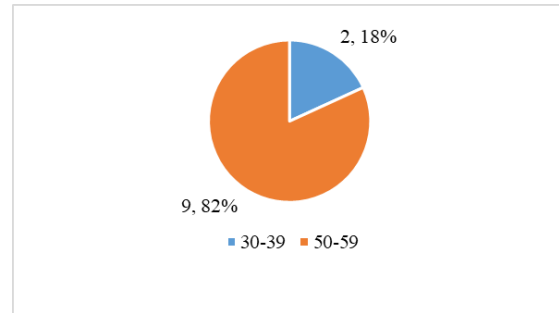


Figure 20 Number of Children

Figure 21 shows that two men, or 33%, were baptized between 5-10 years ago, One over twenty years ago, one between 10-20 years ago, one less than one year, and one non-baptized, each representing 17% of the total. The non-baptized person's wife is in the women's group. He supported baptizing the children and participated in parish activities such as Christmas parties and summer picnics with his wife and children. All the men are fluent in Mandarin but have different capacities in English. Three identified themselves as fluent in English; three had some capacity, as shown in Figure 22.

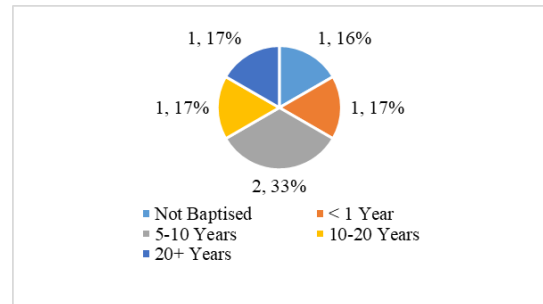


Figure 20 Parent Years of Baptism

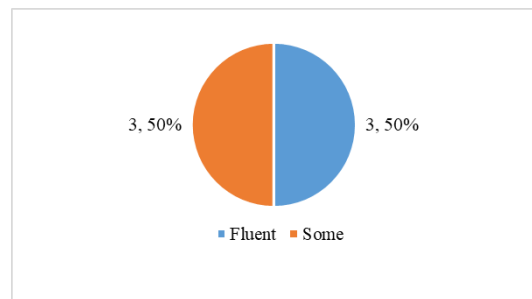


Figure 22 Parent English Fluency

The Parent Night Schedule

Six Parent Nights were scheduled, as shown in Table 2 The first meeting was

Table 2 Parent Night

scheduled at my
home in Mississauga
(west of Toronto),
and the participants

Meetings	Women's Group Parent Night	Men's Group Parent Night	Meeting Place
1	09-Jan-24	11-Jan-24	Deacon Paul's home
2	30-Jan-24	01-Feb-24	Participant's home
3	13-Feb-24	15-Feb-24	Participant's home
4	27-Feb-24	29-Feb-24	Participant's home
5	19-Mar-24	21-Mar-24	Participant's home
6	26-Mar-24	04-Apr-24	Participant's home

were told they were free to invite the group to meet at their homes whenever they were ready; otherwise, my home was always available for the group gathering. Most participants lived in the same city within a fifteen-minute drive, except three (two women and one man) who lived in Oakville, which needed a half-hour drive, and one mother who lived in the northeast of Toronto and needed a full-hour drive.

The program started in Canada's winter, and the weather conditions always needed to be taken into account. The day before our first women's Parent Night, scheduled for

Table 3 Parent Night Actual Dates and Places

January 9th, heavy
snow started, so we
had to postpone the
meeting to a week

Meetings	Women's Group Parent Night	Men's Group Parent Night	Meeting Place
1	16-Jan-24	11-Jan-24	Deacon Paul's home
2	30-Jan-24	01-Feb-24	Deacon Paul's home
3	13-Feb-24	15-Feb-24	Deacon Paul's home
4	27-Feb-24	29-Feb-24	Participant's home
5	19-Mar-24	21-Mar-24	Participant's home
6	02-Apr-24	04-Apr-24	Participant's home

later. Various adjustments were made through the winter, and the actual Parent Night happened on dates shown in Table 3.

The Parent Night Setting

The first three Parent Nights for women and the first three Parent Nights for men were held at my home on the west side of Mississauga. Parking along the curb was convenient, and our driveway was emptied for guests' parking. My wife and I answered

the door and welcomed everyone coming to our home, took care of their coats, and made them feel at home. Some came right from work and did not have time to eat dinner, so my wife prepared bread, sausages, cheese, almond butter, jelly, coffee, and tea for them to have a quick bite. Two single parents needed to bring their children, one boy aged seven and one girl aged ten. My wife prepared the children's snacks and drinks, and the kitchen table was set for them to eat and drink and do their homework. The family room had a TV and three sofas, and the two children could use the family room if they wanted.



Figure 21 Prayer Corner

The evening prayer and sharing were held in the living room. The prayer corner had a tea table with a cross, a statue of the Virgin Mary, and candles, as shown in Figure 23. Participants could comfortably sit around the tea table on two sofas and six chairs.

A binder was prepared for each person, and the basic guidelines of our gathering and sharing (Appendix 3) were printed and included in the binder. Evening prayer of that day, stories, and questions to be discussed (provided to the participants two weeks ahead.) were also printed and added to the binder. At each gathering, I printed the materials needed for that night for everyone so they could easily add them to their binders. Labels with



Figure 22 Table for Group Sharing

different colors and pens were put on the tea table at the first gathering so participants could choose the label they liked, put it on their binder, and write their names. At the following gatherings, participants were expected to bring their binders.

The sharing session of the night was at the table, as shown in Figure 24.

Participants sit around the table. A 3-minute timer, as shown in Figure 25, was put on the table. The sharing person took the timer, flipped it, put it in front of him or her, and began his/her sharing on the discussion topic of the night, which was provided to all the participants a week earlier. Usually, the sharing would start with the presider and go around the table. Though the choice of passing the round, if not ready, was always available, it was rarely used. After everyone had the chance to speak, if there was still time,



Figure 23 3-Minute Timer

anyone who wanted to share more could have the timer for another 3-minute sharing.

This 3-minute rule provided equal opportunities for participants, avoided situations where few voices occupied too much time, and helped the participants organize their thoughts and speak more concisely. A familiar scene I see in Chinese families when communicating with children is that parents tend to speak a lot, and the children's voices are hardly heard. I hope this 3-minute practice could help the parents form a new speaking habit: stop after 3 minutes of talking and leave room for listening. Otherwise, there won't be any dialogue, but only a monologue.

I explained the sharing guidelines, which were printed and put in their binder. At the following gatherings, the presider would read these guidelines as a reminder at the beginning of each sharing session.

A few adjustments were made based on what I learned from the first couple of gatherings. The first adjustment was for someone who came late. Answering the door was an interruption when evening prayer had already started. The solution was that if someone were late, we would leave the printed prayers on the chairs and leave the door unlocked, so when the person arrived, he/she could quickly enter without the need of ringing the doorbell, quietly get to the chair, and join the prayer. The second was the snacks and drinks. When sharing started, the host's hospitality of adding water, coffee, or snacks to people's plates was distracting. I added simple food and drink guidelines - one plate of fruit, one type of snack, coffee, and tea to set at the kitchen table or a side table for self-serving. Participants could get their drinks and snacks ready and bring them to the sharing table before sharing started.

The hospitality, from answering the door, taking care of people's parking, shoes, and coats, and providing hot drinks and snacks; the thoughtfulness, from taking care of single parents' children, arranging for the ones coming late after a busy day; and respect, from listening without interruption, set food and drinks on a separate table, are symbols of the goodness of life, a foundational witness of a good God. It is for this purpose that these elements are designed into the 3C.

At the first Parent Night, I explained the Consent Form to the whole group one more time and articulated that they were free to drop any time during the six cycles without the need for any justification. The participants filled out the questionnaire

(Appendix 4) to establish a baseline for measurement. Each person chose a secret code to put on the questionnaire to keep their identities anonymous.

Usually, at the end of the evening prayer or the sharing, the group would decide whose home for the next gathering by invitation. If there were no invitations, my home would be the default. Parent Nights ended with a prayer led by the host for guests' safe driving home. There were no traffic accidents for any participants during the six cycles through the winter.

One of the parents from each group set up a WhatsApp group as the group's communication platform. I would send out the 1-Page Story or discussion topics and questions at least one week ahead, and the presider would send a reminder one day before our next gathering with the address of the gathering place, parking instructions, and phone number to call. The platform was also used for communication among the group members. Usually, after the Parent Night gathering, some parents would share what they learned and post their appreciation for the host's hospitality.

The program cost about 200 Canadian dollars, mainly for the binders, printing, and the food and drink served when the meetings were at our house. My wife and I covered the cost. When the group gathered at a participant's home, the host would cover the cost of snacks and drinks. However, some mothers would always bring snacks to share with the group, even if it was not expected. That was usually not the case for the men's group; it was rare to see a man bring snacks to share.

The content and format of Parent Night Prayer and Sharing

The evening prayer format followed the basic structure of the Roman Catholic Church Christian Prayer: The Liturgy of the Hours, and the timeline is listed under

Appendix 3. It started with the Invitatory, followed by a hymn, two psalms, a short reading, Responsory, Canticle of Mary, Intercession, Our Father, closing prayer, and concluded with the Latin hymn *Salve Regina*. The short reading is chosen from one of the coming Sunday readings and reflects the homily's central message for that Sunday. For example, I planned to preach the central message on the 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B: “Whose voice should we listen to?” Then, I chose *Lectio Devina* from the first reading on God’s calling to the young Samuel. The short reading was part of the evening prayer, and it was read twice slowly, and the hearers followed the *Lectio Devita* method – which *word* spoke to me in the first round of hearing and which *phrase* spoke to me in the second round. Before each reading, the lector would invite the hearers to listen to God, “Speak, Lord, for your servants are listening.” The other parts of the evening prayer were chanted except for the reading and the closing prayer. Recording of the tune was shared with all the participants, and they were encouraged to lead with chant when it was their turn to preside.

Chanting has a long history in the Catholic monastic tradition, such as the Gregorian chant, and it helps the ones who chant to settle their body more effectively. In his 2017 *My Grandmother’s Hands*, Resmaa Menakem introduced the concept of a “settled body.”¹⁸⁵ toward healing the racialized trauma and finding the pathway to mend our hearts and bodies, and chanting is one of the effective practices.¹⁸⁶ Our Parent Night is on a workday night, and the chanting of the evening prayer is designed for our participants to settle their bodies and ready their hearts for a fruitful gathering.

¹⁸⁵ Resmaa Menakem, *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies* (Las Vegas, NV: Central Recovery Press, 2017), 151.

¹⁸⁶ Menakem, 161.

After a short break, parents would fix their drinks and snacks and sit comfortably around the living room table to start the sharing session. The presider would read out the five sharing guidelines as a reminder, “1. keeping privacy to not sharing anything said in the group outside of the group; 2. 3-minute sharing; 3. admitting to your own mistakes, but not belittling yourself or others. 4. giving no unsolicited advice; 5. no selling, no fundraising.” Then, he/she would read the discussion questions for the night to refresh everyone’s memory and start with his/her sharing before going around the table.

The three questions for parents to discuss with their children at home after Parent Night are designed for children in three age groups: <7, 7-11, and 12+. This division followed Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget’s research, which found that children’s perceptions and thinking were qualitatively different from adults. The question for children in the Preoperational stage (2-7) when learning and using language to think symbolically about objects seen or unseen is to describe one idea or feeling. When thinking becomes more logical and organized regarding concrete objects, the Concrete operational stage (7-11) asks to relate the ideas or feelings involving self-reflections but in concrete terms. The question for the Formal operational stage (12+), when using abstract reasoning following deductive logic to solve hypothetical problems, is to explore possibilities beyond an obvious right or wrong or to reconcile seemingly conflicting ideas.

The content of the six cycles is summarized in Table 4.

Table 4 Summary of the Content of the Six Cycles

	Sunday Reading/P reaching Main Theme	Lectio Divina Reading	1-Pager Story	Parent Sharing Topic	Home Discussion Topic

Cycle One	Whose voice do we listen to?	1 Sam 3:3b-10,19 – from the 1st reading of the 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B God's calling the young Samuel.	<i>A Vote for Kindness</i> – a group of children must make a decision whether to accept a new kid into their club. Everyone has a voice, but whose to listen? Is there a principle that needs to be followed?	If Jeremy, the kid who was hosting the event that day, was your son and he came to you for advice, what would you do?	Have you faced a similar dilemma at school? What would you do? In the Sunday reading, Samuel heard the voice of God. Is there a higher principle we should listen to when facing a dilemma?
Cycle Two	God is not leaving us alone when we face troubles.	Psalms 147 – Psalm from the 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B God heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.	<i>The Trouble Tree</i> – the dad/mom had a bad working day, and he/she left the troubles outside before entering the home to meet the spouse and children.	Do you agree with the person in the story? How do you handle a bad day that negatively impacts your spouse and children?	When dad or mom had a bad working day? How do you know? How do you like dad/mom to handle a bad day at work?
Cycle Three	Life is a blessing, and every one of us is special in the eyes of God.	Num 6: 24-26 – from the 1st reading of January 1st, New Year's Day Mass The Priestly Blessing	<i>You Are Special</i> – Punchineello, a character created by Max Lucado, had a tough life. Almost everyone looked down on him without him doing anything wrong until he met his maker.	Which part of the 1- Pager Story speaks to you, and why?	Have others labeled you like Punchineello? Have you labeled others? Do you know you are special in the eyes of God?

Cycle Four	The Lord is patient with us, do not harden your hearts.	Ex 17:3-7 - from 3rd Sunday of Lent Year A (due to Rite of 1st Scrutiny for RCIA)	8-minute YouTube video by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish on how to handle a child's negative emotions. Reading and cartoon pictures from <i>"How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk."</i>	Discuss the learning moment from the video and the readings on handling a child's negative emotions.	Put what has been learned into practice and discuss it with your children: have they noticed your changes? How they like you to be helpful when they are upset/embarrassed /sad...
Cycle Five	The Lord opens our eyes to see the truth.	Is 50 : 4-5— from the 1st reading of Passion Sunday Year B The Lord has given me the tongue to sustain the weary with words.	<i>Insult or Injury?</i> – the judge misjudged a teen named Judy at a gymnastics competition. Judy was so tempted to give it up; however, she was glad she did not because the mistake was corrected at the end.	What would you say if you were Judy's mom/dad when she wanted to quit? and why?	If you were Judy, what would you feel? Have you ever been judged unfairly? How did you handle that?
Cycle Six	The Lord is risen - This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.	Psalm 118: 22-24— Psalm from the 2nd Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy Sunday) Year B This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.	Easter time – parents are asked to reflect on the happy family time he/she enjoyed when they were kids and how they celebrate at home with their children today.	How does your family celebrate? Do you celebrate their major milestones with your children?	What wonderful family time do you remember? Why is it special to you?

Now, I will turn to the content of each of the six cycles.

Cycle One Content (Refer to *Parents Binder* attached hereto, January 11 – 16, 2024)

Evening prayer: The presider started by chanting the Introduction Prayer and was joined by the whole group. The penitential prayer was added with specific instructions for keeping a moment of silence after the “through my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do” so everyone could reflect on what happened during the day up to this hour before confess, “through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; ...”

After singing the hymn, cantors led to chant the two psalms. Psalm 20 was chosen from Week I Tuesday evening prayer. Psalm 23 was chosen because it was one of the most beloved Psalms, and everyone in the group was familiar with it.

The Lectio Divina reading (1 Sam 3b-10,19) was chosen from the first reading of the 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time (January 14, 2024); readings for that Sunday are listed below:

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B	January 14, 2024	1 st Reading: 1 Sam. 3:3b-10, 19	Ps. 40	2 nd Reading: 1 Cor. 6:13c-15a,17-20	John 1:35-42
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The first reading is about the voice of God mistakenly taken by the young Samuel as the voice of Eli until Eli recognized that it was the voice of the Lord and instructed Samuel to answer, “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.”¹⁸⁷ The Responsory Psalm drives the same message about answering God’s voice, “Here I am, I come to do your

¹⁸⁷ 1 Sam. 3:9.

will.” The Gospel continues on the theme when John the Baptist directed his disciples to Jesus, “Look, here is the lamb of God!” Then, the two disciples listened to John’s instructions and followed Jesus. After hearing Jesus’ invitation, “Come and see,” they followed Jesus’ voice and went, saw, and remained with Jesus.

The 2nd reading is also relevant when St. Paul invites the Corinthians to glorify God in their body, which points out that living the faith is not expressed by abstract ideas but by concrete choices one makes in life. I chose Jewish writer Nesanel Yoel Safran’s story “A Vote for Kindness” for the Parent Night discussion and for the parents to use at home to discuss with their children. The story is about a boy called Jeremy, who formed an after-school playing club with kids in the neighborhood. One day, while the group was playing, a kid who had just moved in the next door came asking whether he could join their play. While Jeremy went to take care of the kid, the other kids voted down the idea. Upon return, Jeremy must decide whether to abide by the group member’s vote or stick to his belief that kindness cannot be put up for a vote. Either way, someone would be upset. The parents were asked to assume Jeremy was their son, who came to ask for their guidance. The purpose of the exercise was neither for the parents to reach a consensus nor for me, the minister, to give a lecture to persuade the parents on what they should do. It was about opening up new possibilities through the parents’ sharing. The essential question I wanted the parents to ponder was whose voice we, as parents, should listen to, especially in a world with so many conflicting voices. The sharing among the parents was meant to enrich each other and prepare them to discuss this topic more readily with their children at home.

The parents' enthusiastic sharing was beyond expectation, especially the mothers. Three minutes passed so quickly that some found it hard to stop and would continue until she could finish her thoughts. Sometimes, it could take six to several minutes. I just smiled and let them continue for two reasons. First, participants needed time to adapt to the 3-minute rule gradually; second, tolerance and kindness were essential to build warmth and trust among the participants. The first Parent Night took two hours instead of the planned one and a half hours, and no one minded; I would watch the following gatherings and gradually guide the Parent Night close to one and a half hours. The reason was that people needed to rest for the following day's work, which would be less of a burden for everyone in the long run.

Summary of the parent's opinions during sharing:

1. The kids were very capable of solving the issue with voting, which was fair. Jeremy should have followed through, and the parents did not need to give different suggestions.
2. Jeremy should follow through with the other kids' vote because it's fair; however, I would invite the new neighbor's kid to our home to play this coming weekend.
3. My son is facing a very similar dilemma at school right now. I think kindness is more important, but I do not want to force him to do what I think is right, and I am happy to hear other approaches.
4. Not everything is up to vote; not being mean to the new kids is more important, and Jeremy should persuade his friend to accept the new kids into the club.

5. Jeremy was right that being kind tramples voting; however, he needs to find a way to bring other kids around instead of a heavy-handed approach. What good was it to gain a new friend but lose an old one?

6. There are more than two choices here. Jeremy could suggest allowing the new kid to play together for the day without accepting him into the club. The vote can be done later after everyone has a chance to know the new kid. This way, the new kid would be happy, and Jeremy could avoid losing an old friend.

I, the minister, contributed to the discussion through my 3-minute sharing on equal footing with the other parents at the very end. That gave the parents the freedom to share their thoughts and discern what the voice of God meant in their life situations. My sharing was to point out that the dilemma of A or B was only on the surface; there were other possibilities. The voice of God is often out of the box and creative.

The first Parent Night finished at 9:30 pm with a closing prayer and blessing for everyone a safe drive home. It took longer than the planned ninety minutes also due to introducing people and the program at the first gathering and filling out the questionnaire.

Cycle Two Content (Refer to Parents Binder attached hereto, January 30/Feb 1st, 2024)

Evening prayer: The format is the same as Cycle One, except the two psalms are taken from Week V Wednesday Evening Prayer Ant. 1 & 2 – Ps 139:1-18. The Lectio Divina reading was taken from Ps 147:1, 3-6, part of the 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B readings on February 5, 2024. Readings for that Sunday are listed below:

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B	February 4 th , 2024	1 st Reading: Job 7:1-4, 6-7	Ps 147	2 nd Reading: 1 Cor 9:16- 19,22-23	Mark 1:29- 39
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The Responsory Psalm, “Sing praise to the Lord, who heals the broken-hearted,” held the key of this Sunday's readings. Job's lament was broken-hearted, “Like a slave who longs for the shadow, and like laborers who look for their wages, so I am allotted months of emptiness, and nights of misery are apportioned to me..... My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle and come to their end without hope.”¹⁸⁸ However, the hope came with Christ, who healed the sick and the suffering in the Gospel reading, “That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. And the whole city was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases and cast out many demons;”¹⁸⁹ This hope in Christ was so much so that it transformed St. Paul, who would willingly be a slave for all, “For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them.”¹⁹⁰

Most immigrant parents have known hardship at the workplace due to working culture differences, communication barriers, and other uncontrollable factors. I chose the story “The Trouble Tree” from the Internet for this week's discussion. The origin of the story is unknown.

This story and question for Parent Night sharing hit a pain point for the parents. Some parents agreed with the main character in the story to hide their bad days from their spouse and children, while others would share their bad days with the family. However, both stressed the importance of finding ways to wind down their negative feelings, for example, taking a detour on the way home to a quiet place and sitting in the car for a

¹⁸⁸ Job 7:2-3,6.

¹⁸⁹ Mark 1:32-34.

¹⁹⁰ 1 Cor. 9:19.

while, going to a church to pray in the chapel, getting out of the house and taking a walk in the neighborhood (for those working from home), listening to music, taking a hot bath, screaming when no one's around, punching a sandbag, talking to a friend.

Some parents discussed this topic with their children before the Parent Night, and their children's feedback was eye-opening. One teenage daughter found it too difficult to give feedback to her dad face to face, so she wrote him a letter. The letter brought the dads into tears when it was shared at the Parent Night. Here is part of the letter with permission to use,

No, I do not think a father should hide his bad days. Yes, he should let his family know that he had a bad day so that his family wouldn't make him do work that would make him more stressed, leading him to be mad at all of us. I think the father should leave his anger outside the house... however, he should not bottle up all his feelings and wait till it's too much, then explode on everyone, making everyone sad. That is not okay, and it could really ruin a father-daughter relationship. ...The father should calm his tone and have more patience. If he had a bad day, his kids and wife would understand and not bother him. Otherwise, his bad tone would lead to many arguments, disappointments, and misunderstandings... making the whole family sad.

The sharing of this letter and the tears that followed were evidence of healing and greater openness in the group. Both men's and women's Parent Night ended around 9:30 pm with a closing prayer and blessing for everyone a safe drive home. It took longer than the planned ninety minutes because there was much to share.

Cycle Three Content (Refer to Parents Binder attached hereto, February 13/15, 2024)

The two psalms of the evening prayer are taken from Psalm 85: 9-14, part of the Chinese New Year Mass liturgy, and Sunday Night Prayer after Evening Pray II Ant. 1 – Ps 91. The Lectio Divina reading was Num 6:24-26, the Priestly Blessing, fitting for the Chinese New Year time and echoes the first reading, Deut. 11:7-9, 11-15, of the Chinese New Year Mass liturgy. 2024 Chinese New Year's Day falls on Saturday, Feb 10th.)

Chinese New Year Mass	February 10 th , 2024	1 st Reading: Deut. 11:7-9, 11-15	Ps 85:9-13	2 nd Reading: Phil 4:6-9	Matthew 5:1-12
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The key themes of the Chinese New Year liturgy are being blessed with good things in life and being protected from misfortune. Chinese has a long history at the beginning of the new year, the Emperor would offer sacrifices to Heaven (天 -Tian) on behalf of the people for the blessing of a prosperous year with good weather and a good harvest (风调雨顺 · 五谷丰登 – “Feng Tiao Yu Shun, Wu Gu Feng Deng”), which means good weather and good harvest. Psalm 91 was chosen for the evening prayer to ask for God’s protection into the new year. Celebrating the Chinese New Year's is often called “过年”(“Guo Nian”), which means passing over the old and launching into the new.

The first reading from Deuteronomy links obeying God’s commands with God's “give (ing) the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the later rain, and you will gather in your grain, your wine, and your oil; and he will give grass in your fields for your livestock, and you will eat your fill.”¹⁹¹ The psalm continues this theme, “Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other....The Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.”¹⁹² The Gospel reading of the Beatitude¹⁹³ brought this blessing to a new level: God loves us, upholds us, and is with us even in all our adversities.

¹⁹¹ Deut. 11:14-15.

¹⁹² Ps. 85:10,12.

¹⁹³ Matt. 5:1-12.

The 1-Pager Story is Max Lucado’s *You Are Special*, which drives the message home that each one of us is special in God’s eye and loved by God no matter what labels and belittling others might put on us. Most participants experienced something similar with Punchinello, the unpretty wooden puppet and the main character in the story, from unwanted nicknames in their childhood to losers in the eyes of their parents, who held unrealistic expectations of their children. However, through sharing, they began to realize that when they became parents, they put similar labels they once hated onto their children, especially when they were upset with them.

Self-realization started to emerge during the sharing, and the evening prayer with Lectio Divina prepared the parents to be more open to sharing their failures, knowing they all have a gracious God. The women’s group finished around 9:30 pm, and the men’s group finished around 9:00 pm on time with a closing prayer and blessing for everyone a safe drive home.

Cycle Four Content (Refer to *Parents Binder* attached hereto, February 27/29, 2024)

The two psalms for evening prayer were taken from Psalm 1 and Sunday Night Prayer after Evening Pray II Ant. 1 – Ps 91. The reading is from Exod. 17:3-7, part of the 3rd Sunday of Lent Year A Mass reading on March 3rd, 2024. The Year A reading was used because of the Rite of the 1st Scrutiny for RCIA.)

3 rd Sunday of Lent Year A (due to Rite of 1 st Scrutiny for RCIA)	March 3 rd , 2024	1 st Reading: Exod. 17:3-7	Ps. 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9	2 nd Reading: 1 Cor 1:26-31	John 4:5-42
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How would you deal with someone who is upset, sad, hostile, or angry at the time he/she is not ready to hear your reasoning? That’s the story we hear in the first reading

about what happened at Massah and Meribah.¹⁹⁴ The people were angry, “Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?” so much so that Moses was afraid that they would be about to stone him. These were all God’s children, and God just carried them out of slavery. Instead of letting Moses lecture them on gratitude or the punishment they deserved, God gave them water from the rock to quench their thirst or, more accurately, to deflate their anger.

In the Gospel reading, Jesus, the Jew, found himself in a challenging situation with a hostile Samaritan woman. Her unfriendly words, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?” “Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob?” to anyone who simply asked for a cup of water could irritate most people. Her “Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem.” is a perfect example to start a religious fight. However, Jesus did not follow her thoughts into the trap; instead, he led her down a different path and deflated her hostility completely.

In this context, I chose this week’s parent’s sharing topic on dealing with children’s negative feelings. The help I found was the work by children's communication experts Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish in their book *How To Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk*¹⁹⁵. I shared my study notes on this topic, shared a YouTube video by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish, and expanded the application of the method from helping children to helping parents deal with their negative feelings. The book has

¹⁹⁴ Exod. 17:7.

¹⁹⁵ Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish, *How To Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk* (New York: SCRIBNER, 2012), 1-29.

many excellent examples and cartoons; I chose some examples to share with our WhatsApp group in place of the 1-Page Story and introduce the book, anticipating the parents to provide their own stories at the Parent Night sharing. Some parents found it extremely helpful and purchased the book to read together with their children.

This week's homework for the parents is to put what they learned into practice, and the Parent Night sharing is about what they learned through their practice with their children. As usual, the sharing among the parents was open and very informative, with various cases in different situations. One highlight of the sharing is that some parents realized they needed to adjust their approach to fit their children's characters even when applying the same method. To one child, "You sound upset" works like a warm invitation to tell more about what happened; to another, it sounds like a criticism. Recognizing their children's negative feelings could be through words or a simple acknowledgment by giving an ear. Most parents realize that their old habit of skipping their children's emotions and jumping into giving advice must be changed.

This Parent Night was held at a couple's home – Tuesday for women and Thursday for men. Parking was easy, hospitality was well-extended, and the norms of our gathering were well-maintained. One of the parents presided over the evening prayer and facilitated the sharing. Both groups finished around 9:30 pm with a closing prayer and blessing for everyone a safe drive home.

Cycle Five Content (Refer to Parents Binder attached hereto, March 19/21, 2024)

The two psalms for evening prayer were taken from Psalm 51 and 23. The reading is from Isa. 50:4-5, part of the 1st reading of Passion Sunday Year B on March 24th, 2024.

Passion Sunday Year B	March 24 th , 2024	1 st Reading: Isa. 50:4-7	Ps. 22	2 nd Reading: Phil. 2:6-11	Mark 14:1 -15:47
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Recognizing children’s negative feelings is the first step in the right direction; the issue underlining the negative feelings also needs to be addressed. This cycle’s Parent Night topic is about how parents should talk to their children to address a concern.

The 1st Sunday reading is chosen for the Lectio Divina in the evening prayer, and it is about the tongue of a teacher, “The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning, he wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught.”¹⁹⁶ When a child comes to the parent with his/her negative feelings, the parent's words need to “sustain the weary.” However, to do that, the parent must first learn to listen.

The Passion Sunday readings are long; however, the Gospel and Psalm 22 consistently convey that innocent people can also suffer. Quite often, our children’s negative feelings are related to something that happened in their lives that they regarded as unfair. This Gospel message brings comfort to our children that they are not alone.

The Sunday readings provide excellent principles for our parents to address their children's issues. The techniques are provided by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish’s work. They brought the parents’ attention to the fact that the words spoken by the parents have two parts: their emotions, often in the tone, and the words they choose.

I sent the learning content to the groups through WhatsApp on March 5th, followed by a 1-Page Story on March 10th. The story chosen for this cycle is *Insult or*

¹⁹⁶ Isa. 50:4-5.

Injury, written by Nesanel Yoel Safran. It is about a girl who felt insulted during a gymnastics competition by a low mark mistakenly given by a judge when she performed almost perfectly. She was very upset and wanted to quit; however, a good teammate's constant pleading calmed her down. The judge eventually realized and corrected the mistake and secured the girl's championship. The girl was thankful to her teammate for not letting her negative feelings ruin her dream. Many of our participants' children are involved in various sports, with one girl in competitive gymnastics. The parents found the story relevant to their lives. They enthusiastically shared their situations and how they handled them, success or failure, and how this newly learned knowledge from study and other parents sharing could help them do better.

This Parent Night was held at another couple's home – Tuesday for women and Thursday for men. Parking was easy, hospitality was well-extended, and the norms of our gathering were well-maintained. One of the parents presided over the evening prayer and facilitated the sharing. Both groups finished around 9:30 pm with a closing prayer and blessing for everyone a safe drive home.

Cycle Six Content (Refer to *Parents Binder attached hereto, April 2/4, 2024*)

The two Psalms of evening prayer are taken from Psalm 23 and 121 (I added Ps. 37:7-8 and 126:5-6 between Ps. 121:6 and 7 to bring about the theme that joy comes after sorrow for the righteous.) The hymn is *Christ Is Risen, Alleluia!* The Lectio Divina reading is from Ps. 118:22-24, part of the Psalm reading of the 2nd Sunday of Easter Year B on April 7th, 2024.)

2 nd Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy Sunday) Year B	April 7 th , 2024	1 st Reading: Acts 4:32-35	Ps. 118	2 nd Reading: 1 John 5:1-6	John 20:19-31
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It is the Easter Season! From last Parent Night, many participants experienced Good Friday, Easter Vigil and the singing of Alleluia after the six weeks of Lent, Easter egg hunt with their children at the churchyard, and Easter celebration at home with a feast of Chinese food or turkey, or both.

This was also the last Parent Night for the thesis project, and the questionnaire would be filled out at the end of the gathering. Celebration as the central theme is fitting; however, I intended to strike a balance between our efforts and God's work among us. The participating parents would find the verses in the evening prayer echo their labor, "May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy. Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves."¹⁹⁷ The Lectio Divina reading would help our parents to recognize God's work among us, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."¹⁹⁸

"Celebration" in Chinese is "庆祝". This Chinese word is especially insightful. It expresses two layers of meaning. The first, "庆," represents joy, and the second, "祝," represents blessing. When parents celebrate with their children, firstly, the parents are happy for their children, and secondly, the children are blessed by their parents, which ultimately points to God's blessing. The night's sharing is about parents celebrating with their children, when and how. This helps the parents to recognize the importance of

¹⁹⁷ Ps. 126:4-5.

¹⁹⁸ Ps. 118:22-24.

celebrating with their children and learn from other parents how to celebrate. One parent shared that every family member would be invited to bless the birthday person during their family birthday celebration and how beautiful it is that parents bless their children, children bless their parents, and siblings bless each other.

This Parent Night was held at participants' homes. Parking was plenty, hospitality was well-extended, and the norms of our gathering were well-maintained. One of the parents presided over the evening prayer and facilitated the sharing. Deacon Peter Lovrick, professor of homiletics at St. Augustine Seminary, attended the men's Parent Night as an observer. His assessment is attached under Appendix 5, Independent Third-Party Reviewer Assessment.

The women's group finished around 9:30 pm, and the men's group finished around 9:00 pm with a closing prayer and blessing for everyone a safe drive home.

Research Methodology

The project starts from current practices in the parish and family, designs a new practice (3C Model) informed by recent social, theological, and homiletic theory, implements the new practice, and measures its outcome. The fitting method is summative evaluation, which aims to “determine if a solution (policy or program) works.”¹⁹⁹ Two evaluation tools are employed: face-to-face interviews for the “gaze” data and questionnaires for “voice” data²⁰⁰ at pre- and after the three-month intervention.

Data Collection

¹⁹⁹ Sensing, 198.

²⁰⁰ Sensing, 251-252.

I collected data through questionnaires, interviews, independent observer notes, and research notes. The questionnaires provided quantitative data, and the interviews and observer notes provided qualitative data. I also used the triangulate method²⁰¹, which was suggested by Dr. Tim Sensing, Professor of Practical Theology at Abilene Christian University, in his *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Dissertations* for data cross-checking.

The questionnaires are designed with five categories — 1. parent faith growth, 2. relationship between husband and wife, 3. relationship between parents and children, 4. faith sharing between parents and children, and 5. the warmth in the family.²⁰² The data will be used to measure against the hypotheses: 1) better parents' faith practices, 2) better parent-child relationships, 3) parents are more ready to socialize the faith to their children, and 4) improved warmth in the family. Each category has five questions following a five-point Likert scale, a “psychological measurement device used to gauge attitudes, values, and opinions. It functions by having a person complete a questionnaire that requires them to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with a series of statements.”²⁰³

The 2nd set of data on the relationship between husband and wife is used for triangulating purposes based on the assumption that if the hypothesis is true, a positive impact on the husband-and-wife relationship can be expected at a group level, knowing

²⁰¹ Sensing, 172.

²⁰² Bengtson, 71.

²⁰³ Roy Ajit, *A Comprehensive Guide for Design, Collection, Analysis and Presentation of Likert and other Rating Scale Data: Analysis of Likert Scale Data* (Unknown, 2020), 16-17.

each couple could go through different challenges that are beyond the scope of this project.

The thesis pilot project period is three months. The questionnaire under Appendix 4 was filled up by participants at the first Parent Night on January 11 for men and January 16 for women. The same questionnaire was filled up again at the last Parent Night on April 2nd for women and April 4th for men.

Semi-structured one-on-one interviews through Zoom were conducted at the beginning of the intervention for the purpose of knowing the participants and answering their questions. After the last Parent Night, a one-on-one interview was conducted to hear firsthand their feedback. Interview questions are listed under Appendix 6.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is a process of reduction and inquiry²⁰⁴ toward measuring the effectiveness of the intervention against the hypotheses. Each questionnaire question has five choices, valued from 1 to 5. The mean is calculated to give the value of each section. A mean distribution chart is developed and presented in Chapter Six to compare the results from pre- and after-intervention, and it shows the effectiveness of the 3C Method against the hypothesis. The interview data is analyzed for a better interpretation of the questionnaire data and to help identify the parenting style of the Chinese immigrant family, which will help fine-tune the 3C Model.

A five-axis radar chart for each participant and the group is developed. Each axis represents a factor of the hypothesis: parent faith growth, spousal relationship, parent-child relationship, parent-child faith sharing, and family warmth. The radar chart provides

²⁰⁴ Luker, 198-199.

insight into three aspects: the effectiveness of the 3C Model, the strength or weakness of the 3C in each of the five factors, and possible relationships between these factors.

Procedures and techniques, such as using code rather than individual names, are employed to ensure anonymous data collection and unbiased analysis. This study is designed for first-generation Chinese Catholic immigrant parents in the GTA aged between the late 20s and late 50s.

Ethical Procedures

Canada's main guidance document for research ethics involving human participants is the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans —TCPS 2 (2022). It applies to all research involving humans, conducted in Canada or abroad, by researchers working under institution(s) eligible for funding by federal agencies, i.e., the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and/or the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

This thesis project does not fall under the TCPS 2 scope. However, I will voluntarily follow the three pillar principles of Respect for Persons, Concern for Welfare, and Justice under TCPS 2²⁰⁵.

The foreseeable risks in participating in this research are minimal. Any participant who feels uncomfortable may discontinue participating at any time without negative consequences. There are no financial costs or incentives to participating in the study. Participants may decline to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. Confidentiality of personal identity is observed, and all assessments are

²⁰⁵ Content can be found here: https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/tcps2-eptc2_2022_chapter3-chapitre3.html#intro.

treated as confidential documents. No personally identifiable information is divulged in the data analysis or report-writing processes.

Conclusions

The 3C Parent Preacher Formation Program completed as planned, with minor adjustments on dates due to weather. Participants in both men's and women's groups took their efforts and were grateful for the opportunity to pray, share, and grow together. They were genuinely interested and engaged, with enthusiasm for discussions and learning. They especially appreciated the rules in place to safeguard the community, the hospitality every host family provided, the relevant topics to help them grow, and the 3-minute timer to allow everyone to share and keep the group on time. Overall, the format and structure of the formation program allowed the parents to grow together in a safe and supportive environment and helped them to be more effective preachers of the Gospel in their domestic churches. The next chapter will discuss the outcomes of this 3C pilot project and future opportunities.

Chapter 6

Results, Findings, and Opportunities

I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ.

—Phil 1:6

Introduction

The 3C program forms parents to become partners with ordained ministers to bring the Gospel to their children in their domestic churches. In the first chapter, I used the image of a telecommunication switch hub to describe today's parish; the effectiveness or stickiness of Sunday preaching depends on how the Gospel message is "consumed" in the family. Just like the last mile from the switching hub to the household defines which carrier will have the advantage, the last mile from the parish to the parishioner's family life is the decisive factor in extending Sunday preaching into the homes.

Each cycle of the 3C program includes a Parent Night, Sunday Liturgy, and Family Snack & Storytime. I launched the program with our Mandarin-speaking congregation at SOTW from January 11 to April 4, 2024. The hypothesis is that if the method functioned as expected, we should see four measurable outcomes: 1) better parents' faith practices, 2) better parent-child relationships, 3) parents are more ready to socialize the faith to their children, and 4) improved warmth in the family.

Throughout the six cycles of the 3C program, participants prayed together and shared their lives with openness in a safe space. Our three-month journey together was

remarkable. The women's group started with nine participants, and one dropped after the 4th Parent Night, while eight completed the program and filled up the pre- and post-questionnaire. The men's group started with six participants and ended with six participants, and all six completed the program and filled up the pre and post-questionnaire. This chapter describes the findings of the 3C pilot project in detail. First, I discuss the 3C program's effectiveness against the four measurements through quantitative and qualitative analysis, followed by my observations, and conclude with a discussion about future opportunities.

Findings

Results from quantitative data analysis

The questionnaire is designed using a five-point Likert scale that measures the four hypotheses based on participants' self-assessment, with the 5th data set on the spousal relationship as a triangulate measure. I calculated the mean score for each category at the group level. The women's group result is captured in Table 5 and illustrated under the radar chart in Figure 26.

Table 5 Women's Group Result

Five Data Sets	Mean (Pre)	Mean (Post)	% (+/-)
Parents' Faith	3.68	3.90	6.12%
Parent-Child Relationship	3.98	4.09	2.83%
Faith Practice in Parenting	3.08	3.25	5.69%
Family Warmth	3.93	4.06	3.27%
Spousal Relationship	3.25	3.38	3.85%

The measure of all four hypotheses at the group level moved in a positive direction, with Parent's Faith and Faith in Parenting at 6.12% and 5.19% improvements,

followed by Family Warmth and Parent-Child Relationship at 3.17% and 2.83%. The data shows that the four hypotheses in Chapter One are true, which means the 3C Parent

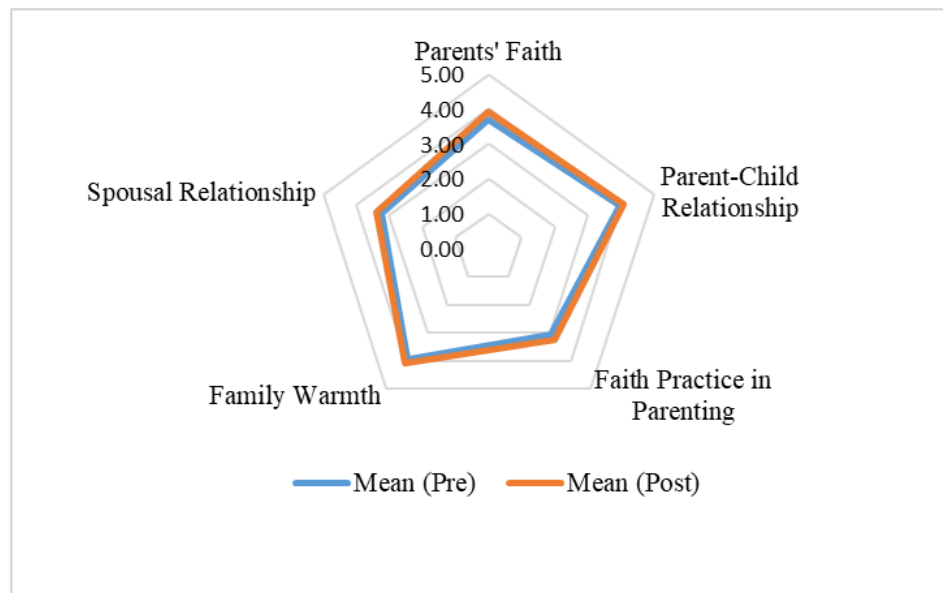


Figure 24 Women's Group Result Radar Chart

Preacher Formation Program is effective for this women's group. The radar chart shows that parents grow in their faith, build better relationships with their children, feel more confident to discuss faith-related topics with their children and improve the warmth of their homes. A better spousal relationship can be expected, and the 5th set of data on spousal relationships at the group level moved in a positive direction, which helped to validate the credibility of the other four sets of results.

Another two sets of triangulated data are the self-perceived level of language (between English and Chinese) and culture barrier (between Chinese and Western) between parents and their children, which is measured by question 8 and 9 of Part I: General Information of the questionnaire under Appendix 4. The language barrier Mean(pre) is 2.0 on the five-point Likert scale, and the Mean(post) is 1.75, a 5% improvement. The culture barrier Mean(pre) is 2.38 on the five-point Likert scale, and the Mean(post) is 2.00, a 7.6% improvement. A possible interpretation is that the better

relationship between mothers and their children and warmer homes helped participating moms view the language and culture barrier with their children less significantly.

The men's group-level result is captured in Table 6 and illustrated under the radar chart in Figure 27.

Table 6 Men's Group Result

Five Data Sets	Mean (Pre)	Mean (Post)	% (+/-)
Parents' Faith	3.65	3.65	0.00%
Parent-Child Relationship	3.96	4.08	3.11%
Faith Practice in Parenting	2.90	3.37	16.09%
Family Warmth	3.90	3.97	1.71%
Spousal Relationship	3.63	4.00	10.34%

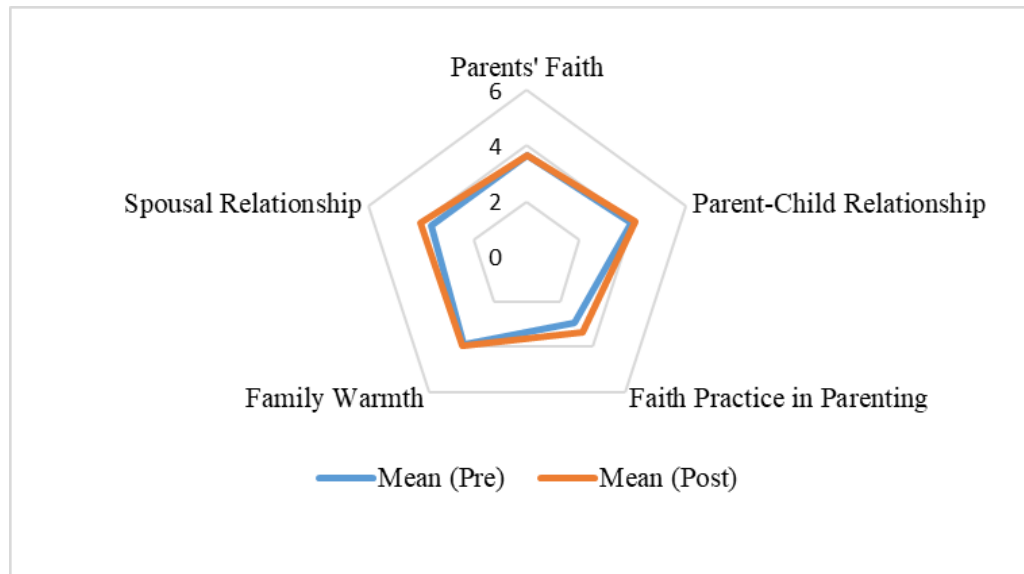


Figure 25 Men's Group Result Radar Chart

The measure of three of the four hypotheses, parent-child relationship, faith practices in parenting, and family warmth, move positively at the group level, led by Faith in Parenting at 16.09% improvements, followed by Parent-Child Relationship and Family Warmth at 3.11% and 1.71%. The fourth data set on parents' faith remained the same. Interestingly, the men's group has significant improvement in faith practices with

their children; however, there is no improvement in their own practices. The answer could be awareness. The men's group asked me to share the questionnaire because one of the dads said these questions were a good reminder to pay attention to what they should do with their children. That awareness could change their interaction with their children, and the 1-Pager Story also provided them a platform to discuss faith-related topics. Though all people need motivation besides reasons to do something, it seems men, at least in this group, needed more motivation compared to this women group to improve their own faith practices.

Overall, the data shows that the hypotheses are largely true and the 3C Parent Preacher Formation Program is effective, at least for this men's group. The 5th set of data on spousal relationships at the group level moved in a positive direction with a 10.34% improvement, which helped to validate the credibility of the other four sets of results. Another two sets of triangulated data are the self-perceived level of language and culture barrier between parents and their children. The result is similar to that of the women's group. The language barrier Mean(pre) is 2.0 on the five-point Likert scale, and the Mean(post) is 1.83, a 3.4% improvement. The culture barrier Mean(pre) is 2.83 on the five-point Likert scale, and the Mean(post) is 2.00, a 16.6% improvement. It is likely that the better relationship between fathers and their children and warmer homes helped participating dads view the language and culture barrier with their children less significantly, especially on the perceived culture barrier.

I now dive deeper into the four data sets to analyze how the 3C Program impacts the parents in the four areas the project was set to measure. The first data set is parents' faith, measured by five questions with scores of 1 to 5. The women's group Mean

improved from 3.68 to 3.90, or 6.12%, as shown in Table 7. The median also moved favorability from the median (pre) of 3.80 to the median (post) of 3.90. The most significant improvement is on question 3 - “When making important decisions, how often do you pray to God for guidance?” with a 10.71% increase; the possible explanation is

Table 7 Parents' Faith (Women's Group)

Measure on Parents' Faith	Mean (Pre)	Mean (Post)	% (+/-)
1 - How important does Christian faith mean to you?	4.13	4.50	9.09%
2 - How often do you attend Mass?	3.63	3.88	6.90%
3 - When making important decisions, how often do you pray to God for guidance?	3.50	3.88	10.71%
4 - How often do you pray/read Bible?	3.38	3.50	3.70%
5 - How much do you participate in church ministries/activities (liturgy, choir, visiting the sick, cooking/cleaning in the church, charity events etc)?	3.75	3.75	0.00%
Mean of Parents' Faith Group of Questions	3.68	3.90	6.12%

that this question brought awareness to the parents, and some started introducing it into their faith practices. During Parent Night, some moms shared that when their children in challenging situations, they prayed with them, calmed them down and helped them find solutions. That sharing could have helped other parents. Interestingly, improvement in Mass attendance, prayer, Bible reading, and awareness of the importance of Christian faith does not

automatically translate into involvement in church ministry.

The Mean(pre) standard deviation²⁰⁶ is

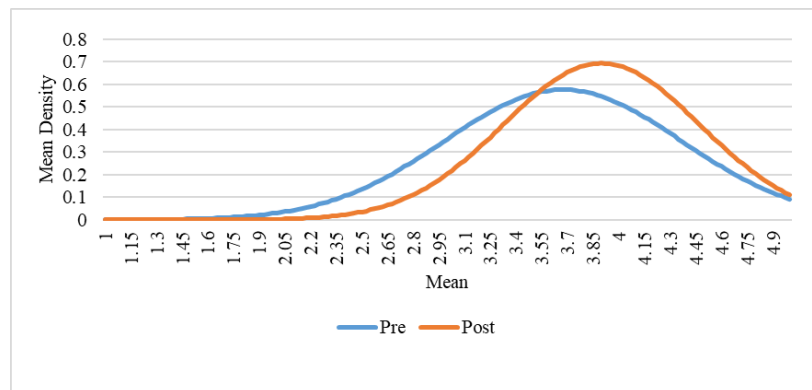


Figure 26 Parent Faith Mean Distribution (Women's Group)

²⁰⁶ Standard deviation is calculated using the Microsoft Excel formula STDEV.S.

0.69, and the Mean(post) standard deviation is 0.58. $0.58 < 0.69$ means the 3C intervention not only increased the mean of parents' faith practices but also drives the individual Mean distribution²⁰⁷ of the group toward the group Mean, which supports the design of the 3C program of moving the group toward the Middle Way as illustrated in Figure 28.

The men's group does not show improvement in this measure, and the group's Mean remains at 3.65, as shown in Table 8. The median moved negatively from the median (pre) of 3.95 to the median (post) of 3.85. The most significant improvement is on question 5 - "How much do you participate in church ministries/activities (liturgy, choir, visiting the sick, cooking/cleaning in the church, charity events, among others.)?" with a 10.53% increase. The data suggests that men are more interested in participating in church activities as their faith expression than prayer and Bible reading; however, the sample is too small to draw that conclusion. The negative result (-4%) on the importance of faith was caused by one lower score; however, this same individual had lower faith

Table 8 Parents' Faith (Men's Group)

Measure on Parents' Faith	Mean (Pre)	Mean (Post)	% (+/-)
1 - How important does Christian faith mean to you?	4.17	4.00	-4.00%
2 - How often do you attend Mass?	3.42	3.42	0.00%
3 - When making important decisions, how often do you pray to God for guidance?	4.00	4.00	0.00%
4 - How often do you pray/read Bible?	3.50	3.33	-4.76%
5 - How much do you participate in church ministries/activities (liturgy, choir, visiting the sick, cooking/cleaning in the church, charity events etc)?	3.17	3.50	10.53%
Mean of Parents' Faith Group of Questions	3.65	3.65	0.00%

importance (after) score, putting in a higher score on prayer/Bible reading. The negative result (-4.76%) on prayer/Bible reading was caused by lower scores by two persons;

²⁰⁷ Mean Distribution is calculated using the Microsoft Excel formula NORM.DIST(x, mean, standard-dev, cumulative).

however, both rated the same score pre and after on the importance of faith. It is safe to regard these two negative results as immaterial.

The standard deviation of the Mean(pre) is 0.76, and the Mean(post) is 0.74;

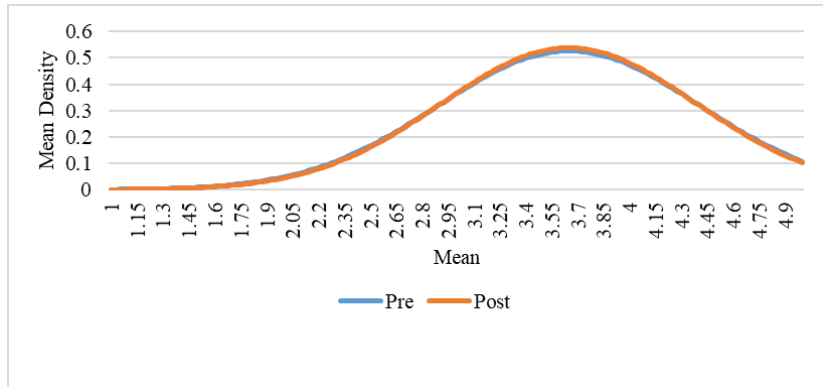


Figure 27 Parents Faith Mean Distribution (Men's Group)

the difference is insignificant, which means the 3C intervention had minimum impact on the density of the individual Mean distribution, as shown in Figure 29.

The second data set is parents' relationship with their children, measured by five questions with scores of 1 to 5. The women's group Mean improved from 3.98 to 4.09, or 2.83%, as shown in Table 9. The median also moved favorability from the median (pre) of 4.00 to the median (post) of 4.10.

Table 9 Parent-Child Relationship (Women's Group)

Measure of Parent-Child Relationship	Mean (Pre)	Mean (Post)	% (+/-)
1 - How would you rate your relationship with your children?	4.50	4.19	-6.94%
2 - When you discuss a topic with your child, from the amount of speech perspective, which split between you and your child below best represents the overall pattern?	3.38	3.88	14.81%
3 -How often do you smile at your child?	4.25	4.50	5.88%
4 -How often do you interrupt your child before he/she can finish his/her sentence?	3.13	3.13	0.00%
5 - How often do you spend one-on-one time with your child?	4.63	4.75	2.70%
Mean of Parent-Child Relationship Group of Questions	3.98	4.09	2.83%

The negative score on the first question, "How would you rate your relationship with your children?" is caused by one parent who had a teenage child. The score went

from 5 - very close to 3 – somewhat close. This could actually be the result of the parent becoming more attentive to the adolescent and seeing more clearly the reality of their current relationship based on better mutual understanding. Through this study, I realized that the child's age significantly impacts the parent-child relationship, and parents usually rate their relationship with children seven and under closer than with their teenagers. For future studies, I will consider adding parents asking their teenage children to rate their relationship so the other side of the story can also be seen.

The most significant improvement is on question 2 - “When you discuss a topic with your child, from the amount of speech perspective, which split between you and your child below best represents the overall pattern?” with a 14.81% increase. It is pretty common that parents talk most of the time and leave little room for their children to share what’s on their minds. Some parents pointed out that this was an excellent question to bring awareness to their blind spots and were willing to make room for their children to speak.

The Mean(pre) standard deviation is 0.59, and the Mean(post) standard deviation is 0.43. $0.43 < 0.59$ means the 3C program not only increases the Mean of the parent-child relationship

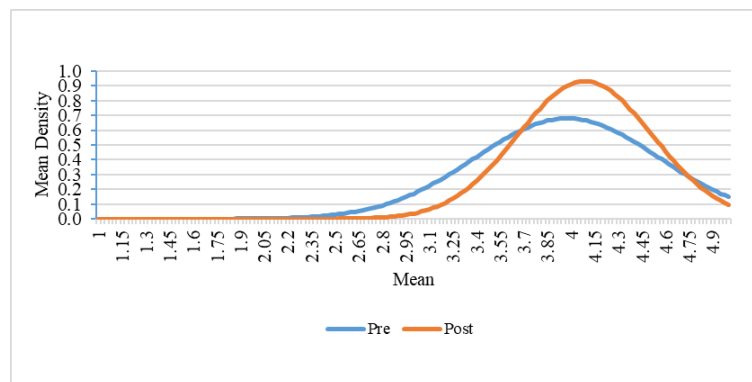


Figure 28 Parent-Child Relationship Mean Distribution (Women's Group)

but also drives the individual Mean distribution of the group more concentrated toward

the group Mean, which supports the design of the 3C of moving the group toward the Middle Way as illustrated in Figure 30.

The men's group Mean improved from 3.96 to 4.08, or 3.11%, as shown in Table 10. The median moved negatively from the median (pre) of 3.90 to the median (post) of 3.80.

Table 10 Parent-Child Relationship (Men's Group)

Measure of Parent-Child Relationship	Mean (Pre)	Mean (Post)	% (+/-)
1 - How would you rate your relationship with your children?	4.33	4.42	1.92%
2 - When you discuss a topic with your child, from the amount of speech perspective, which split between you and your child below best represents the overall pattern?	3.83	4.17	8.70%
3 -How often do you smile at your child?	4.17	4.33	4.00%
4 -How often do you interrupt your child before he/she can finish his/her sentence?	3.67	3.33	-9.09%
5 - How often do you spend one-on-one time with your child?	3.80	4.17	9.65%
Mean of Parent-Child Relationship Group of Questions	3.96	4.08	3.11%

The most significant improvement is on question 5 – “How often do you spend one-on-one time with your child?” and question 2 - “When you discuss a topic with your child, from the amount of speech perspective, which split between you and your child below best represents the overall pattern?” with a 9.65% and 8.7% increase. The negative score on the fourth question, “How often do you interrupt your child before he/she can finish his/her sentence? ” was caused by one parent with two children. The score went from 5 - rarely to 3 – sometimes. Without this score, the Mean(post) score would be favorable compared to the Mean(pre). A possible interpretation is that something out of the norm happened in the family, and this dad interrupted the conversation with his child more than he used to.

The standard deviation of the Mean(pre) and the Mean(post) is 0.66, which means the 3C intervention did not change the Mean distribution regarding the parent-child

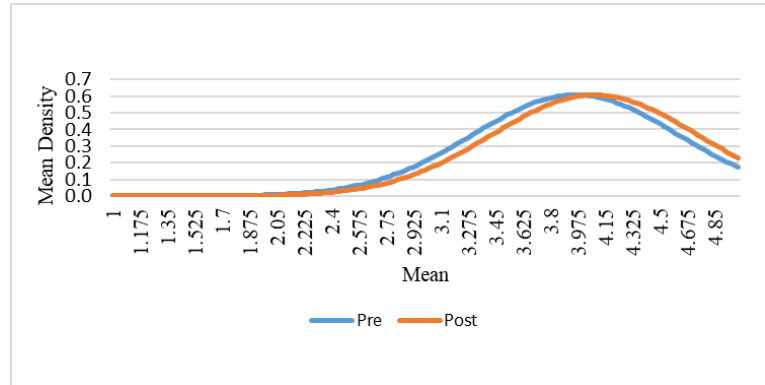


Figure 29 Parent-Child Relationship Mean Distribution (Men's Group)

relationship measurement, as illustrated in Figure 31.

The third data set is “faith in parenting,” which measures parents' comfort level when discussing faith-related topics with their children. This category consists of five questions with scores of 1 to 5. The women’s group Mean improved from 3.08 to 3.25, or 5.69%, as shown in Table 11. The median also moved favorability from the median

Table 11 Faith-in-Parenting (Women's Group)

Measure of Faith-in-Parenting	Mean (Pre)	Mean (Post)	% (+/-)
1 -How important to you to bring your children up in the Christian faith?	3.75	4.38	16.67%
2 -How often do you talk about faith with your child?	2.88	2.88	0.00%
3 -How often do you and your child go to church together?	4.13	4.13	0.00%
4 -How often do you and your child read the Bible together?	1.88	1.75	-6.67%
5 -How often do you and your child pray together?	2.75	3.13	13.64%
Mean of Faith-in-Parenting Group of Questions	3.08	3.25	5.69%

(pre) of 3.00 to the median (post) of 3.30.

The most significant improvement is on questions 1 – “How important is it to you to bring your children up in the Christian faith?” and 5 - “How often do you and your child pray together?” with a 16.67% and 13.64% increase.

The standard deviation of the Mean(pre) is 0.95, and the Mean(post) is 0.87.

0.87<0.95 means the 3C intervention not only increased the Mean of Faith-in-Parenting but also drove the individual Mean distribution of the group slightly

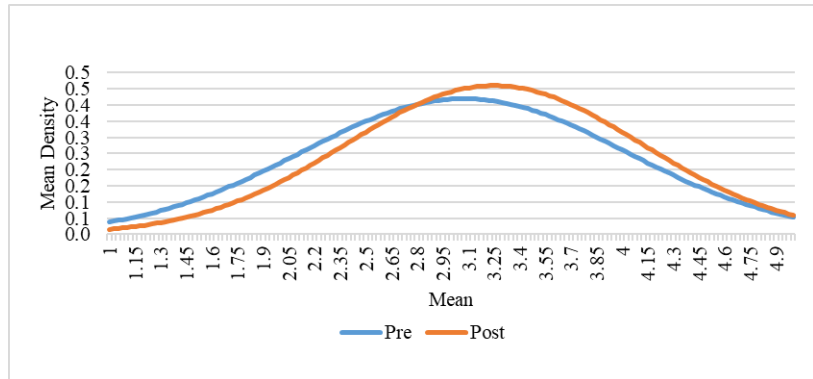


Figure 30 Faith-in-Parenting Mean Distribution (Women's Group)

concentrated toward the group Mean, as illustrated in Figure 32.

The men's group Mean improved from 2.90 to 3.37, or 16.09%, as shown in Table 12. The median also moved favorably from median(pre) 3.30 to median(post) 3.50.

Table 12 Faith-in-Parenting (Men's Group)

Measure of Faith-in-Parenting	Mean (Pre)	Mean (Post)	% (+/-)
1 -How important to you to bring your children up in the Christian faith?	4.00	4.33	8.33%
2 -How often do you talk about faith with your child?	2.50	3.17	26.67%
3 -How often do you and your child go to church together?	3.33	3.83	15.00%
4 -How often do you and your child read the Bible together?	2.00	2.33	16.67%
5 -How often do you and your child pray together?	2.67	3.17	18.75%
Mean of Faith-in-Parenting Group of Questions	2.90	3.37	16.09%

This data set shows the most significant increase of the four data sets that correspond with the four hypotheses. Four of the five questions saw double-digit growth, and the reason could be awareness by the participating dads, and the 1-Pager Story provided the platform for dads to discuss faith-related topics. One of the dads asked me to give them the questionnaire because these questions helped him to recognize where he could be helpful to his children's faith, and the other dads agreed with him. This will improve the child's perceived dad's faith practices, even if the dad's faith practice

remains the same. Bentson's report shows that faith-practicing fathers have a more significant impact on their children's faith than mothers.²⁰⁸ This positive impact on their children's perception is a plus for faith transmission in the family.

The Mean(pre) standard deviation is 0.79, and the Mean(post) standard deviation is 0.64. $0.64 < 0.79$ means

the intervention not only improved the group's average score but also moved the distribution of the Mean more concentrated toward the

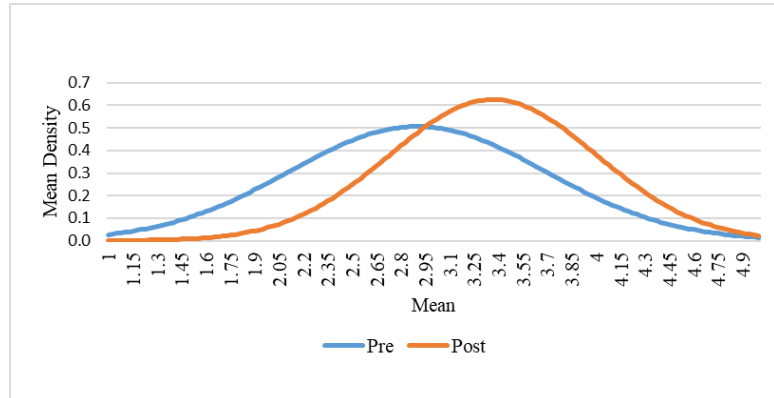


Figure 31 Faith-in-Parenting Mean Distribution (Men's Group)

group average, which supports the design of the 3C program of moving the group toward the Middle Way, as shown in Figure 33.

The fourth data set is "family warmth," which measures the temperature of the family's acceptance and hospitality toward each other. This category consists of five questions with scores of 1 to 5. The women's group Mean improved from Mean(pre)

Table 13 Family Warmth (Women's Group)

Measure of Family Warmth	Mean (Pre)	Mean (Post)	% (+/-)
1 -How would you describe the overall temperature of your family?	4.25	4.38	2.86%
2 -How often does your family share a meal together?	3.86	4.13	6.49%
3 -How freely do your family members share affection with each other? (for example, kiss, hug, words of caring/encouragement, etc.)	3.88	3.88	0.00%
4 -How does your family treat a sick family member?	3.69	4.06	9.23%
5 -Which is the closest in describing your family on free opinion expression?	4.00	4.00	0.00%
Mean of Family Warmth Group of Questions	3.93	4.09	3.76%

²⁰⁸ Bentson, 76.

3.93 to Mean(post) 4.09, or 3.76%, as shown in Table 13. The median also moved favorability from the median (pre) of 3.88 to the median (post) of 4.06.

The Mean(pre) standard deviation is 1, and the Mean(post) standard deviation is 0.81. $0.81 < 1$ means the intervention not only improved the group's average score but also

moved the distribution of the Mean more concentrated toward the group average, which supports the design of the 3C program of moving the group toward the Middle

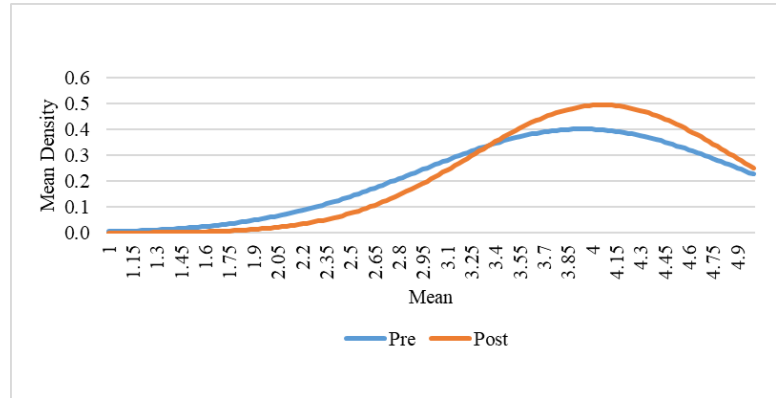


Figure 32 Family Warmth Mean Distribution (Women's Group)

Way as illustrated in Figure 34.

The men's group Mean improved insignificantly from Mean(pre) 3.90 to Mean(post) 3.97, or 1.68%, as shown in Table 14. The significant improvement is in men's showing affection toward family members, with a 25% increase. In this area lies the low-hanging fruit, and awareness alone could bring positive results. I just realized the design of questions four and five has a flaw because they do not ask how you, as a dad,

Table 14 Family Warmth (Men's Group)

Measure of Family Warmth	Mean (Pre)	Mean (Post)	% (+/-)
1 -How would you describe the overall temperature of your family?	4.50	4.50	0.00%
2 -How often does your family share a meal together?	4.33	4.50	3.70%
3 -How freely do your family members share affection with each other? (for example, kiss, hug, words of caring/encouragement, etc.)	2.50	3.33	25.00%
4 -How does your family treat a sick family member?	4.33	4.00	-8.33%
5 -Which is the closest in describing your family on free opinion expression?	3.83	3.50	-9.52%
Mean of Family Warmth Group of Questions	3.90	3.97	1.68%

treat a sick family member or respect free opinion expression in the family; rather, they ask about other family members who were not in the project. The participating dads likely improved their behaviors in these areas due to awareness; however, that awareness could make them score negatively on other family members who were not part of the project. I will update questions four and five for future studies to link the measure directly with the participant's behavior.

The Mean(pre) standard deviation is 0.45, and the Mean(post) standard deviation is 0.41. $0.41 < 0.45$ means

the intervention moved the distribution of the Mean slightly concentrated toward the group average, which supports the design of

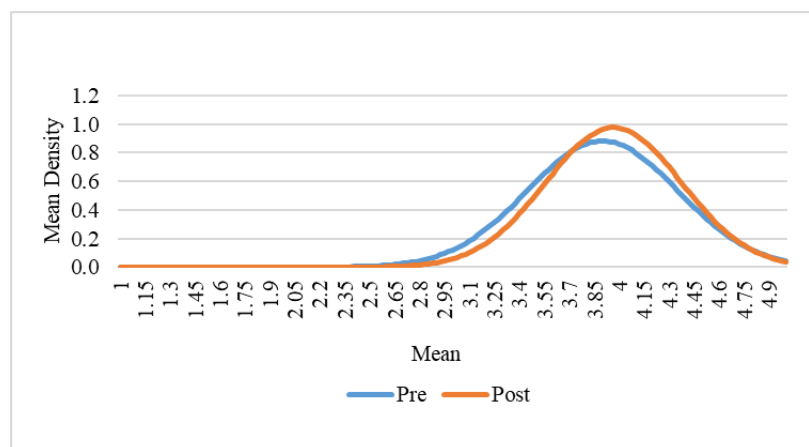


Figure 33 Family Warmth Mean Distribution (Men's Group)

the 3C program of moving the group toward the Middle Way as illustrated in Figure 35.

Insights from Qualitative Assessment

The interviews followed the questions outlined in Appendix 6 and focused on finding what benefited the parents and what did not. All participants appreciated the opportunity to be part of the journey and expressed gratitude for their profound learning. Overall, the 3C program received a positive evaluation from all participants. The most beneficial elements the parents mentioned are the stories or discussion topics, the sharing at the Parent Night, the evening prayer's beauty, and the hosts' hospitality.

The parents recognized that the stories or topics were close to their lives and regarded them as a platform to engage their children in meaningful conversations. The sharing among the parents at Parent Night expanded the parents' views, and sometimes, those "A ha" moments brought about significant changes. One parent shared that she was brought up in an environment of much parental criticism and believed that was the way to prepare her son to be resilient when facing difficulties later in life. The result was constant conflicts with her son. Other parents view that the parents' love, not criticism, makes their children strong and ready to face difficulties when they grow up because that loving and trusting relationship will anchor the children. That was an "Aha" moment for her. She shared how that insight helped her and improved her relationship with her teenage son. Another parent shared that he put extra effort into tutoring his daughter's math and often ended with belittling, "You cannot solve such a simple question. What else can you do? You will grow up a failure!" This is not uncommon in Chinese culture for several reasons. First, there is the pressure of doing well in exams, which leads to a better-paying job in the future; second, there is the cultural norm of belittling one's own accomplishments as a virtue. However, these children now function in a Canadian culture that emphasizes achievements beyond school exams and encouragement. The 3C program intends to help parents come to terms with the new norms in Canadian society. The story "*You Are Special*" and discussions at the Parent Night helped him to realize that he was the one who often put negative "labels" on her daughter and the one who needed to change. He recognized that God gives each child different gifts, and it is perfectly fine if his daughter does not have the same gift in math as he does, and the skills taught by children's communication experts Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish helped him

how to talk to his daughter. Most parents mentioned similar learning experiences at some points during the journey.

Almost all participants mentioned the beauty of the evening prayer. After a busy day, the chanting helped them into a relaxing, peaceful, and holy space. Praying together as a group invited participants to open their hearts to God and each other. Each person found different parts of the prayer touched their hearts. One parent said the hymn was especially speaking to her, and she felt deeply touched whenever she sang this line, “Guide our work, refresh our weary hearts. Glory to You, Christ.” Because most of the time, I used the same hymn and tone for the evening prayer, after a while, the group was quite familiar with the hymn and could remember some lines by heart. Another parent especially loved the chanting of the Psalms, and he said he experienced the beauty of prayer that he never experienced when reading the Psalms. Some parents highlighted the Lectio Divina style of reading and listening to the Scripture, especially the opening line, “Speak Lord, for your servant is listening.” Many parents loved the Latin closing hymn, *Salve Regina*, which drew them closer to Mother Mary’s heart when they sang along, even using an unfamiliar language. I printed both Latin and Chinese on the evening prayer sheet so everyone knew the meaning of the lyrics.

All participants recognized and appreciated the hospitality provided by the hosts. From parking outside the house to the clean and warm space inside the house to snacks and drinks, the hosts are always well-prepared. Sometimes, the single parent needed to bring the child, and the hosts would have a child-friendly place, or the hosts’ child would take good care of the young guest. At the end of the three-month project period, some parents continued to invite the group to their home for Parent Night, and one couple

invited both men's and women's groups to their home for a pot-luck gathering at the end of June 2024. All participants were thankful for the hosts' generosity and thoughtfulness.

Areas for improvement

The 3C Parent Preacher Formation Program is effective against the four hypotheses, though with small percentages of improvement, but in the right direction.

The 3C recognizes that this formation is slow work for parents to establish new habits at each individual's pace and is designed to keep the balance between the minister's agenda and the genuineness of the community's sharing. The golden ratio remains to be found; however, the participants helped me identify three areas for improvement: parents' preparation, the explicit link between the Lectio Divina and the 1-Page Story, and a good balance between sharing and teaching.

Parents' preparation: The quality of sharing among parents relies on their preparedness. There were occasions when few parents came to the gathering without preparation; for example, they did not read the material sent to them, or read it but did not put in the effort to reflect on the questions, or read and reflected but did not write down as the instruction asked. Their ad hoc sharing either fell short of meaningful content or dragged on beyond three minutes. Moving forward, I will ask the host to send a friendly reminder two days before the gathering and resend the reading material and reflection questions. However, as a parent, I understand that sometimes things happen, and it is not always possible for everyone to come well-prepared. Between preparedness and participation, I lean toward participation so the one who is well-prepared can benefit the once-in-a-while unprepared teammates.

The link between the Lectio Divina and the 1-Pager Story: The Scripture chosen for Lectio Divina during the evening prayer is taken from the coming Sunday readings. The 1-Pager Story chosen for the night is related. There is a link by design between the Scripture in Lectio Divina, the story, and the main theme of the coming Sunday homily. However, few parents recognized the link when they dived into the story and shared their opinions. Sometimes, I linked them through my 3-minute sharing with an implied instead of an articulated approach. Moving forward, I can add a 3-minute reflection during the Lectio Divina to make the link explicit (or through a video recording to the parents ahead of time if I cannot be present physically). First, I will give simple teaching on how to give reflections, then give my reflections as examples; second, I'll ask the parents to give reflections. Gradually, this should help the parents to recognize better the link between their sharing and the message of the Scripture.

The balance between teaching and sharing: Some parents suggested that I add some teaching after the parents share because sharing among parents helped them realize other possibilities, but it was not enough for the parents to know the correct answer. This mindset of letting the minister provide a correct answer to a given question is common in the Chinese community because most parents were brought up in the Chinese education system, and teachers were the ones who provided the answers. My concern about this approach is that once the minister starts to give directions, the parents will feel the pressure to follow the minister's thinking in future sharing, and the sharing might not be as genuine as it is today. A possible solution is to add a "what I have learned" parent session after the Family Snack & Storytime, such as an online meeting on a weekday night for the parents to share their experiences with their children about the story and

what they have learned. This should help the parents to get to better solutions without the specific directions given by the minister.

In the following section, I share the insights I learned from the pilot project.

Insights

I see six key attributes essential to the program's success: A trusting environment, the 3-minute rule, evening prayer before sharing, in-person Parent Night, parents presiding, and the relevant stories/topics.

A trusting environment: The participants met in private homes, and the conversations were not recorded. Parents could leave the program anytime during the six cycles and were free to share or not to share. The guidelines prioritized respecting privacy as the first rule. Giving no unsolicited advice and comments on other people's sharing safeguarded each person's sharing from being accidentally abused, even with good intentions. No belittling self and others safeguarded the group from unintentional harm. The emphasis on listening when someone was sharing helped the sharing person to build confidence, and the no fundraising and no donations rule eased the nerves of all the participants. All these elements were essential to help the group build a trusting relationship.

The 3-minute rule: There always seemed not enough time to say all one wanted to say; however, a prepared person knew how much he or she could accomplish within 3 minutes. One of the major issues that a community breaks down is that few persons dominate the conversation or occupy too much time and leave the rest of the community unsatisfied. The 3-minute rule introduced fairness into the sharing, encouraged parents to prepare what they wanted to say, and safeguarded the group's overall satisfaction.

Evening prayer before sharing: The evening prayer helped the parents to settle down, body and mind, after a busy day's work. The chanting was especially effective in settling the body and ushering in a gentle and delightful spirit. Praying as a community helped the parents to open their hearts to each other and share generously and respectfully.

In-person Parent Night: Meeting online was a real temptation, especially during the Canadian winter; however, virtual meetings are ineffective in building communities. I learned this firsthand during COVID-19 when mentoring the diaconate candidates at St. Augustine Seminary. Today's virtual meeting platforms cannot keep a group chanting in sync. Being absent is one click away. The background noise, the challenge of keeping privacy, and unforeseen technical issues could quickly outweigh the convenience of meeting online and significantly compromise the community's experiences. The in-person Parent Night brought the group together after several gatherings, and the trusting relationship among the members started to emerge quickly.

Parents presiding: the parents must own their formation and take responsibility for leading prayers, facilitating sharing, and organizing their gatherings. My role is to guide and show the way so they can learn and take charge. I must decrease, and they must increase to fulfill their calling as head of their domestic church. After I presided over the first two gatherings, the parents started to organize the next gathering and facilitate the sharing. I recorded the tune of the evening prayer chanting and shared it through our WhatsApp groups, and the parents began to lead evening prayers from the fourth session. My role gradually reduced to providing material for the parents, and they began to take charge of their formation.

The relevant stories/topics: the 1-Pager Story and discussion questions for the parents gathering and their children are critical. It must relate to the coming Sunday readings, be relevant to the parents and their children's lives, be simple enough for the children to understand, and at the same time, have the potential for deeper reflections. Most parents had more than one child, and the questions designed for children of different ages helped them communicate more effectively with their children.

Future Opportunities

The designed intervention period ended on April 4th, 2024; however, both groups wanted to continue gathering. Another six cycles were added from April to June, as shown in Table 15.

Table 15 Post 3C Pilot Project Parent Night Dates

Meetings	Women's Group Parents Night	Men's Group Parents Night	Meeting Place
7	16-Apr-24	19-Apr-24	Participant's home
8	30-Apr-24	02-May-24	Participant's home
9	14-May-24	16-May-24	Participant's home
10	28-May-24		Participant's home
11	11-Jun-24	20-Jun-24	Participant's home
12	29-June-24, both groups together, pot-luck & Parents Night		Participant's home
	Summer Break		
13	08-Oct-24		Participant's home
14	11-Nov-24	21-Nov-24	Participant's home
15	29-Dec-24	13-Feb-25	Participant's home

After the summer break, the women's group resumed in October 2024, and the frequency of gatherings was adjusted to once a month. The men's group resumed in November 2024 and also intended to gather once a month.

Fr. Andrew Deng, then pastor of CMCC (Chinese Martyr's Catholic Church, the largest Chinese Catholic Church in the GTA), heard about this program and asked me to guide a newly baptized group of five families living in the city of Vaughan, north of Toronto and in between our church SOTW and CMCC. The group prefers to gather with both parents once a month on a Saturday afternoon. Their children would play together in

the basement when parents prayed and shared. I adapted the program to fit their schedule and started in September 2024. The participants answered the questionnaires to establish a baseline for future measurement. This provided me another learning opportunity to adapt the 3C program to different settings to find an effective way for parents to partner with the preacher and bring the Gospel home.

Our parish Mandarin-speaking RCIA class has over 30 adults this year. They usually attend Saturday's 5:30 pm Mandarin Mass, and after the liturgy of the Word, they go to their class for a discussion session. I plan to organize them after their baptism to gather regularly before Saturday Mass at the church. Due to the large number of people, they can be divided into two or three groups. The gathering format follows the 3C program, and the current parents in the 3C program in the past year can be group leaders. There are a couple of advantages to using Saturday afternoon before Mass. First, it will save a parents' trip on a weekday night; second, the Sunday preaching right after the gathering could have more impact; and third, when the parents discuss the 1-Page Story with their children at their Family Snack & Storytime, their memory should still be fresh of what was shared and preached the day before. The downside is the lack of the warmth of a home; however, it provides another possible setting for the 3C program to test out.

I plan to organize the content and launch a website so parents can access the materials whenever they need them. I also plan to write a pamphlet for parent leaders interested in organizing a parent group to bring the Gospel to their children. With the pamphlet and the material on the website, the parent leader can be enabled to play a significant role in today's domestic churches.

I believe the effectiveness of the 3C program should go beyond the Mandarin-speaking Catholic immigrant parents in the GTA because the key elements are pretty universal. To test that out further down the road, God willing, there is a potential that this 3C program can be developed into a course, especially for the diaconate community, so that the deacons can be equipped with the necessary tools to start their ministry in their parish to help parents in their parish to build the domestic church.

Conclusion

The calling of Vatican II for Christian families to be domestic churches implies a calling for Christian parents to be preachers who bring the Gospel to their children in their daily lives through their words and actions. The 3C program was designed to help the parents effectively do just that. The data shows that the hypothesis in Chapter One is credible, at least for the participants in the Mandarin-speaking parent groups.

In Chapter One, I used the metaphor of telecommunication providers to suggest that what happens in the last mile, from the parishes to the homes, is the decisive factor in the effectiveness of Gospel preaching. Just as all carriers know that the last mile in telecommunication is the most labor-intensive and cost-prohibitive, ministers laboring in the Lord's vineyard also know the last mile from parishes to homes is anything but a short and easy walk. However, there is an encouraging Chinese saying, “千里之行 · 始于足下.” (“Qian Li Zhi Xiong, Shi Yu Zu Xia”), which means a thousand-mile journey begins with the first steps. The 3C program belongs to the first steps of a long journey and will continue to be a work in progress. I hope Christian parents, with the help of their ministers, will take up the 3C program, adapt it to their specific settings, and labor to

bring the Gospel to their homes—the domestic churches—so that the good work the Lord has begun among us will bear good fruit in due time.

Appendix 1

Church Announcement

Church Announcement after Mass (Nov 25, Dec 2nd & 9th, 2023, 5:30 pm Mass)

Dear Brothers and sisters,

Many of us came to Canada for a better future for our children. In the past many years of serving at our parish, I found that a question people often ask is, “How can I bring up and guide my children so that they can live a good life when they grow up?” Especially facing the challenges between Chinese and Western cultures, Christian beliefs, and secular values, many of you feel that you don't know how to guide your children when faced with challenging situations with your children.

There is no quick fix. A possible solution is that we, as parents, put efforts into learning, practicing, and growing together as a community. One of the fruits of my past four years of doctoral studies in preaching was to design a program for this purpose, which I now first introduce to our Mandarin-speaking congregation. If you are interested, please see me after Mass at the lobby or email me at deaconpaulma@gmail.com before December 12; leave your contact information, and I will contact you for a more detailed Q&A session.

God bless,

Deacon Paul Ma

堂区通讯 (2023 年 11 月 25 日 · 12 月 2 日及九日 下午五点半提前弥撒)

大家好，

我们很多人来到加拿大，是为了孩子有一个更美好的未来，在过去许多年服务救世主堂的过程中，我发现人们经常问的一个问题是：“我该如何培养、引导自己的孩子，使他们有一个更美好的未来？”特别在中西文化，基督信仰与习俗价值差异的环境中，许多人感到面对孩子提出的问题，不知该如何引导才好。

我觉得没有速成的解决方案，可行的尝试是在团体中一起学习、实践，成长。过去四年，我的博士学习的成果之一，就是为此而设计了一种方法，准备首先介绍给本堂区的国语教友，如果你有兴趣了解，请弥撒后在大堂留下您联系方法，或在12月12日前发邮件给我，deaconpaulma@gmail.com，我会跟您联系给予更多的信息。

主佑平安！

马杰 执事

Appendix 2

Consent Form

Project of Extending Sunday Preaching into Homes with the Help of Parents

Background: In Canada, the main guidance document for the ethics of research involving human participants is the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans —TCPS 2 (2022). It applies to all research involving humans, conducted in Canada or abroad, by researchers working under institution(s) eligible for funding by federal agencies, i.e., the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and/or the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

This thesis project does not fall under the TCPS 2 scope. However, I have completed the TCPS 2 online courses and passed the exam, and I will voluntarily follow the three pillar principles of Respect for Persons, Concern for Welfare, and Justice under TCPS 2, which can be found here: https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/tcps2-eptc2_2022_chapter3-chapitre3.html#intro.

Preacher: Deacon Paul Ma, Doctor of Ministry in Preaching Candidate, Aquinas Institute of Theology, St. Louis, MO, USA.

Purpose: I am developing a new method called the 3C Model to extend the Gospel to homes with the help of the parents. Living the Gospel is envisioned and practiced by Christians of all ages; however, each age must face its own challenges. In our time, it is imperative to enable parents to take the Gospel to their children in the warmth of their home and adapt the message close to their lives. The method has three steps. Step one is Community, which is to form a parent's community under the guidance of the preacher. The community comprises two groups, each with ten parents with school-aged children. One group is for women, and the other is for men. The women's group meets on Tuesday night every two weeks, and the men's group meets on Thursday night every two weeks. It helps parents to not worry about babysitting. Step two is Communion; parents take their children to attend Sunday Mass/Sunday school. The third step is Commission, which means parents hold Family Snack & Storytime at home with their children to read the Sunday readings and discuss the story and related questions (provided by the preacher on the previous Tuesday/Thursday parents' night).

This 3C method is designed to help parents grow in the Christian faith through community sharing, strengthen marriage through meaningful conversation between the couple, and raise their children in the Christian values through storytelling and life sharing in the family.

Duration, Procedures, and Communication: The preacher-guided period will take twelve weeks with six sessions (dates are attached). Each session includes 90 minutes of Parent Night, 60 minutes of attending Sunday Mass/Sunday School, and 60 minutes of Family Snack & Storytime at home. The goal of the twelve-week practices is to establish the community to the point that it can stand and continue on its own. However, the preacher will continue to provide the necessary materials.

Parents' night includes community prayer, Lectio Divina, sharing, and discussion on the story/questions provided by the preacher.

During the twelve weeks, the preacher will conduct pre and after-surveys, as well as one personal interview.

A WhatsApp group will be established to include the members of this group and the preacher only. The preacher will preside over the first three sessions, and parents will be invited to take turns to preside at the following sessions. The presider has the duty to send a reminder for the gathering a day before through the group WhatsApp.

Risks: The foreseeable risks in participating in this research are minimal. A participant may feel uncomfortable discussing personally meaningful topics or working in a group environment. Any participant who feels uncomfortable may discontinue participating at any time without any negative consequences. If a participant discontinues participating, her/his data will be destroyed.

Benefits, Incentives, and Costs: There are no financial benefits or incentives to participating in the study. The primary potential benefit to participating in this research is the opportunity the participants have to grow personally, as a couple, and as a family. At the same time, participants can contribute to the community by sharing their wisdom and life experiences. There are no costs to participating in this study.

Alternatives: Participants may decline to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without consequence.

Confidentiality: The preacher will strongly encourage the adoption of confidentiality in the process. All assessments will be treated as confidential documents. No personally identifiable information will be divulged in the data analysis or report-writing processes. After the research is concluded and the final reports are written, the data of all participants will be destroyed. However, existing laws require the preacher to report any individuals who are in clear and imminent danger of harm to themselves or others and any potential child abuse and neglect.

Contact: For information about this research and your rights as a research participant, please contact the preacher at deaconpaulma@gmail.com.

Consent: I have read this form, and the research study has been explained to me. I understand that I may ask questions and that I know whom to contact if I have questions. I understand that I can discontinue participation in the study at any time without consequence. I understand that this study does not provide, nor is it a substitute for, professional psychological counseling or marriage counseling. Individuals who need such professional counseling are encouraged to seek it. By signing below, I confirm that I am at least 18 years old, and I agree to participate in the research study described above.

Date

Print name

Signature

Updated Parent Night Dates:

Meetings	Women's Group Parent Night	Men's Group Parent Night	Meeting Place
1	9-Jan-24	11-Jan-24	Deacon Paul's home
2	30-Jan-24	1-Feb-24	Participant's home
3	13-Feb-24	15-Feb-24	Participant's home
4	27-Feb-24	29-Feb-24	Participant's home
5	19-Mar-24	21-Mar-24	Participant's home
6	26-Mar-24	4-Apr-24	Participant's home

Time: 7:30 pm – 9:00 pm

同意参与“在家长的帮助下将主日讲道扩展到家庭”项目的说明

背景：在加拿大，涉及人类参与者的研究伦理的主要指导文件是三个理事会的共同政策声明：涉及人类研究的道德行为准则 —**TCPS 2 (2022)**。它适用于由有资格获得联邦机构资助的机构下的研究人员在加拿大或国外进行的所有涉及人类的研究。这三个理事会是加拿大卫生研究院 (**CIHR**)、加拿大自然科学和工程研究委员会 (**NSERC**) 和/或社会科学和人文研究委员会 (**SSHRC**)。

本论文项目虽不属于 **TCPS 2** 范围，但研究人员自愿遵循 **TCPS 2** 下的尊重人、关心福利和正义三大支柱原则，有关 **TCP2** 的内容，可以在这里找到：

https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/tcps2-eptc2_2022_chapter3-chapitre3.html#intro。

研究人员：马杰执事，美国密苏里州圣路易斯的阿奎那神学院，传道博士候选人

目的：研究人员正在设计一种称为 **3C** 模式的新方法，以帮助父母将福音带给自己的孩子。各个时代的基督徒都努力将福音付诸实践，然而，每个时代都有独特的挑战。在我们这个时代，当务之急是使父母能够在温暖的家中将福音传给孩子，使福音的信息贴近他们的生活。该方法分为三个步骤。第一步是团体，即在传道人的指导下组建家长团体。该团体分两组；每个小组有 10 名有学龄儿童的家长。一组是女士，另一组是男士。女士组周二晚上聚会，每两周一次；男士组周四晚聚会，也是每两周一次，这是为方便父母轮流在家照顾孩子。第二步是共融，家长带孩子去参加主日弥撒，或主日学，与教会大家庭融合。第三步是派遣，家长在家中与孩子一起有一个愉悦的小吃+故事时间，阅读本周福音，并讨论小故事，以及相关的问题（小故事由传道人在上周二/周四家长聚会时提供）。

3C 方法旨在通过建立友爱的家长团体，及彼此的分享来帮助父母在基督信仰中成长，并通过在家庭中讲故事和生活分享把福音带给孩子，培养孩子的基督徒价值观。

时间、程序和沟通：指导期将持续十二周，共六次（日期附后）。每程包括 90 分钟的家长聚会、60 分钟的参加主日弥撒/主日学，以及 60 分钟的家庭小吃和故事时间。为期十二周的实践目标是建立团体，使家长们有能力主持聚会而继续下去，前三次聚会由执事主持，之后将邀请家长轮流主持，之后，执事将继续提供必要的材料。在这十二周内，执事将在开始和结束时做问卷调查，及一次个人访谈。如果家长们同意，建立一个便于彼此沟通的网上社交群体也是可行的。

风险：参与本研究的可预见风险很小。虽然分享是自愿的，参与者仍可能会对某些讨论的话题或在团体环境中感到不适。任何感到不适的参与者都可以随时停止参与，不会有任何负面后果。如果参与者停止参与，她/他的数据将被销毁。

收益、激励和成本：参与此项研究没有经济利益或激励。参与这项研究的主要潜在好处是参与者有机会获得个人、夫妻和家庭关系方面的成长。同时，参与者可以通过分享自己的智慧和生活经验为团体做出贡献。参与本研究无需支付任何费用。

替代方案：参与者可以随时拒绝参加或退出研究，而不会产生任何后果。

保护隐私：研究人员会始终要求参与的人在此过程中保护他人隐私。所有研究评估的数据都将被视为机密。在数据分析或报告撰写过程中不会泄露任何个人身份信息。研究结束并撰写最终报告后，所有参与者的数据将被销毁。然而，现行的加拿大法律要求研究

人员报告任何明显且紧急的对自己或他人造成伤害的个人，以及任何潜在的虐待和忽视儿童的情况。

联系方式：有关本研究的信息以及您作为研究参与者的权利，请通过电子邮件 **deaconpaulma@gmail.com** 与执事联系。

同意：我已阅读此说明，研究人员已向我解释了该研究。我了解我可能会提出问题，并且如果我有问题，我知道该联系谁。我了解我可以随时停止参与研究，不会产生任何后果。我了解这项研究并不提供，也不能替代专业的心理咨询或婚姻咨询。通过在下面签名，我确认我已年满 **18** 岁，并且我同意参加上述研究。

_____	_____	_____
日期	姓名	签名

家长聚会日期:

Meetings	Woman's Group Parent Night	Man's Group Parent Night	Meeting Place
1	9-Jan-24	11-Jan-24	Deacon Paul's home
2	30-Jan-24	1-Feb-24	Participant's home
3	13-Feb-24	15-Feb-24	Participant's home
4	27-Feb-24	29-Feb-24	Participant's home
5	19-Mar-24	21-Mar-24	Participant's home
6	26-Mar-24	4-Apr-24	Participant's home

聚会时间：晚 7：30 pm – 9:00 pm

Appendix 3

Guidelines of the 3C Parent Night

家长聚会基本准则

1. 保护隐私，保持友谊。
2. 3 分钟分享，让自己喘口气。
3. 承认自己的错，但不贬低自己和别人。
4. 不主动给人建议是明智。
5. 销售与集资不合事宜。

Guidelines of the 3C Parent Night

1. Keeping privacy keeps friendship.
2. A 3-minute sharing at a time gives everyone a breath.
3. Admitting own mistakes, not belittling self or others.
4. Giving no unsolicited advice is wisdom.
5. Selling and fundraising are not fitting.

家长聚会日期

The six sessions of the Parent Night are scheduled below

Meetings	Woman's Group Parent Night	Man's Group Parent Night	Meeting Place
1	16-Jan-24	11-Jan-24	Deacon Paul's home
2	30-Jan-24	1-Feb-24	Participant's home
3	13-Feb-24	15-Feb-24	Participant's home
4	27-Feb-24	29-Feb-24	Participant's home
5	12-Mar-24	14-Mar-24	Participant's home
6	26-Mar-24	28-Mar-24	Participant's home

Parent Night Agenda

- 7:30 am – 8:05 pm Evening Prayer / Lectio Divina
8:05 pm – 8:15 pm Break time
8:15 pm – 9:00 pm Snacks and sharing around the 1-Pager Story/questions
Place: Decide at each gathering for the next.

家庭小吃和故事时间安排建议

该时间表只是为家长提供指导建议，家长可灵活改动，以更好地适应家庭环境。

- 5 分钟：妈妈（或爸爸）点燃蜡烛并主持祈祷
15 分钟：周日读经/聆听（读经一/圣咏/读经二/福音）
5 分钟：阅读小故事
30 分钟：家长与孩子分享小故事中列出的问题
5 分钟：祈祷，邀请在座每个人参与

Family Snack & Storytime Schedule

The schedule is only a suggestion to provide guidance for parents, and parents will customize it to fit better into the dynamics of their family setting.

- 5 minutes: Mom (or Dad) lights up the candle(s) and lead the opening prayer
15 minutes: Sunday readings/listening (first reading/Psalm/second reading/the Gospel)
5 minutes: read the 1-Pager Story
30 minutes: parents led sharing on the questions listed on the 1-Pager Story
5 minutes: closing prayer, everyone at the table is invited to offer his/her prayer.

Appendix 4

Survey Questions for Participating Parents

Please create a unique code that you will use for all surveys during the three-month study period. The code will be used to link your surveys while promoting confidentiality, so please do not use a code that might identify you (like your name).

Unique Code: _____

研究问卷

请创建一个代码，您将在三个月的研究期间使用该代码进行所有调查。该代码将用于链接您的调查，同时保护隐私，因此请不要使用可能识别您身份的代码（例如您的姓名）。

您选择的代码：_____

Part I: General Information

1 Age (circle one) (年龄，请选一)

>30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
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2. Gender (circle one) (性别，请选一)

Male (男)	Female (女)
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3. Your Children (or Grand Children)'s Age (Children living with you, or see each other often) (您孩子 (或孙子) 的年龄 (与您住在一起或经常见面的孩子))

Child 1 (孩子 1)	Boy (男) / Girl (女)	>6	6—12	13—18
Child 2 (孩子 2)	Boy (男) / Girl (女)	>6	6—12	13—18
Child 3 (孩子 3)	Boy (男) / Girl (女)	>6	6—12	13—18
Child 4 (孩子 4)	Boy (男) / Girl (女)	>6	6—12	13—18

4. Where did you live before immigrating to Canada? (Please circle one)

(移民加拿大之前您住在哪里？) (请圈选一项)

Mainland China (中国大陆)	Hong Kong (香港)	Taiwan (台湾)	Other Place (Please specify) 其他地方 (请说明)
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5. Your years living in Canada (circle one)

Less than a year	1 -5 years	5 —10 years	10-20 years	More than 20 years
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6. Your years of being a baptized Christian (circle one) (领洗时间 · 请选一)

Less than a year	1 -5 years	5 - 10 years	10-20 years	More than 20 years
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7. How would you rate your language capability (listening and speaking only)? (您如何评估自己的语言听说能力？)

	Fluent in both (听说流利)	Listening well, speaking some (听可以, 说不太行)	Limited listening & and speaking (听说都比较吃力)	None at all (听说都不行)
English (英语)				
Mandarin (国语)				
Cantonese (粤语)				

8. Which of the following best describes you and your children from a language perspective? (Please circle one) (以下哪一个最接近您和孩子的语言沟通方式)

Between English and Chinese, we understand each other well. (中文英文都用, 我们彼此理解没有语言障碍)	Between English and Chinese, we understand each other well, though sometimes need more explanation (中英文都用, 我们彼此理解大多还行, 只是偶尔需要进一步解释)	Between English and Chinese, we can manage to understand each other. (夹杂中文和英文, 我们基本可以明白彼此的意思)	We can get the message across with some effort, like lowering the speed, using simple words, repeating etc. (我们努力听懂彼此, 比如说慢一点, 使用简单词语, 多重复几遍)	I only speak Chinese and my children mostly speak English; communication is always a challenge (我只懂中文, 孩子大多之说英文, 语言沟通满困难的)
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9. Which of the following best describes you and your children from a cultural perspective? (Please circle one) (以下哪一个最接近您和孩子的文化取向, 请选一)

I understand Western and Chinese culture well, we rarely misunderstand each other from a cultural perspective (我对中西方文化都很了解, 我们很少彼此误解)	I am open to learning Western culture, and my children are open to learning Chinese culture, we are willing to learn from each other, though misunderstanding does happen. (我对西方文化持开放态度, 我的孩子对中国文化持开放态度, 虽然会有误解, 我们愿意彼此学习。)	Between Western and Chinese cultures, we make progress in understanding each other and learn to make compromises, however, challenges arise from time to time. (夹在中西文化差异之间, 我们在彼此理解上有几步, 也学习彼此让步, 但挑战会不时地发生。)	My judgment often comes before understanding. There are challenges between me and my children from a cultural perspective. I am willing to make progress but do not know how. (我常判断在先, 了解在后。从文化差异来看, 我和我的孩子之间存在诸多挑战。我愿意改变, 但不知道该做什么)	There are many challenges between me and my children from a cultural perspective. There is no room for compromise and my children must learn to obey. (我和孩子之间有许多文化认同上的差异, 这里不存在让步的余地, 孩子必须学会服从家长。)
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Part II Faith practice of the parents (Mass attendants, prayer life, relating Scripture with daily life) (有关家长的信仰实践, 如参与主日弥撒, 祈祷, 将圣经与生活相连)

1. How important does Christian faith mean to you (Please circle one)? (对你来说, 基督徒信仰有多重要? 请选一)

Extremely important (极为重要)	Important (重要)	Somewhat important (有些重要)	Good to have but not necessary (有好处, 但不必要)	Not important at all (完全不重要)
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2. How often do you attend Mass (circle one) (您经常参加弥撒吗? 请选一)

Daily (每天)	Weekly (每周)	Monthly (每月)	Couple times a year (一年几次)	Once a year (一年一次)
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3. When making important decisions, how often do you pray to God for guidance? (当你做人生重要决定时, 你会祈求天主的指引吗?)

Close to none (几乎没有)	Rarely (很少)	Sometimes (有的时候)	Often (经常)	Always (每次都)
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4. How often do you pray/read Bible? (您经常祈祷、阅读圣经吗?)

Close to none (几乎没有)	Rarely (很少)	Sometimes (有的时候)	Often (经常)	Always (每次都)
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5. How much do you participate in church ministries/activities (liturgy, choir, visiting the sick, cooking/cleaning in the church, charity events etc) (您经常服务教会的善会/活动吗? (如礼仪、歌咏团、探望病人、教堂清洁等))

Never (从不参加)	Rarely (很少)	Sometimes (有时)	Often (weekly) (大约每周)	Very often (leadership role) (很多, 如善会负责人)
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Part III Relationship between husband and wife (quality time, communication, closeness) 夫妻关系 (有质量的共同时间、沟通、亲近感)

1A. How would you rate your relationship with your spouse? 您如何评价您与配偶的关系?

Distant (疏远)	Kind of distant (有些疏远)	Kind of Close (还算亲近)	Close (亲近)	Very Close (非常亲近)
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1B. How would your spouse rate his/her relationship with you? 您认为您的配偶会如何评价他/她与您的关系?

Distant (疏远)	Kind of distant (有些疏远)	Kind of Close (还算亲近)	Close (亲近)	Very Close (非常亲近)
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2. How often do you share affection with each other? (for example, kiss, hug, words of caring/encouragement, etc.) 你们经常表达彼此的亲近吗? (例如亲吻、拥抱, 关心/鼓励的话语等)

Rarely (极少)	Sometimes (偶尔)	Sometimes (for example, daily) (有的时候, 如一天一次)	Often (more than once a day) (经常, 多过一天一次)	Very often, part of daily routine. (很多, 每日生活的自然部分)
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3. How soon do you get over an argument? 你们争吵后, 多久会和好?

Before the Sun goes down (日落以前, 当日)	Couple days (几天)	A week (一周)	Two weeks (两周)	More than two weeks (多过两周)
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4. How often do you hang out with each other? 你们多久一起出去随便做点什么?

Never (几乎没有)	Rarely (很少)	Occasionally (偶尔)	Sometimes (有的时候)	Often (经常)
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Part IV Relationship between parents and children (listening, openness, quality time)

父母与孩子之间的关系 (倾听、开放、在一起的美好时光)

1A. How would you rate your relationship with your children? 您如何评价您与孩子的关系?

	Distant (疏远)	Kind of distant (有些疏远)	Kind of close (还算亲近)	Close (亲近)	Very close (非常亲近)
Child 1 第一个孩子 —Age 年龄 ()					
Child 2 第二个孩子 —Age 年龄 ()					
Child 3 第三个孩子 —Age 年龄 ()					

1B. How would your child rate his/her relationship with you ? 您认为您的孩子会如何评价他/她与您的关系？

	Distant (疏远)	Kind of distant (有 些疏远)	Kind of close (还 算亲近)	Close (亲近)	Very close (非常亲 近)
Child 1 第一个孩子 —Age 年龄 ()					
Child 2 第二个孩子 —Age 年龄 ()					
Child 3 第三个孩子 —Age 年龄 ()					

2. When you discuss a topic with your child, from the amount of speech perspective, which split between you and your child below best represents the overall pattern? 当您与孩子讨论某个话题时，从言语多少的角度来看，下面哪个划分最能代表您/孩子的讲话比例？

90/10	80/20	70/30	60/40	50/50
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3. How often do you smile at your child? 经常对您的孩子微笑吗？

Rarely (极少)	Sometimes (偶尔)	Sometimes (for example, daily) (有的时候，如一天一次)	Often (more than once a day) (经常，多过一天一次)	Very often, part of daily routine. (很多，每日生活的自然部分)
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4. How often do you interrupt your child before he/she can finish his/her sentence? 在孩子说话时，您会打断他/她的话吗？

Rarely (极少)	Occasionally (偶尔)	Sometimes (有的时候)	Often (经常)	Always. (几乎每次)
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5. How often do you spend one-on-one time with your child? 您多久与您的孩子进行一对一的交流？

Once every week or two (每一两周)	Once every month or two (每一两个月)	Once every couple of months (几个月一次)	About once a year (大约一年一次)	Never (从未有过)
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Part V The faith sharing between parents and children (conversation, joined activities, life occasions) 父母与孩子之间的信仰分享 (对话、共同活动、生活中的选择)

1. How important is it to you to bring your children up in the Christian faith? 在基督信仰中抚养孩子对您来说有多重要?

Extremely important (极为重要)	Important (重要)	Somewhat important (有些重要)	Good to have but not necessary (有好处, 但不必要)	Not important at all (完全不重要)
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2. How often do you talk about faith with your child? 您经常和您的孩子谈论信仰有过的话题吗?

Rarely (极少)	Occasionally (偶尔)	Sometimes (有的时候)	Often (经常)	Always. (非常频繁)
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3. How often do you and your child go to church together? 您和孩子多久一起去教堂?

Once a year, 一年一次	Once every couple of months (几个月一次)	Once a month (大约每月一次)	Every Two weeks (每两周)	Every week (每周)
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4. How often do you and your child read the Bible together? 您和孩子一起读圣经吗?

Once a year, 一年一次	Once every couple of months (几个月一次)	Once a month (大约每月一次)	Every Two weeks (每两周)	Every week (每周)
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5. How often do you and your child pray together? 您和孩子一起祈祷吗？

Once every couple of months (几个月一次)	Once a month (大约每月一次)	Every Two weeks (每两周)	Every week (每周)	Daily (每天)
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Part VI The warmth in the family (an indicator of intergeneration faith transition—Bengtson) 家庭的温暖 (代际信仰传递的指标)

1. How would you describe the overall temperature of your family? 您会如何形容您家庭温暖度？

Mostly warm (大多时候很温暖)	Mostly switching between warm and lukewarm (everyone seems busy with their own things) 时冷时热，因为每个人都在忙自己的事	Switching between warm and cold (cold war between the spouses often, hardly to say) 时冷时热，因为夫妻时不时地冷战，很难说。	Mostly between lukewarm (busy) and indifferent (no one cares) 大多是不冷不热（因为忙碌），或冷漠（彼此漠不关心）	Mostly cold (cold war between the spouse seems always on) 大多是冷淡的，因为夫妻大多是在冷战中
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2. How often does your family share a meal together? 您一家在一起吃饭吗？

Every day (每天)	Every couple of days (每几天)	Once a week (每周)	Only important occasions, like a birthday, New Year's Day, etc (重要日子，如生日，新年等)	Almost never (几乎没有)
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3. How freely do your family members share affection with each other? (for example, kiss, hug, words of caring/encouragement, etc.) 您的家庭成员之间如何自由地表达情感？（例如，亲吻、拥抱、关心/鼓励的话语等）

Rarely (极少)	Sometimes (偶尔)	Sometimes (for example, daily) (经常)	Often (more than once a day) (经常，多过一天一次)	Very often, part of daily routine. (很多，每日)
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		有的时候·如每天)		生活的自然部分)
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4. How does your family treat a sick family member? 您的家人如何对待生病的家庭成员？

A burden to the rest of the family (家人的负担)	Will give a hand if being asked (有求的时候, 帮把手)	Will offer a hand even not being asked (主动帮手)	We'll go out of our way to find the better cure, and to make him/her more comfortable. (尽力找到好的治疗, 让病人尽可能舒适)	We not only meet his/her bodily needs but also give a good ear to listen, to ensure him/her know that we love him/her. (不仅提供身体上的需要, 更会倾听生病的人, 让他/她感到自己是被爱的)
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5. Which is the closest in describing your family on free opinion expression? 在自由表达个人意见方面, 以下哪一个最接近你家的情形？

Better say nothing to anyone, if you do not want to be ridiculed (如果你不想当笑柄, 最好别说话)	Saying what's on your mind can be dangerous, it all depends on which family member you talk to (表达自己的真实想法是危险的, 你要很小心选择跟哪个家人讲)	You get ridiculed from time to time, but in a good way, it's overall safe to share our opinions (虽然有时受点嘲笑, 但家人都是好意, 不伤人, 总的来说, 表达意见是安全的)	Rarely got ridiculed, pretty safe to share our opinions (很少被嘲笑, 表达个人意见是相当安全的)	Conversations are always civilized, no one would ridicule anyone even we disagree with each other (谈话总是文明礼貌的, 即使彼此见解不同, 没有人会嘲笑他人)
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Appendix 5
Independent Third-Party Reviewer Assessment

Evaluator: Deacon Peter Lovrick

Physical Settings:

Is there any difficulty in finding the place? Finding a parking?

No problem at all.

Is the space inside the home suitable for the gathering? And why?

The house was spacious, with meeting rooms easily accommodating an even larger group.

The Event:

What format of the gathering did you observe?

The group format was very similar to a diaconate support group. It began with a modified form of Evening Prayer. One of the group took a leadership role. He reviewed the group contract for how the discussions would go – and kept time with an hourglass. Each person presented a reflection on a question related to the ceremony – making connections with Church ceremonies around Easter and how those are kept in the family and other family ceremonial celebrations like birthdays.

Is the time length proper for each section?

The time was handled extremely well. No one monopolized the conversation, and the evening moved smoothly so that the meeting felt neither rushed nor too long.

What would you say about the hospitality? (Feeling welcomed? Quality of food and drink, etc)

This was a warm, spiritual group of people. The host provided a variety of snacks, which were mostly pre-packaged, and so did not set up an expectation of anyone having to go to much trouble to make things.

The People:

How engaged are the participants?

Everyone fully participated in the prayers – but most importantly, they gave heartfelt reflections from their personal experience and from their family life.

How would you describe the interactions among the people?

Everyone was cordial, respectful, and eager to have this group continue in the future.

Is there anyone left out?

The group reflections moved from one to another in rotation with a timer for each so that no one could be left out.

Is the tone or mood of the members light, serious, fired up, sleepy, relaxed, or hurried as they leave?

The tone was reflective, spiritual, and respectful.

Evaluator Signature: Peter Loriel

Date: April 5, 2024

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Appendix 6
Semi-structured Interview Questions

Name: _____ Date: _____

Interview questions at the beginning of the intervention:

1. Would you like to tell me about yourself in the big picture, for example, your situation with life, family, children, work, and whatever you'd like me to know about you?
2. Regarding parenting style, which one below describes you most closely? and why?
 - Warm, affirming, your child has a close relationship with you.
 - Distant or authoritarian parenting, obeying is the most important for your child.
 - Ambivalent or mixed message, you are sometimes warm, sometimes cold.
 - Strained or preoccupied. You are distracted by marital, financial, health, or substance abuse problems.
3. What language do you use at home with your child? Do you see any challenges?
4. What brought you to the faith? Which person in your life had the most significant impact on your faith? How often do you attend Mass? How do you practice your faith? What is your favorite prayer, and Scripture passage?
5. Why do you want to participate in the 3C (Community, Communion, Commission) program? And what is your expectation?
6. Is there any questions? Or anything else you'd like to discuss?

Interview questions after the three-month intervention:

1. What are the most significant things you learned through 3C in the past three months?
2. How does the 3C impact your faith and relationship with God, with your spouse, and with your children?
3. Is there any changes in your parenting style?
4. How does the 3C impact the warmth of your family?
5. What are the things that could make 3C better?
6. Is there anything else you'd like to talk about?

Appendix 7

3C Pilot Project Participating Parents' Binder
(Provided through separate document due to file size)

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Appendix 7 - Parents Binder

3C Parent Preacher Formation Program

Cycle One (English)

(English version of Cycle One, which was not provided for Parent Night due to the prayer being in Mandarin; the English translation is only provided here for the thesis project.)

Part I: Evening Prayer

(January 11/16, 2024)

(Introduction)

Presider: God, + come to my assistance.

All: Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

— as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen. Alleluia.

(Penitential Prayer)

I confess to almighty God, and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned through my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do;

(pause for a silent moment)

through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore, I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sister, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

(Hymn: The Sun Is Set)

As the sun sets and the day draws to a close,
let us pray earnestly,
sing our heartfelt praises to the Lord.
We have worked diligently in the Lord's vineyard.

The day's labor has ended,
and we ask for the promised glory.
It is You who call us all
into Your blessed peace.

You guide our work
and refresh our weary hearts.
Glory to You, Christ,
and to the Father and the Holy Spirit, forever
and ever. Amen.

(Psalms)

Ant. 1 (Psalm 20)

(Cantor 1): God has crowned his Christ with victory.

(Cantor 2):

May the Lord answer in time of trial. *
may the name of Jacob's God protect you.

May he send you help from his shrine *
and give you support from Zion.
May he remember all your offerings *
and receive your sacrifice with favor.

May he give you your heart's desire *
and fulfill every one of your plans.
May we ring out our joy at your victory †
and rejoice in the name of our God. *
May the Lord grant all your prayers.

I am sure now that the Lord *
will give victory to his anointed,
will reply from his holy heaven *
with the mighty victory of his hand.

Some trust in chariots or horses, *
but we in the name of the Lord.
They will collapse and fall, *
but we shall hold and stand firm.

Give victory to the king, O Lord, *
give answer on the day we call.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, *
and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, *
and will be forever. Amen.

All: God has crowned his Christ with victory.

Ant. 2 (Psalm 23)

(Cantor 2): We celebrate your mighty works with songs of praise, O God.

(Cantor 1):

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
He restores my soul.

He leads me in the right paths, for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil, for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, *
and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, *
and will be forever. Amen.

All: We celebrate your mighty works with songs of praise, O God.

(Lectio Divina- 1 Sam 3:3b-10,19)

Presider: “Speak Lord, for your servants are listening.”

Lector: Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was. Then the Lord called, “Samuel! Samuel!”[a] and he said, “Here I am!” and ran to Eli, and said, “Here I am, for you called me.”

But he said, “I did not call; lie down again.” So he went and lay down. The Lord called again, “Samuel!” Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call, my son; lie down again.” Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. The Lord called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” Then Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy. Therefore Eli said to Samuel, “Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, ‘Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

Now the Lord came and stood there, calling as before, “Samuel! Samuel!” And Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant is listening.”

As Samuel grew up, the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground.

(Responsory)

Through all eternity, O Lord, your promise stands unshaken.
— Through all eternity, O Lord, your promise stands unshaken.

Your faithfulness will never fail;
— your promise stands unshaken.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
— Through all eternity, O Lord, your promise stands unshaken.

(Canticle of Mary)

Ant. My spirit rejoices in God, my Savior.

My + soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord †
my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior *
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me
blessed: †
the Almighty has done great things for me. *
and holy is his Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm, *
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *
and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, *
and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel *
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
the promise he made to our fathers, *
to Abraham and his children forever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, *
and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, *
and will be forever. Amen.

Ant. My spirit rejoices in God, my Savior.

(Intercessions)

Presider: Let us praise Christ the Lord, who lives
among us, the people he redeemed, and let us
say:
Lord, hear our prayer.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

(Cantor 2): Lord, king and ruler of nations, be
with all your people and their governments,
— inspire them to pursue the good of all
according to your law.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

You made captive our captivity
— to our brothers who are enduring bodily or
spiritual chains, grant the freedom of the sons
of God.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

May our young people be concerned with
remaining blameless in your sight,
— and may they generously follow your call.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

May our children imitate your example,
— and grow in wisdom and grace.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Accept our dead brothers and sisters into your
eternal kingdom,
— where we hope to reign with you.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Presider : Now, let's keep a moment of
silence, to entrust the petitions in our hearts to
God.

(Moment of silence)

Lord, hear our prayer.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

(The Lord's Prayer)

Presider: Now let us offer together the prayer
our Lord Jesus Christ taught us:

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed
be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be
done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this
day our daily bread; and forgive us our
trespasses as we forgive those who trespass
against us; and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

(Concluding Prayer)

Presider: Almighty God, we give you thanks for bringing us safely to this evening hour. May this lifting of our hands in prayer be a sacrifice pleasing in your sight. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

All: Amen.

(Dismissal)

(In the absence of a priest or deacon)

All: May the Lord + bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

(If a priest or deacon presides)

Deacon/Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Deacon/Priest: May almighty God bless you, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Deacon/Priest: Let's spend the rest of the evening in the peace of Christ.

All: Thanks be to God.

Part II: 1-Pager Story and Parent Night Discussion Questions

(Provided to parents one week before the scheduled Parent Night)

“A VOTE FOR KINDNESS”

(written by Nesanel Yoel Safran)¹

My friends and I were laughing so loud that we almost didn't hear the knock on the clubhouse door. Okay, it's not really a clubhouse - it's just Jeremy's garage. But nobody minds the not-so-nice setting, because when me and the other guys in our neighborhood 'friends club' get together after school, it's a fun and relaxing world that's all our own.

Todd heard the knocking first and when we were finally convinced it wasn't just coming from inside his head, we opened up the door.

We were a little afraid it was Jeremy's dad complaining about the noise or something. Thankfully it wasn't that. But it *was* Sammy, Jeremy's next-door neighbor, a new kid who had just moved in last week. What did *he* want?

"Oh, hi guys. Um, I just came over to see if Jeremy could play. I heard voices in here so I knocked. Mind if I come in and join you guys?"

The place got really quiet. We all looked at each other because we didn't know what to say to the kid. It wasn't like we were just hanging out or something. This was our *club*. Jeremy bought us some time by taking Sammy into his house for a drink while we decided what to do.

"What's the big deal?" asked Greg. "He seems like a good kid. Let's let him join us."

"No way!" Stan yelled out. "There are more than enough members already. Let him go start his own club if he wants."

"Let's vote on it," Josh suggested. "It's the only fair thing to do." We all agreed, and a quick show of hands sealed it. Five to three - Sammy was o-u-t *out*.

Jeremy popped back in, leaving Sammy inside his house, finishing his drink. "Sammy'll be here in a minute."

"Well then he can walk right out again," snapped Stan. "We already voted on it, and even if you vote for him, it's not enough votes to get him into the club. Sammy is out."

"But it'll really hurt him if we don't let him in," Jeremy insisted.

"But Jeremy," I said, "we *voted* on it. It may seem mean, but it was a fair decision."

Jeremy is now in a dilemma; he does not like to be mean to Sammy, and at the same time does not want to offend his friends; he could hide behind, "Sorry Sam, it's the group's decision when I was not there." But still, he would feel guilty. He came to you as his parent for advice.

Parent Assignment before Parent Night: Write the story's ending within 200 words for group sharing.

Parent Night Sharing Topic:

1. Share the ending you write, and explain why.
2. Give the author's ending below at Parent Night, and ask parents whether they agree with the author and why.

Story continues....

The author Nesanel Yoel Safran's ending

Jeremy looked at me. "No it isn't, Barry. We can vote on what time to have the meeting or what we want to play, but being cruel is not something you can vote to be or not to be - it's just plain wrong. And what's wrong is wrong, no matter how many people vote and say it's right."

Jeremy had a point that I hadn't really thought about before. Voting to do something that's wrong doesn't really make it right.

"Well, if you don't have the guts to run this club properly, who needs you or your crummy clubhouse? I have plenty of room in my basement to meet. Let's go, guys!" Stan said, getting up and starting to storm out.

But I guess Jeremy's point had made sense to the others too, because nobody followed him as he left in a huff.

Just then, Sammy showed up. Thankfully, he had missed the storm. We all welcomed him to the club, glad to have realized that niceness wasn't up for vote.

Part III: Discussion Questions with your Children at Home Snack & Storytelling Time

(Provided at the end of the Parent Night)

1. What would you do if you were Jeremy? And why? (any age)
2. Is voting always the best way to settle disagreements? (age 7-11)
3. When there is no solution to keep everyone happy, what could be the right approach? (12+)

Cycle One (Chinese)

#1 晚祷（第一周星期二/四（2024 年 1 月 11/16 日）

主礼 (Presider)：天主，求祢快来拯救我（✠）；

众：上主求祢速来扶助我。

愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。

起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。

阿肋路亚。

主礼+众：我向全能的天主和各位兄弟姐妹，承认我在思、言、行为上的过失。

（静默片刻，省察忏悔）

我罪，我罪，我的重罪。为此，恳请终身童贞圣母玛利亚，天使、圣人，和你们各位兄弟姐妹，为我祈求上主，我们的天主。阿们。

众：赞美诗

夕阳西下，日近黄昏，
让我们虔诚祈祷，
向上主唱出心底的赞颂。
我们在主葡萄园辛勤耕耘，

一天的劳苦已结束，
求祢赏赐预许的光荣。
是祢召唤我们众人，
进入祢的祝福平安，

辅导我们的工作，
振作我们疲倦的心灵。
基督，光荣归于祢，
及父及圣神，世世无穷。阿们。

（对经一）

领一 (Cantor 1)：上主赐衲的基督获得胜利

领二 (Cantor 2)：愿上主在忧患的时日俯允你！愿雅各伯的天主保佑你！

左：愿衲由圣所救助你。
由熙雍眷顾你！

右：愿衲怀念你的一切祭献，*
悦纳你的燔祭。
愿衲使你得偿心愿，*
成全你的一切计划。

左：我们要因你的胜利而欢呼，†
奉我们天主的名竖起旗帜，*
愿上主满足你的一切请求！
现在我知道，上主从神圣的高天俯听

*

右：以无敌的右手使衲的受傅者获胜。
有人依靠战车，有人依靠战马，*
我们却依靠我们的天主，上主。
他们倒地毙命，* 我们却屹立不动。

左：上主，求祢使君王获胜，*
我们呼求的时日，愿祢垂听！

右：愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。*

左：起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。

众：上主赐衲的基督获得胜利。

（静默片刻）

(对经二)

领二：我要歌颂称扬上主的德能。

领一：上主是我的牧者，我实在一无所缺。

右： 他使我卧在青绿的草场，又领我走近幽静的水旁，
还使我的心灵得到舒畅。

左： 他为了自己名号的原由，
领我踏上了正义的坦途。
纵使我已走过阴森的幽谷，
我不怕凶险，因你与我同在。

右： 你的牧杖和短棒，
是我的安慰舒畅。
在我对头面前，你为我摆设了筵席；
在我的头上傅油，使我的杯爵满溢。

左： 在我一生岁月里，
幸福与慈爱常随不离；
我将住在上主的殿里，
直至悠远的时日。

右： 愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。*

左： 起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。

众： 我要歌颂称扬上主的德能。

(聆听天主圣言 -- 撒慕尔纪上 3：3b-10，19)

主礼：‘请上主发言，你的仆人在此静听’

读经员 (Lector)：撒慕尔在安放天主约柜的圣殿内睡觉。上主呼唤说：“撒慕尔，撒慕尔！”他回答说：“我在这里！”就跑到厄里面前说：“你叫我吗？我在这里。”厄里说：“我没有叫你，回去睡吧！”他就回去睡了。上主又叫撒慕尔；撒慕尔起来，又走到厄里那里，说：“你叫我吗？我在这里。”厄里对他说：“我儿，我没有叫你，回去睡吧！”撒慕尔不知道是上主，因为上主的话尚未启示给他。上主第三次又叫了撒慕尔；他又起来，走到厄里那里，说：“你又叫了我吗？我在这里。”厄里才明白是上主在叫这青年，便对撒慕尔说：“你去睡吧！如果有人再叫你，你就回答说：‘请上主发言，你的仆人在此静听。’”撒慕尔就回去，仍旧睡在原处。上主来了，站在那里像前几次一样呼唤说：“撒慕尔，撒慕尔！”撒慕尔便回答说：“请上主发言，你的仆人在此静听。”撒慕尔渐渐长大；上主与他同在，使他说的话，没有一句不实现的。

(对答咏)

领二： 上主，祢的圣言永远存留。

众： 上主，祢的圣言永远存留。

领二： 祢的真理，永世常存。

答： 永远存留。

领二： 愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。

答： 上主，祢的圣言永远存留。

(谢主曲)

领一： 我的心神欢跃于上主、天主；我的救主；阿勒路亚。

众：

我的灵魂颂扬上主，
我的心灵欢跃于我的救主、天主。
因为祂垂顾了祂卑微的使女，

今后万代的人都要称我有福。
全能者给我作了奇事，
祂的名号何其神圣。

祂对敬畏祂的人们，广施慈爱，千秋万世。
祂运用手臂，大施神威，
把心高气傲的人击溃。

祂从高位上推下权贵，却提拔了弱小卑微。
祂使饥饿者饱飧美味，
却使富有者空手而回。

祂扶助了祂的仆人以色列，*因为祂常念及自己的仁慈。
正如祂曾应许我们的先祖：
永久眷顾亚巴郎和他的家族。

愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。
起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。

众： 我的心神欢跃于上主、天主；我的救主；阿勒路亚。

(祷词)

主礼： 主基督生活在我们中间，我们是祂以高价取得的子民。现在我们一齐赞颂祂、恳求祂：
主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

领二： 主，统治万民的君王，求祢教导祢的子民和所有从政人员，——使他们按照祢的法律，谋求公共的福利。

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷

领二： 主，祢以教会和圣事拯救我们摆脱邪恶的奴役，——求祢恢复我们做天主儿女的自由。

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

领二： 愿我们的年轻人，在祢面前保持纯洁无罪，——使他们慷慨顺从祢的召唤。

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

领二： 求祢使儿童们效法祢的榜样，——使他们在智慧和恩宠上，日渐增长。

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

领二： 求祢把去世的人接入永恒的天国，——我们都希望将来在那里与祢一同为王。

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

主礼： 现在让我们静默片刻，将各自心中的祈求交托给上主

(静默片刻)

主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

(天主经)

主礼： 现在我们按主耶稣教给我们的，向天父同声祈祷

众： 我们的天父，愿祢的名受显扬；愿祢的国来临；愿祢的旨意奉行在人间，如同在天上。求祢今天赏给我们日用的食粮；求祢宽恕我们的罪过，如同我们宽恕别人一样；不要让我们陷于诱惑，但救我们免于凶恶。

（结束祷词）

主礼：主、全能的天主，感谢祢使我们又度过了一天，求祢使我们向祢所作的祈祷，成为祢歆飨的祭品。以上所求是靠祢的子，我们的主天主耶稣基督，祂和祢及圣神永生永王。阿们。

（结束语）

主礼：愿全能的天主降福我们（✠），保护我们免于灾祸，引领我们到达永生。

众：阿们。

（若神父或执事在场，用以下结束语）

神父或执事：愿主与你们同在

众：也与你的心灵同在

神父或执事：愿全能的天主，圣父圣子圣神降福你们

众：阿们

神父或执事：平安去吧。

众：感谢天主！

#2 “投票善意？”

（作者：内萨内尔·约尔·萨夫兰撰写）

我和我的朋友笑得很大声，几乎没有听到俱乐部会所的敲门声。好吧，这并不是真正的俱乐部会所——它只是吉米的车库。但没有人介意不太好的环境，因为当我和邻居的朋友们放学后聚在一起时，这是我们自己的有趣和轻松的世界。

拓特首先听到了敲门声，当确信他没听错时，我们打开了门。我们担心的是吉米的爸爸来抱怨我们太吵，还好，不是那样。来的是吉米的隔壁邻居山姆，一个上周刚搬到这里来的孩子。他想要什么呢？

“哦，大家好。嗯，我只是过来看看吉米是否可以一起打球。我听到这里有声音，所以就敲门。介不介意我和你们一起玩？”

大家一下子静下来，面面相觑，因为我们不知道该对这个孩子说什么。我们并不只是没事闲逛什么的，这是我们的俱乐部。为防止尴尬，吉米带山姆去屋里找点喝的给他，为我们赢得一些时间做决定。

“有什么大不了的？”格雷问，“他看上去是个好孩子。让他加入我们吧。”

“决不！”斯坦大声喊道。“会员已经够多了，他可以去创办自己的俱乐部。”

“要么，我们投票决定，”乔治建议道，“这是唯一公平的办法。”

大家都同意，我们很快就举手表决了-- 五比三，山姆出局了。

这时，吉米回来了，留下山姆在屋里喝完饮料。“山姆一会喝完就来。”

“他可以直接走人，”斯坦大声说道，“我们已经投过票了，即使你投票给他，也不足以让他加入俱乐部，山姆已经出局了。”

“但如果我们不让他一起玩，会很伤害他，”吉米坚持说。

“但是吉米，”我说，“我们已投过票了，虽然看起来很刻薄，但这是一个公平的决定。”

吉米陷入了两难的境地，他不喜欢对山姆刻薄，同时也不想得罪自己的朋友。他可以敷衍说，“对不起，山姆，这是我不在场时大家的决定。”但他会感到内疚。于是，吉米来找你作为他的家长寻求建议。

作业：写出你的故事结局，不超过 200 字。聚会时，欢迎读出你的结局。

家长聚会讨论话题：

1. 分享每人写的故事结尾，及为什么？
2. 故事原作者的结尾如下，你同意吗？为什么？

吉米看着我。“不，巴里。我们可以投票决定什么时候开会或者玩什么游戏，但残忍不是你可以通过投票决定的事情——它完全是错误的。不管有多少人投票说它是对的，错的就是错的。”

吉米说的有道理，我以前没有真正想过。投票做错事并不意味着它是正确的。

“好吧，如果你没有勇气把这个俱乐部经营好，谁还需要你或你那破烂的俱乐部会所？我的地下室有足够的空间可以开会。走吧，伙计们！”斯坦说着站起来，开始气冲冲地走开。

但我想吉米的观点对其他人来说也是有道理的，因为没有人跟着他生气地离开。

就在这时，山姆出现了。谢天谢地，他没有听到我们的争论。我们都欢迎他加入俱乐部，很高兴意识到友善不是投票决定的。

#3 在家吃零食和讲故事时与孩子讨论的问题（家长聚会时提供）

1. 如果你是吉米，你会怎么做？为什么？（任何年龄）
2. 投票总是解决分歧的最佳方式吗？（7-11 岁）
3. 当没有让每个人都满意的解决方案时，什么是正确的方法？（12 岁以上）
4. 故事原作者的结尾附在下面。你同意吗？为什么？

Cycle Two (Chinese)

Part I: Evening Prayer

(Jan30/Feb 1st, 2024)

(**Note:** The English version of the Evening Prayer was not provided for Parent Night due to the prayer being in Mandarin. The format is the same as Cycle One, except the two psalms are taken from Week V Wednesday Evening Prayer Ant. 1 & 2 – Ps 139:1-18. The reading is from Ps 147:1, 3-6 – the psalm from the 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B on February 5, 2024. Attached below is the Chinese version.)

主礼 (Presider)：天主，求祢快来拯救我
(✝)；

众：上主求祢速来扶助我。
愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。
起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。
阿肋路亚。

主礼+众：我向全能的天主和各位兄弟姊妹，承认我在思、言、行为上的过失。

(静默片刻，省察忏悔)

我罪，我罪，我的重罪。为此，恳请终身童贞圣母玛利亚，天使、圣人，和你们各位兄弟姊妹，为我祈求上主，我们的天主。阿们。

众：赞美诗

夕阳西下，日近黄昏，
让我们虔诚祈祷，
向上主唱出心底的赞颂。
我们在主葡萄园辛勤耕耘，

一天的劳苦已结束，
求祢赏赐预许的光荣。
是祢召唤我们众人，
进入祢的祝福平安，

辅导我们的工作，
振作我们疲倦的心灵。
基督，光荣归于祢，
及父及圣神，世世无穷。阿们。

(对经一)

领一 (Cantor 1)：上主，祢的知识深奥无比

领二 (Cantor 2)：上主，祢洞察我，认清我，

左：我一举一动，祢无不深知，*
祢在远处也透澈我的心思。
我或行或止，祢明察无遗，*
我所作所为，祢都熟悉

右：我的话尚未出口，*
上主，祢已知晓，
瞻之在前，忽焉在后，*
圣手所指，不离左右。

左：祢的知识深奥无比，*
为我确实高不可及。
我到何处，才能躲开祢的神能？*
我到何处，方能逃避祢的面容？*

右：我到天上，祢已在那里，*
我潜入阴府，祢也在那里。
我若振翼飞往日出之乡，*
我若遁迹息影于辽海之滨，。

左：祢的手仍在那里引导着我，*
祢的右手依然紧紧地握着我。
我若说：愿黑暗把我笼罩，*
愿我四周的光明变为黑夜；

右：但黑夜为祢并非朦胧，†
黑夜与白昼同样光明，*
黑暗与光明为祢完全相同。

左：愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。*

右：起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。

众：上主，祢的知识深奥无比。

(静默片刻)

(对经二)

领二：我是明察人心，洞悉肺腑的上主；我要依照各人的善恶，予以赏罚。

领一：上主，我的脏腑原是祢造成，* 祢使我在母胎中成型。

右：我称谢祢，祢神奇地把我创造，*
我深切了解祢工程的奥妙。

左：我未见天日之前，*
我在母胎受造时，
我的灵魂，祢已完全知晓，*
我的形骸，祢已完全明瞭。

右：我尚未出生，祢已洞察，*
祢的书卷全部记录。
岁月尚未开始，*
寿限早已注定。

左：天主，祢的计划为我是何等深奥！*
祢的意念浩繁，不可胜数。
我若计算，多于沙粒，*
我若醒来，祢仍然与我同在。

右：天主，求祢明察我，认清我的心思，*
考验我，洞悉我的念虑。
看我是否误入歧途，*
引我迈向永生的道路。

左：愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。*

右：起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。

众：我是明察人心，洞悉肺腑的上主；我要依照各人的善恶，予以赏罚。

(聆听天主圣言 – 咏 147)

主礼：‘请上主发言，你的仆人在此静听’

读经员 (Lector)： 请赞颂上主，歌颂我们的天主是件美事，赞美颂扬他，甘饴之至。他医治了破碎的心灵，亲自包扎他们的创伤。点点繁星，由他制定；颗颗星辰，是他命名。上主至大至尊，威能无比；他的智慧无法估计。上主将谦虚的人扶起，将作恶的人贬抑至地。

(对答咏)

领二： 这是一个爱护兄弟姐妹的人，他常为他人祈祷。

众： 这是一个爱护兄弟姐妹的人，他常为他人祈祷。

领二： 他为自己的兄弟姐妹牺牲了性命。

答： 他常为他人祈祷。

领二： 愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。

答： 这是一个爱护兄弟姐妹的人，他常为他人祈祷。。

(谢主曲)

领一： 我的心神欢跃于上主、天主；我的救主；阿勒路亚。

众：

我的灵魂颂扬上主，
我的心灵欢跃于我的救主、天主。
因为祂垂顾了祂卑微的使女，

今后万代的人都要称我有福。
全能者给我作了奇事，
祂的名号何其神圣。

祂对敬畏祂的人们，广施慈爱，千秋万世。
祂运用手臂，大施神威，
把心高气傲的人击溃。

祂从高位上推下权贵，却提拔了弱小卑微。
祂使饥饿者饱飧美味，
却使富有者空手而回。

祂扶助了祂的仆人以色列，*因为祂常念及自己的仁慈。
正如祂曾应许我们的先祖：
永久眷顾亚巴郎和他的家族。

愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。
起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。

众： 我的心神欢跃于上主、天主；我的救主；阿勒路亚。

(祷词)

主礼： 上主以无限的爱心照顾祂的选民，愿上主的名号在众人身上受显扬。我们现在赞美祂，祈求祂：
上主，求祢显示祢的仁慈。

众： 上主，求祢显示祢的仁慈。

领二： 上主，求祢记得祢的教会，——保护它脱离一切邪恶，使它在祢的圣爱中日益完美。

众： 上主，求祢显示祢的仁慈。

领二： 求祢使各个民族认识祢是唯一的天主，——也认识祢派遣来的祢的圣子耶稣基督。
众： 上主，求祢显示祢的仁慈。

领二： 求祢赏赐我们的亲友，事事顺遂，——使他们今生在祢的爱护下，平安度日，来世得到永生。

众： 上主，求祢显示祢的仁慈。

领二： 求祢使劳苦和负重担的人获得安慰，——使受轻视的人恢复自尊。

众： 上主，求祢显示祢的仁慈。

领二： 求祢给今天逝世的人，敞开仁慈的大门，——迎接他们进入天国。

众： 上主，求祢显示祢的仁慈。

主礼： 现在让我们静默片刻，将各自心中的祈求交托给上主

(静默片刻)

主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

(天主经)

主礼： 现在我们按主耶稣教给我们的，向天父同声祈祷

众： 我们的天父，愿祢的名受显扬；愿祢的国来临；愿祢的旨意奉行在人间，如同在天上。求祢今天赏给我们日用的食粮；求祢宽恕我们的罪过，如同我们宽恕别人一样；不要让我们陷于诱惑，但救我们免于凶恶。

(结束祷词)

主礼：主、全能的天主，感谢祢使我们又度过了一天，求祢使我们向祢所作的祈祷，成为祢歆飨的祭品。以上所求是靠祢的子，我们的主天主耶稣基督，祂和祢及圣神永生永王。阿们。

(结束语)

主礼：愿全能的天主降福我们（✠），保护我们免于灾祸，引领我们到达永生。

众：阿们。

（若神父或执事在场，用以下结束语）

神父或执事：愿主与你们同在

众：也与你的心灵同在

神父或执事：愿全能的天主，圣父圣子圣神降福你们

众：阿们

神父或执事：平安去吧。

众：感谢天主！

Salve, Regina

Salve, Regina, mater misericordiae;

Vita, dulcedo et spes nostra salve.

Ad te clamamus, exsules filii Hevae.

Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes

in hac lacrimarum valle.

Eia ergo, advocata nostra,

illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte.

Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui,

nobis post hoc exsilium ostende.

O clemens, o pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria

万福母后诵（又圣母经）

万福母后！仁慈的母亲；我们的生命，我们的甘饴，我们的希望。厄娃子孙，在此尘世，向妳哀呼。在这涕泣之谷，向妳叹息哭求。我们的主保，求妳回顾，怜视我们，一旦流亡期满，使我们得见妳的圣子、万民称颂的耶稣。童贞玛利亚，妳是宽仁的，慈悲的，甘饴的。天主圣母，请为我们祈求，使我们堪受基督的恩许。阿门。

Cycle Two Part II: 1-Pager Story and Parent Night Discussion Questions

(For the Women's Group)

The Trouble Tree¹

The clean lady I hired to help me restore an old apartment had just finished a rough first day on the job. A flat tire made her lose two hours of work, her vacuum quit, and now her ancient car refused to start. While I drove her home, she sat in stony silence.

On arriving, she invited me in to meet her family. As we walked toward the front door, she paused briefly at a small tree, touching the tips of the branches with both hands. When opening the door she underwent an amazing transformation. Her tanned face was wreathed in smiles and she hugged her two small children and thanked the babysitter.

Afterward, she walked me to the car. We passed the tree and my curiosity got the better of me. I asked her about what I had seen her do earlier.

"Oh, that's my trouble tree," she replied. "I know I can't help having troubles on the job, but one thing's for sure, troubles don't belong in the house with my children. So I just hang them on the tree every night when I come home. Then in the morning, I pick them up again."

She paused. "Funny thing is," she smiled, "when I come out in the morning to pick 'em up, there ain't nearly as many as I remember hanging up the night before."

Parent Night Discussion Question:

How would you handle a bad working day from negatively impacting your children? Do you agree with the clean lady in the story and why?

Please write down your thoughts within 200 words and send them to paul01.ma@gmail.com or 416-888-8872 before Sunday, January 28, 2024.

Part III: Discussion Questions with your children at Family Snack & Story Time

1. (<7) Did you know if Mom had a bad day at work? How?
2. (7 -11) What would you expect Mom to handle a bad working day?
3. (12+) Is it plausible for Mom to hide her bad working day from you?

#2 麻烦树 (Chinese Translation)

我雇来清理我那老旧宿舍的阿姨刚刚完成了艰难的第一天工作。早上轮胎漏气让她迟到了两个小时，后来她的吸尘器又坏了，收工时她破旧的车子又无法启动。

送她回家的路上，她坐在副驾驶座上一言不发。到达后，她邀请我去见见他的家人。走到门口的时候，她在一棵小树前停了下来，双手抚摸着树枝。

当她进家门时，发生了惊人的变化。她晒黑的脸上洋溢着笑容，热情地拥抱着两个年幼的孩子和感谢照看孩子的人，脸上洋溢着满足和爱意。

随后，她送我出来。我们经过那棵小树，出于好奇，我问她之前双手抚摸着树枝是什么意思。

“哦，那是我的麻烦树，”她回答道，“我知道工作中难免会遇到麻烦，但有一点我知道，工作上的麻烦不属于家里的孩子。所以每天晚上进家门时，我把这一天的烦恼挂在这小树上。有趣的是，当我第二天早上出门，再拾起昨天的麻烦时，那麻烦好像不再如前一天那么重了。”

家长聚会讨论问题：

工作不顺的日子，你会如何应对，以减少给你孩子的负面影响？你同意故事中这个阿姨的做法吗？为什么？

请写下您的想法（200字以内），并于2024年1月28日星期日之前发给 paul01.ma@gmail.com 或 416-888-8872。

#3 在家吃零食和讲故事时与孩子讨论的问题

1. (<7岁) 当妈妈从工作不顺的一天回到家？你知道吗？怎么知道？
2. (7-11岁) 你希望妈妈下班回到家，如何应对糟糕的一天？
3. (12岁及以上) 妈妈向你隐瞒糟糕的一天是否可取？

Cycle Two Part II: 1-Pager Story and Parent Night Discussion Questions
(For the Men's Group)

The Trouble Tree

The carpenter I hired to help me restore an old farmhouse had just finished a rough first day on the job. A flat tire made him lose an hour of work, his electric saw quit, and now his ancient pickup truck refused to start. While I drove him home, he sat in stony silence.

On arriving, he invited me in to meet his family. As we walked toward the front door, he paused briefly at a small tree, touching the tips of the branches with both hands. When opening the door he underwent an amazing transformation. His tanned face was wreathed in smiles and he hugged his two small children and kissed his wife.

Afterward, he walked me to the car. We passed the tree and my curiosity got the better of me. I asked him about what I had seen him do earlier.

“Oh, that's my trouble tree,” he replied.” I know I can't help having troubles on the job, but one thing's for sure, troubles don't belong in the house with my wife and the children. So I just hang them on the tree every night when I come home. Then in the morning, I pick them up again.”

He paused. “Funny thing is,” he smiled, “when I come out in the morning to pick 'em up, there ain't nearly as many as I remember hanging up the night before.”

Parent Night Discussion Question:

How would you handle a lousy working day from negatively impacting your wife and children? Do you agree with the carpenter in the story, and why?

Please write down your thoughts within 200 words and send them to paul01.ma@gmail.com or 416-888-8872 before Sunday, January 28, 2024.

Part III: Discussion Questions with your children at Family Snack & Story Time

1. (<7) Did you know if Dad had a bad day at work? How?
2. (7 -11) What would you expect Dad to handle a bad working day?
3. (12+) Is it plausible for Dad to hide his bad working day from Mom and you?

#2 麻烦树 (Chinese Translation)

我雇来清理我那老旧宿舍的工人刚刚完成了艰难的第一天工作。早上轮胎漏气让他迟到了两个小时，后来他的电锯又坏了，收工时他破旧的车子又无法启动。

送他回家的路上，他坐在副驾驶座上一言不发。到达后，他邀请我去见见他的家人。走到门口的时候，他在一棵小树前停了下来，双手抚摸着树枝。

当他进家门时，发生了惊人的变化。他晒黑的脸上洋溢着笑容，热情地拥抱着妻子和两个年幼的孩子，感谢照看孩子的人，脸上洋溢着满足和爱意。

随后，他送我出来。我们经过那棵小树，出于好奇，我问他之前双手抚摸着树枝是什么意思。

“哦，那是我的麻烦树，”他回答道，“我知道工作中难免会遇到麻烦，但有一点我知道，工作上的麻烦不属于家里的孩子。所以每天晚上进家门时，我把这一天的烦恼挂在这小树上。有趣的是，当我第二天早上出门，再拾起昨天的麻烦时，那麻烦好像不再如前一天那么重了。”

家长聚会讨论问题：

工作不顺的日子，你会如何应对，以减少给你孩子的负面影响？你同意故事中这个工人的做法吗？为什么？

请写下您的想法（200字以内），并于2024年1月28日星期日之前发给 paul01.ma@gmail.com 或 416-888-8872。

#3 在家吃零食和讲故事时与孩子讨论的问题

1. (<7岁) 当爸爸从工作不顺的一天回到家？你知道吗？怎么知道？
2. (7-11岁) 你希望爸爸下班回到家，如何应对糟糕的一天？
3. (12岁及以上) 爸爸向你隐瞒糟糕的一天是否可取？

Cycle Three (Chinese)

Part I: Evening Prayer

(Feb 13/15, 2024)

(Note: The English version of the Evening Prayer was not provided for Parent Night due to the prayer being in Mandarin. The format is the same as Cycle One, except the two psalms are taken from Week III, Tuesday Morning Prayer Ant. 1 – Ps 85:9-14, and Sunday Night Prayer after Evening Pray II Ant. 1 – Ps 91. The reading is from Num 6:24-26, the Priestly Blessing, which is part of the Chinese New Year Mass reading. 2024 Chinese New Year's Day falls on Feb 10th.)

主礼 (Presider)：天主，求祢快来拯救我
(✙)；

众：上主求祢速来扶助我。
愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。
起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。
阿肋路亚。

主礼+众：我向全能的天主和各位兄弟姐妹，承认我在思、言、行为上的过失。

(静默片刻，省察忏悔)

我罪，我罪，我的重罪。为此，恳请终身童贞圣母玛利亚，天使、圣人，和你们各位兄弟姐妹，为我祈求上主，我们的天主。阿们。

众：赞美诗

夕阳西下，日近黄昏，
让我们虔诚祈祷，
向上主唱出心底的赞颂。
我们在主葡萄园辛勤耕耘，

一天的劳苦已结束，
求祢赏赐预许的光荣。
是祢召唤我们众人，
进入祢的祝福平安，

辅导我们的工作，
振作我们疲倦的心灵。
基督，光荣归于祢，
及父及圣神，世世无穷。阿们。

(对经一)

领一 (Cantor 1)：上主向自己的圣者和子民，所说的话，确是和平纶音。

领二 (Cantor 2)：我要听天主上主说的话，

左：他向自己的圣者和子民，
以及向他回心转意的人。
确是和平纶音，*

右：他的救恩必接近敬畏他的人，*
为使光荣在我们的地上久存，
仁爱和忠信必彼此相迎，*
正义与和平必彼此相亲。

左：忠信从地下生出，*
正义由天上远瞩。
上主也必赐下康乐幸福；*

右：我们的地必有他的收获，*
正义在上主前面行走，
救恩必随上主的脚步。*

左：愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。*

右：起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。

众：上主，祢的知识深奥无比。

(静默片刻)

(对经二)

领二：祂要用翅膀荫庇你；黑夜的恐怖，将不会使你怕惧。

领一：居住在至高者的护佑下，* 栖身在全能者荫底下的人

右：要对上主说：“我的天主！*
祢是我的避难所，
祢是我的保障，我要投靠祢。

左：祂定要救你脱离猎人的陷阱，*
救你摆脱仇人的恶计。
祂要用自己的翅膀荫庇你，*
你要投奔到祂的羽翼之下。

右：祂的信实好像盾牌和盔甲卫护你，*
黑夜的恐怖，将不会使你怕惧。
白天你也不怕乱箭的攻击，*
夜间流行的瘴疔，中午致命的瘟疫。

左：纵有千人倒毙在你的身边，†
万人气绝在你的右边，*
灾祸决不会到你面前。

右：只要你睁开眼睛，†
就会看见恶人遭到报应，*
因为你以上主为避难所。

左：你以至高者天主，作为碉堡，†
灾祸决不会降到你的身上，*
凶恶也不会威胁你的营帐，

右：因为祂必为你派遣天使，*
在你要走的每条路上保护你；
他们要左右扶持着你，*
免得你的脚碰在石头上。

左：你可从豺狼虎豹身上走过，*
你可践踏猛狮和毒蛇。
上主说：因为他依靠我，我必拯救他，*
他既承认我的名，我必要保护他。

右：他呼求我，我必俯允他，†
他有困苦，我必和他在一起，*
我定要拯救他，光荣他。
使他延年益寿，让他看到我的救赎。*

左：愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。*

右：起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。
阿们。

众：祂要用翅膀荫庇你；黑夜的恐怖，将不会使你怕惧。

(聆听天主圣言)

主礼：‘请上主发言，你的仆人在此静听’

读经员 (Lector)： (户籍纪 6: 24-26)

『愿上主祝福你，保护你；愿上主的慈颜光照你，仁慈待你。愿上主转面垂顾你，赐你平安。』

(对答咏)

领二：他必按时给你们土地，降下时雨、秋雨和春雨。

众：他必按时给你们土地，降下时雨、秋雨和春雨。

领二：必使你丰收五谷、新酒和新油

答：降下时雨、秋雨和春雨。

领二：愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。

答：他必按时给你们土地，降下时雨、秋雨和春雨。

(谢主曲)

领一： 我的心神欢跃于上主、天主；我的救主；阿勒路亚。

众：

我的灵魂颂扬上主，
我的心灵欢跃于我的救主、天主。
因为祂垂顾了祂卑微的使女，

今后万代的人都要称我有福。
全能者给我作了奇事，
祂的名号何其神圣。

祂对敬畏祂的人们，广施慈爱，千秋万世。
祂运用手臂，大施神威，
把心高气傲的人击溃。

祂从高位上推下权贵，却提拔了弱小卑微。
祂使饥饿者饱飧美味，
却使富有者空手而回。

祂扶助了祂的仆人以色列，*因为祂常念及自己的仁慈。
正如祂曾应许我们的先祖：
永久眷顾亚巴郎和他的家族。

愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。
起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。

众： 我的心神欢跃于上主、天主；我的救主；阿勒路亚。

(祷词)

主礼： 我们要感谢天主，祈求祂藉着圣神净化我们的心灵，在爱德上坚定不移。我们现在向祂恳切祈祷说：上主，求祢赐给我们祢的圣神。

众： 上主，求祢赐给我们祢的圣神。

领二： 求祢使我们饱飧由祢口中所发出的一切言语，——也使我们能付诸实践。
众： 上主，求祢赐给我们祢的圣神。

领二： 求祢使各个民族，特别是中华民族，认识祢是唯一的天主，——也认识祢派遣来的祢的圣子耶稣基督。

众： 上主，求祢赐给我们祢的圣神。

领二： 求祢赏赐我们不但在大事上，追求爱德，——而且也在生活的细节上实行爱德。

众： 上主，求祢赐给我们祢的圣神。

领二： 求祢使劳苦和负重担的人获得安慰，——使受轻视的人恢复自尊。

众： 上主，求祢赐给我们祢的圣神。

领二： 求祢使我们懂得节用财物，——以便帮助生活贫困的人。

众： 上主，求祢赐给我们祢的圣神。

主礼： 现在让我们静默片刻，将各自心中的祈求交托给上主

(静默片刻)

上主，求祢赐给我们祢的圣神。

众： 上主，求祢赐给我们祢的圣神。

(天主经)

主礼： 现在我们按主耶稣教给我们的，向天父同声祈祷

众： 我们的天父，愿祢的名受显扬；愿祢的国来临；愿祢的旨意奉行在人间，如同在天上。求祢今天赏给我们日用的食粮；求祢宽恕我们的罪过，如同我们宽恕别人一样；不要让我们陷于诱惑，但救我们免于凶恶。

（结束祷词）

主礼：全能的天主，我们蒙祢助佑，完成了今天的劳苦工作，我们感谢祢所赏赐的鸿恩，求祢接受我们的赞颂，作为今晚对祢的祭献。以上所求是靠祢的子我们的主耶稣基督，祂和祢及圣神永生永王。阿们。

（结束语）

主礼：愿全能的天主降福我们（✠），保护我们免于灾祸，引领我们到达永生。

众：阿们。

（若神父或执事在场，用以下结束词）

神父或执事：愿主与你们同在

众：也与你的心灵同在

神父或执事：愿全能的天主，圣父圣子圣神降福你们

众：阿们

神父或执事：平安去吧。

众：感谢天主！

Salve, Regina

Salve, Regina, mater misericordiae;

Vita, dulcedo et spes nostra salve.

Ad te clamamus, exsules filii Hevae.

Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes
in hac lacrimarum valle.

Eia ergo, advocata nostra,

illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte.

Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui,

nobis post hoc exsilium ostende.

O clemens, o pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria

万福母后诵（又圣母经）

万福母后！仁慈的母亲；我们的生命，我们的甘饴，我们的希望。厄娃子孙，在此尘世，向妳哀呼。在这涕泣之谷，向妳叹息哭求。我们的主保，求妳回顾，怜视我们，一旦流亡期满，使我们得见妳的圣子、万民称颂的耶稣。童贞玛利亚，妳是宽仁的，慈悲的，甘饴的。天主圣母，请为我们祈求，使我们堪受基督的恩许。阿门。

Cycle Three Part II: 1-Pager Story and Parent Night Discussion Questions

You Are Special

(By Max Lucado)¹

The Wemmicks were small wooden people. All of the wooden people were carved by a woodworker named Eli. His workshop sat on a hill overlooking their village.

Each Wemmick was different. Some had big noses, others had large eyes. Some were tall and others were short. Some wore hats, others wore coats. But all were made by the same carver and all lived in the village.

And all day, every day, the Wemmicks did the same thing: They gave each other stickers. Each Wemmick had a box of golden star stickers and a box of gray dot stickers. Up and down the streets all over the city, people spent their days sticking stars or dots on one another.

The pretty ones, those with smooth wood and fine paint, always got stars. But if the wood was rough or the paint chipped, the Wemmicks gave dots.

The talented ones got stars, too. Some could lift big sticks high above their heads or jump over tall boxes. Still, others knew big words or could sing pretty songs. Everyone gave them stars.

Some Wemmicks had stars all over them! Every time they got a star made them feel so good! It made them want to do something else and get another star.

Others, though, could do little. They got dots.

Punchineello was one of these. He tried to jump high like the others, but he always fell. And when he fell, the others would gather around and give him dots.

Sometimes when he fell, his wood got scratched, so the people would give him more dots.

Then when he would try to explain why he fell, he would say something silly, and the Wemmicks would give him more dots.

After a while, he had so many dots that he didn't want to go outside. He was afraid he would do something dumb such as forget his hat or step in the water, and then people would give him another dot. In fact, he had so many gray dots that some people would come up and give him one for no reason at all.

"He deserves lots of dots," the wooden people would agree with one another. "He's not a good wooden person."

After a while, Punchinello believed them. "I'm not a good Wemmick," he would say.

The few times he went outside, he hung around other Wemmicks who had a lot of dots. He felt better around them.

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One day he met a Wemmick who was unlike any he'd ever met. She had no dots or stars. She was just wooden. Her name was Lucia.

It wasn't that people didn't try to give her stickers; it's just that the stickers didn't stick.

Some of the Wemmicks admired Lucia for having no dots, so they would run up and give her a star. But it would fall off. Others would look down on her for having no stars, so they would give her a dot. But it wouldn't stay either.

That's the way I want to be, though Punchinello, I don't want anyone's marks. So he asked the stickerless Wemmick how she did it.

"It's easy," Lucia replied. "Every day I go see Eli."

"Eli?"

"Yes, Eli. The woodcarver. I sit in the workshop with him."

"Why?"

"Why don't you find out for yourself? Go up the hill. He's there."

And with that, the Wemmick who had no stickers turned and skipped away.

"But will he want to see me?" Punchinello cried out. Lucia didn't hear. So Punchinello went home. He sat near a window and watched the wooden people as they scurried around giving each other stars and dots.

"It's not right," he muttered to himself. And he decided to go see Eli.

He walked up the narrow path to the top of the hill and stepped into the big shop. His wooden eyes widened at the size of everything. The stool was as tall as he was. He had to stretch on his tiptoes to see the top of the workbench. A hammer was as long as his arm. Punchinello swallowed hard. "I am not staying here!" and he turned to leave.

Then he heard his name. "Punchinello?" The voice was deep and strong.

Punchinello stopped.

"Punchinello! How good to see you. Come and let me have a look at you."

Punchinello turned slowly and looked at the large bearded craftsman. "You know my name?" the little Wemmick asked.

"Of course I do. I made you."

Eli stooped down and picked him up and set him on the bench. "Hmm," the maker spoke thoughtfully as he looked at the gray dots. "Looks like you've been given some bad marks."

"I didn't mean to, Eli. I really tried hard."

“Oh, you don’t have to defend yourself to me, child. I don’t care what the other Wemmicks think.”

“You don’t?”

“No, and you shouldn’t either. Who are they to give stars or dots? They’re Wemmicks just like you. What they think doesn’t matter, Punchinello. All that matters is what I think. And I think you are pretty special.”

Punchinello laughed.

“Me, special? Why? I can’t walk fast. I can’t jump. My paint is peeling. Why do I matter to you?”

Eli looked at Punchinello, put his hands on those small wooden shoulders, and spoke very slowly. “Because you’re mine. That’s why you matter to me.”

Punchinello had never had anyone look at him like this ---- much less his maker. He didn’t know what to say.

“Every day I’ve been hoping you’d come,” Eli explained.

“I came because I met someone who had no marks,” said Punchinello.

“I know. She told me about you.”

“Why don’t the stickers stay on her?”

The maker spoke softly. “Because she has decided that what I think is more important than what they think. The stickers only stick if you let them.”

“What?”

“The stickers only stick if they matter to you. The more you trust my love, the less you care about their stickers.”

“I’m not sure I understand.”

Eli smiled. “You will, but it will take time. You’ve got a lot of marks. For now, just come to see me every day, and let me remind you how much I care.”

Eli lifted Punchinello off the bench and set him on the ground.

“Remember,” Eli said as the Wemmick walked out the door, “you are special because I made you. And I don’t make mistakes.”

Punchinello didn’t stop, but in his heart, he thought, *I think he really means it.*

And when he did, a dot fell to the ground.

Parent Night Discussion Question:

For our Parent Night 3-minute sharing, please write a paragraph with the format below within 250 words.

I was touched by this sentence, “_____,” It reminds me of something that happened in my life, “_____.” I believe the message is also relevant to my children today because “_____.”

If time permits, we’ll share thoughts on how you would like to handle the question below for ages 12+.

Cycle Three Part III: Discussion Questions with your children at Family Snack & Story Time

Read the story with your children, and listen to your children when they discuss the following questions:

Would you like to give some examples of the stickers in your life?

Age<7: Would you like to give some examples of the stickers in your life? Is a nickname a sticker? Has someone given you a sticker, and how did you feel? Would you give stickers to others? Why?

Age 7-11: It is unavoidable that others would give you stickers, how would you handle it? Especially those stickers make you feel bad.

Age 12+: Should stickers always be avoided? Or can they be used to enrich one’s life? Is it reconcilable between “You are special” and the other saying, “Just because you are unique, doesn’t mean you are useful”?



第三周期第二部分 故事分享

你很特别

(作者：马克斯·卢卡多)

卫美克人是小木人。所有的木人都是由一位名叫伊莱的木匠雕刻而成的。他的作坊坐落在俯瞰村庄的山上。

每个卫美克人都各不相同。有的鼻子大，有的长着大眼睛。有的个子高，有的个子矮。有的戴帽子，有的穿外套。但所有卫美克人都是由同一位雕刻师雕刻而成，而且都住在村子里。

卫美克人每天都在做同样的事情：他们互相贴贴纸。每个卫美克人都有一盒金色的星形贴纸和一盒灰色的圆点贴纸。在城市的大街小巷，人们整天都在给彼此贴星星或圆点。

漂亮的卫美克人，那些木头光滑、油漆精致的，总是会贴上星星。但如果木头粗糙或油漆剥落，卫美克人就会贴上圆点。

有才华的人也会贴上星星。有些人可以把大棍子高高举过头顶，或者跳过高高的箱子。不过，其他人知道大词或能唱好听的歌。每个人都给他们星星。

有些卫美克身上全是星星！每次得到一颗星星，他们都会感觉很好！这让他们想做点别的事，再得到一颗星星。

然而，其他人却无能为力。他们得到的是点。

庞奇内罗就是其中之一。他试图像其他人一样跳得高，但总是摔倒。当他摔倒时，其他人会聚集在他周围，给他点。

有时当他摔倒时，他的木头会被划伤，所以人们会给他更多的点。

然后，当他试图解释为什么摔倒时，他会说一些愚蠢的话，卫美克会给他更多的点。

过了一会儿，他有太多的点，以至于他不想出去。他害怕自己会做一些愚蠢的事情，比如忘记戴帽子或踩到水里，然后人们会再给他一个点。事实上，他有太多的灰点，有些人会毫无理由地上来给他一个。

“他应该有很多点，”木头人会互相同意。“他不是一个好的木头人。”

过了一会儿，庞奇内罗相信了他们。“我不是个好的卫美克，”他会说。

他出去的几次，他都和其他有很多点的卫美克混在一起。和他们在一起他感觉好多了。

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有一天，他遇到了一个和他见过的任何人都不一样的卫美克。她身上没有点或星星。她只是木头。她的名字叫露西亚。

并不是人们不试着给她贴贴纸；只是贴纸粘不住。

有些卫美克羡慕露西亚身上没有点，所以他们会跑上前去给她一颗星星。但星星会掉下来。其他人会看不起她没有星星，所以他们会给她一个点。但点也不会留住。

这就是我想要成为的样子，不过庞奇内罗，我不想要任何人的标记。于是他问没有贴纸的卫美克她是怎么做到的。

“这很容易，”露西亚回答。“我每天都去看 Eli。”

“伊莱？”

“是的，伊莱。木雕师。我和他一起坐在工作室里。”

“为什么？”

“你为什么不自己去看看？上山去。他就在那里。”

说罢，没有贴纸的温米克转身跳开了。

“但他会想见我吗？”庞奇内罗喊道。露西亚没有听见。于是庞奇内罗回家了。他坐在窗户旁边，看着木人四处乱窜，互相给对方画星星和圆点。

“这不对，”他自言自语道。他决定去见伊莱。

他沿着狭窄的小路走到山顶，走进大商店。看到每样东西的大小，他的木眼睛都睁大了。凳子和他一样高。他不得不踮起脚尖才能看到工作台的顶部。锤子和他的胳膊一样长。庞奇内罗用力咽了口口水。“我不呆在这里！”他转身离开。

然后他听到了他的名字。“庞奇内罗？”声音低沉而有力。

庞奇内罗停了下来。

“庞奇内罗！见到你真高兴。过来让我看看你。”庞奇内罗慢慢转过身，看着这位大胡子工匠。“你知道我的名字吗？”小个子温米克问道。

“当然知道。是我造了你。”

伊莱弯下腰，把他抱起来，放在长凳上。“嗯，”工匠看着那些灰点，若有所思地说。“看来你被打上了一些不好的标记。”

“我不是故意的，伊莱。我真的很努力。”

“哦，你不必在我面前为自己辩护，孩子。我不在乎其他 卫美克 怎么想。”

“你不在乎？”

“不，你也不应该。他们是谁，凭什么给你星星或点？他们和你一样都是 卫美克。他们怎么想并不重要，庞奇内罗。重要的是我怎么想。而且我觉得你很特别。”

庞奇内罗笑了。

“我，特别？为什么？我走得不快。我不能跳。我的油漆剥落了。为什么我对你很重要？”

伊莱看着 庞奇内罗，把手放在那小小的木头肩膀上，非常缓慢地说道。“因为你是我的。这就是你对我很重要的原因。”

庞奇内罗从来没有被人这样看过——更不用说他的创造者了。他不知道该说什么。

“我每天都希望你会来，”伊莱解释道。

“我来是因为我遇到了一个没有标记的人，”庞奇内罗说。

“我知道。她跟我说过你的事情。”

“为什么贴纸不留在她身上？”

制造者轻声说道。“因为她认为我的想法比他们的想法更重要。贴纸只有在你允许的情况下才会粘住。”

“什么？”

“只有当你在乎贴纸时，贴纸才会粘住。你越信任我的爱，你就越不在乎他们的贴纸。”

“我不确定我是否明白。”

伊莱笑了。“你会的，但这需要时间。你身上有很多痕迹。现在，每天来看我，让我提醒你我有多在乎你。”

伊莱把庞奇内罗从长凳上抬起来放在地上。

“记住，”伊莱在卫美克走出门时说道，“你很特别，因为我创造了你。我不会犯错。”

庞奇内罗没有停下来，但他心里想，我想他是认真的。

当他停下来时，一个贴纸掉到了地上。

第三周期第二部分家长聚会讨论问题

在我们的家长聚会 3 分钟分享中，请按照以下格式写一段不超过 250 字的段落。

这句话“_____”让我很感动，它让我想起了我生活中发生的一件事，
“_____”。我相信这个信息也与我今天的孩子有关，因为
“_____”。

如果时间允许，我们将分享你希望如何处理以下针对 12 岁以上儿童的问题的想法。

第三周期第三部分：在家庭零食和故事时间与您的孩子讨论问题

与您的孩子一起阅读故事，并听孩子们讨论以下问题：

你想举一些你生活中贴纸的例子吗？

年龄<7：你想举一些你生活中贴纸的例子吗？昵称是贴纸吗？有人给你贴纸吗？你感觉如何？你会给别人贴纸吗？为什么？

7-11 岁：别人给你贴纸是不可避免的，你会如何处理？尤其是那些让你感觉不好的贴纸。

12 岁以上：贴纸应该一直避免吗？或者它们可以用来丰富一个人的生活？“你很特别”和另一句话“你很独特并不意味着你有用”之间可以调和吗？



Cycle Four (Chinese)

Part I: Evening Prayer

(Feb 27/29, 2024)

(Note: The English version of the Evening Prayer was not provided for Parent Night due to the prayer being in Mandarin. The format is the same as Cycle One, except the two psalms are taken from Psalm 1 and Sunday Night Prayer after Evening Pray II Ant. 1 – Ps 91. The reading is from Ex 17:3-7, part of the 3rd Sunday of Lent Year A Mass reading on March 3rd, 2024. The Year A reading was used because of the Rite of the 1st Scrutiny for RCIA.)

主礼 (Presider)：天主，求祢快来拯救我
(✙)；

众：上主求祢速来扶助我。
愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。
起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。
阿肋路亚。

主礼+众：我向全能的天主和各位兄弟姐妹，承认我在思、言、行为上的过失。

(静默片刻，省察忏悔)

我罪，我罪，我的重罪。为此，恳请终身童贞圣母玛利亚，天使、圣人，和你们各位兄弟姐妹，为我祈求上主，我们的天主。阿们。

众：赞美诗

夕阳西下，日近黄昏，
让我们虔诚祈祷，
向上主唱出心底的赞颂。
我们在主葡萄园辛勤耕耘，

一天的劳苦已结束，
求祢赏赐预许的光荣。
是祢召唤我们众人，
进入祢的祝福平安，

辅导我们的工作，
振作我们疲倦的心灵。
基督，光荣归于祢，
及父及圣神，世世无穷。阿们。

(对经一)

领一 (Cantor 1)：祢是我的天主；求祢教导我奉行祢的旨意，*

领二 (Cantor 2)：凡不随从恶人的计谋，

左：不插足于罪人的道路，
不参与讥讽者的席位，*

右：而专心爱好上主法律的，
和昼夜默思上主诫命的，
像这样的人才是有福的！

左：他像植在溪畔的树，
准时结果，枝叶不枯，
所作所为，随心所欲。

右：恶人却不如此，绝不如此！
他们像被风吹散的糠粃。
在审判的时日，恶人站立不住；

左：在义人的会中，罪人不能立足：
因上主赏识义人的行径，
恶人的行径必自趋沉沦。

右：愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。*

左：起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。

众：祢是我的天主；求祢教导我奉行祢的旨意。

(静默片刻)

(对经二)

领二：祂要用翅膀荫庇你；黑夜的恐怖，将不会使你怕惧。

领一：居住在至高者的护佑下，* 栖身在全能者荫底下的人

右：要对上主说：“我的天主！*
祢是我的避难所，
祢是我的保障，我要投靠祢。

左：祂定要救你脱离猎人的陷阱，*
救你摆脱仇人的恶计。
祂要用自己的翅膀荫庇你，*
你要投奔到祂的羽翼之下。

右：祂的信实好像盾牌和盔甲卫护你，*
黑夜的恐怖，将不会使你怕惧。
白天你也不怕乱箭的攻击，*
夜间流行的瘴疔，中午致命的瘟疫。

左：纵有千人倒毙在你的身边，†
万人气绝在你的右边，*
灾祸决不会到你面前。

右：只要你睁开眼睛，†
就会看见恶人遭到报应，*
因为你以上主为避难所。

左：你以至高者天主，作为碉堡，†
灾祸决不会降到你的身上，*
凶恶也不会威胁你的营帐，

右：因为祂必为你派遣天使，*
在你要走的每条路上保护你；
他们要左右扶持着你，*
免得你的脚碰在石头上。

左：你可从豺狼虎豹身上走过，*
你可践踏猛狮和毒蛇。
上主说：因为他依靠我，我必拯救他，*
他既承认我的名，我必要保护他。

右：他呼求我，我必俯允他，†
他有困苦，我必和他在一起，*
我定要拯救他，光荣他。
使他延年益寿，让他看到我的救赎。*

左：愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。*

右：起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。

众：祂要用翅膀荫庇你；黑夜的恐怖，将不会使你怕惧。

(聆听天主圣言)

主礼：‘请上主发言，你的仆人在此静听’

读经员 (Lector)： (出谷纪 17: 3-7)

百姓在那里渴望水喝，就抱怨梅瑟说：「你为什么从埃及领我们上来？难道要使我们，我们的子女和牲畜都渴死吗？」梅瑟向上主呼号说：「我要怎样对待这百姓呢？他们几乎愿用石头砸死我！」上主回答梅瑟说：「你到百姓面前去，带上几个以色列长老，手中拿着你击打尼罗河的棍杖去！看，我要在你面前站在曷勒布那里的磐石上，你击打磐石，就有水流出来，给百姓喝。」梅瑟就在以色列的长老眼前照样作了。他称那地方为玛撒和默黎巴，因为以色列子民在那里争吵过，并试探过上主说：「上主是否在我们中间？」

(对答咏)

领二： 上主必救我，脱离猎人的罗网。

众： 上主必救我，脱离猎人的罗网

领二： 决不使我陷入谎言的羁绊

答： 脱离猎人的罗网。

领二： 愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。

答： 上主必救我，脱离猎人的罗网

(谢主曲)

领一： 今天该听从他的声音：「不要再像在默黎巴那样心顽，也不要像在旷野中玛撒那天！」

众：

我的灵魂颂扬上主，
我的心灵欢跃于我的救主、天主。
因为祂垂顾了祂卑微的使女，

今后万代的人都要称我有福。
全能者给我作了奇事，
祂的名号何其神圣。

祂对敬畏祂的人们，广施慈爱，千秋万世。
祂运用手臂，大施神威，
把心高气傲的人击溃。

祂从高位上推下权贵，却提拔了弱小卑微。
祂使饥饿者饱飧美味，
却使富有者空手而回。

祂扶助了祂的仆人以色列，*因为祂常念及自己的仁慈。
正如祂曾应许我们的先祖：
永久眷顾亚巴郎和他的家族。

愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。
起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。

众： 今天该听从他的声音：「不要再像在默黎巴那样心顽，也不要像在旷野中玛撒那天！」

(祷词)

主礼： 上主，祢是眷顾人的天主，我们颂扬祢，并以诚恳的心向祢献上我们的祈求 -- 主，求祢俯听我们。

众： 主，求祢俯听我们。

领二： 在这四旬期，求祢使我们饱飧由祢口中所发出的一切言语，——也使我们能付诸实践。

众： 主，求祢俯听我们。

领二： 求祢使各个民族，特别是中华民族，认识祢是唯一的天主，——也认识祢派遣来的祢的圣子耶稣基督。

众： 主，求祢俯听我们。

领二： 求祢记得我们生病的兄弟姐妹，特别是。。。---赐他们力量，和早日康复。

众： 主，求祢俯听我们。

领二： 求祢使劳苦和负重担的人获得安慰，——使受轻视的人恢复自尊。

众： 上主，求祢赐给我们祢的圣神。

领二： 求祢使我们懂得节用财物，——以便帮助生活贫困的人。

众： 上主，求祢赐给我们祢的圣神。

领二： 求祢怜悯我们去世的亲友，特别是。。。----恩赐他们获享天国永恒的幸福。

众： 主，求祢俯听我们。

主礼： 现在让我们静默片刻，将各自心中的祈求交托给上主

(静默片刻)

上主，求祢赐给我们祢的圣神。

众： 上主，求祢赐给我们祢的圣神。

(天主经)

主礼： 现在我们按主耶稣教给我们的，向天父同声祈祷

众： 我们的天父，愿祢的名受显扬；愿祢的国来临；愿祢的旨意奉行在人间，如同在天上。求祢今天赏给我们日用的食粮；求祢宽恕我们的罪过，如同我们宽恕别人一样；不要让我们陷于诱惑，但救我们免于凶恶。

（结束祷词）

主礼：全能的天主，我们蒙祢助佑，完成了今天的劳苦工作，我们感谢祢所赏赐的鸿恩，求祢接受我们的赞颂，作为今晚对祢的祭献。以上所求是靠祢的圣子我们的主耶稣基督，祂和祢及圣神永生永王。阿们。

（结束语）

主礼：愿全能的天主降福我们（✙），保护我们免于灾祸，引领我们到达永生。

众：阿们。

（若神父或执事在场，用以下结束词）

神父或执事：愿主与你们同在

众：也与你的心灵同在

神父或执事：愿全能的天主，圣父圣子圣神降福你们

众：阿们

神父或执事：平安去吧。

众：感谢天主！

Salve, Regina

Salve, Regina, mater misericordiae;

Vita, dulcedo et spes nostra salve.

Ad te clamamus, exsules filii Hevae.

Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes

in hac lacrimarum valle.

Eia ergo, advocata nostra,

illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte.

Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui,

nobis post hoc exilium ostende.

O clemens, o pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria

万福母后诵（又圣母经）

万福母后！仁慈的母亲；我们的生命，我们的甘饴，我们的希望。厄娃子孙，在此尘世，向妳哀呼。在这涕泣之谷，向妳叹息哭求。我们的主保，求妳回顾，怜视我们，一旦流亡期满，使我们得见妳的圣子、万民称颂的耶稣。童贞玛利亚，妳是宽仁的，慈悲的，甘饴的。天主圣母，请为我们祈求，使我们堪受基督的恩许。阿门。

Cycle Four Part II: 1-Pager Story and Parent Night Discussion Questions

For our next gathering on Feb 27

(Sent on Feb 17th through Group WhatsApp)

Our next topic will be helping children deal with their negative feelings. We'll use a chapter from "How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk," a New York Times best seller. I found the method is relevant not only to children but often to adults as well. The book was first published in 1980 and the latest version is in 2012. The authors, Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish, together, held many parenting workshops all over North America with child psychologist Dr. Haim Ginott. Elaine (the one in the red dress) passed away in 2017 at the age of 92, and Adele is 96 and lives in New York.

First, let's watch the 8-minute YouTube video where the two authors talk about helping children deal with their negative feelings. Focus on the first 6 minutes. The last 2 minutes are on a different topic – engaging cooperation with your children, which we will not discuss at our next gathering.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IdM0KFMofMY&t=4s>

Feel free to share one point that you observed in the video clip in our WhatsApp group. I'll send my study note about the method in the coming days.

Paul Study Note on helping your children deal with negative feelings¹

(Sent on Feb 20th through Group WhatsApp)

When your children come to you on something with strong negative emotions, there are two things in their communication: one is their emotions, and the other is the meaning of their words. Effective communication means that before addressing the right or wrong of their words, parents must first address their negative feelings, not ignore them, as so many of us would do. We are all good at talking reasons, but addressing emotion is unnatural. That's why we need to learn.

To explain this point, the authors gave an example from the adult world. Imagine your boss came to you asking for a special report to be completed by the end of the day; however, you had an extremely busy day with demands from everyone else. Now it's 5 pm, and you decided to work overtime to get the report done for your boss. Right then, your boss came by, asking whether the report was ready; you said it would be ready in about two hours. Your boss angrily said, "Forget it!" and stormed out the door. You felt truly unfair and not being treated with basic respect. On your way home, you went to see a friend to chat about it.

1. .Faber, A., & Mazlish, A. (2012). How To Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk. New York: SCRIBNER, 5-6.

How would you feel when your friend said something like this:

1. Denial your feeling response – “There is no reason to be upset. It’s foolish to feel that way. You are probably just blowing the whole thing out of proportion. It cannot be that bad, come on, smile... you look so nice when you smile.”
2. The philosophical response – “Look, life is like that. Things don’t always turn out the way you want. You have to learn things in strides. In this world, nothing is perfect.”
3. Advice – “You know what I think you should do? Tomorrow morning, go straight to your boss and say.....”
4. Questions – “What exactly were those demands you had that would cause you to forget a special request from your boss?”
5. Defense of the other person – “I can understand your boss’ reaction....”
6. Pity – “Oh, you poor thing, That’s terrible! I feel so sorry for you; I could just cry.”

Do these sound familiar when you had a bad day and tried to talk to someone? Or someone had a bad day come to you, and what would you say to him/her? One thing in common in all of these responses is that none speak to your feelings.

What if an answer like this – “Boy, that sounds like a rough experience. To be subjected to an attack like that in front of other people, especially after having been under so much pressure, must have been pretty hard to take!”

Does this response make you feel you were heard and wanted to say more? You might say,” Yes” Why? Because it addressed your feelings.

The method Adele and Elaine designed has four elements:

1. Listen quietly and attentively
2. Acknowledge your child’s feelings with “Oh... Mmm... I see”
3. Give his/her feelings a name – “That sounds frustrating (upsetting, embarrassing, ...)
4. If it helps, you can give your child his wishes in fantasy – “I wish I could make the banana ripe for you right now!”

I (Paul) think the most important is to give that negative feeling a name; that acknowledgment of your child’s feeling will be received as he/she was heard, and being heard encourages him/her to tell you more about what’s going on. Sometimes, before you give any advice, he/she has already figured out the right course to take and would appreciate it if you listened to them.

Homework for our Parent Night sharing: Try to practice this method to address the negative emotional moment with your children, and share with us what you learned at our next gathering.

Advanced: You can apply this method even to yourself. Observe your mood, give that mood a name, and ask yourself what made you feel that way. It is helpful to walk out of that negative mood by yourself.

Cycle Four Part III: Continue to practice the newly learned method with your children after Parent Night, and write down your reflections.

On Practice: Suzuki, a Japanese violin teacher, once met a parent who insisted he teach his four-year-old son to play the violin, a difficult instrument that one would usually start at an older age. That challenge set Suzuki on a new teaching journey. Today, his teaching method is used all over the world. A sentence from Suzuki is a wise reminder to all of us, “Knowledge is not skill; skill is knowledge practiced one thousand times.”

第四周期第二部分家长聚会讨论的问题

(二月二十七日聚会，二月十七日由 whatsapp 提前发出)

我们的下一个话题是帮助孩子处理他们的负面情绪。我们将使用《纽约时报》畅销书《如何说孩子才会听，如何听孩子才会说》中的一章。我发现这种方法不仅对孩子有用，而且对成年人也很有用。这本书最初出版于 1980 年，最新版本是 2012 年。作者阿黛尔·法伯和伊莱恩·马兹利什与儿童心理学家 Haim Ginott 博士一起在北美各地举办了许多育儿研讨会。伊莱恩（穿红裙子的那位）于 2017 年去世，享年 92 岁，阿黛尔 96 岁，住在纽约。

首先，让我们观看 8 分钟的 YouTube 视频，两位作者在其中谈论如何帮助孩子处理他们的负面情绪。重点关注前 6 分钟。最后 2 分钟是另一个话题——与孩子进行积极的合作，我们将不会在下次聚会上讨论这个话题。

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IdM0KFMoFMY&t=4s>

欢迎在我们的 WhatsApp 群组中分享您在视频片段中观察到的一点。我将在未来几天发送有关该方法的学习笔记。

我的学习笔记：如何帮助孩子应对负面情绪¹

(二月二十日由 whatsapp 提前发出)

当孩子带着强烈的负面情绪来找你时，他们的交流中有两个方面：一是他们的情绪，二是他们话语的含义。有效的沟通意味着在解决他们话语的对错之前，父母必须首先解决他们的负面情绪，而不是像我们许多人那样忽略它们。我们都擅长讲道理，但解决情绪问题是不自然的。这就是我们需要学习的原因。

为了解释这一点，作者举了一个成人世界的例子。想象一下，你的老板来找你，要求你在一天结束前完成一份特别报告；然而，你这一天非常忙碌，其他人都对你有要求。现在是下午 5 点，你决定加班为老板完成报告。就在那时，你的老板过来问报告是否准备好了；你说大约两个小时后就可以准备好。你的老板生气地说：“算了！”然后冲出了门。你觉得真的不公平，没有得到基本的尊重。在回家的路上，你去见了一个朋友，聊了聊这件事。

¹Faber, A., & Mazlish, A. (2012). How To Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk. New York: SCRIBNER, 5-6.

当你的朋友说出类似这样的话时，你会有什么感觉：

1. 否认你的感受——“没有理由感到不安。有这种感觉很愚蠢。你可能只是把事情夸大了。事情不会那么糟糕，来吧，微笑吧……你笑起来真好看。”
2. 哲学回应——“看，生活就是这样。事情并不总是按照你想要的方式发展。你必须一步步学习。在这个世界上，没有什么是完美的。”
3. 建议——“你知道我认为你应该怎么做吗？明天早上，直接去找你的老板说……”
4. 问题——“你到底有什么要求，会让你忘记老板的一个特殊要求？”
5. 为对方辩护——“我能理解你老板的反应……”
6. 怜悯——“哦，你这个可怜的人，太糟糕了！我为你感到难过；我简直想哭。”

当你过得不顺心，想跟别人倾诉时，这些话听起来很熟悉吗？或者有人过得不顺心，你会对他/她说些什么？所有这些回答都有一个共同点，那就是没有一个能表达你的感受。

如果是这样回答——“天哪，这听起来像是一次艰难的经历。在别人面前遭受这样的攻击，尤其是在承受了如此大的压力之后，一定很难接受！”

这个回答让你觉得你被听到了，想说更多吗？你可能会说，“是的”

为什么？因为它表达了你的感受。

Adele 和 Elaine 设计的方法有四个要素：

1. 静静地、专心地倾听
2. 用“哦……嗯……我明白了”来认可孩子的感受
3. 给他/她的感受命名——“这听起来令人沮丧（令人心烦、尴尬……）
4. 如果有帮助，你可以在幻想中告诉孩子他的愿望——“我希望我现在就能让香蕉成熟！”

我认为最重要的是给这种消极情绪命名；当你听到孩子的声音时，孩子就会接受对他/她感受的认可，而听到孩子的声音会鼓励他/她告诉你更多正在发生的事情。有时，在你给出任何建议之前，他/她已经想好了正确的做法，如果你听取他们的意见，他们会很感激的。

家长聚会分享家庭作业：试着练习这种方法来应对孩子情绪低落的时刻，并在下次聚会时与我们分享你学到的东西。

高级：你甚至可以将这种方法应用于自己。观察你的情绪，给这种情绪起个名字，问问自己是什么让你有这种感觉。独自走出那种消极情绪是有帮助的。

第四周期第三部分：家长之夜后，继续和你的孩子练习新学到的方法，并写下你的反思。

关于练习：日本小提琴教师铃木曾遇到过一位家长，这位家长坚持要教他四岁的儿子拉小提琴，这是一种很难的乐器，人们通常要到更大的时候才开始学习。这个挑战让铃木踏上了新的教学旅程。今天，他的教学方法在世界各地使用。铃木的一句话对我们所有人都是一个明智的提醒：“知识不是技能；技能是练习一千次的知识。”

Cycle Five (Chinese)

Part I: Evening Prayer

(Mar 19/21, 2024)

(Note: The English version of the Evening Prayer was not provided for Parent Night due to the prayer being in Mandarin. The format is the same as Cycle One, except the two psalms are taken from Psalm 51 and 23. The reading is from Is 50:4-5, part of the 1st reading of Passion Sunday Year B on March 24th, 2024.

主礼 (Presider)：天主，求祢快来拯救我
(✙)；

众：上主求祢速来扶助我。
愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。
起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。
阿肋路亚。

主礼+众：我向全能的天主和各位兄弟姊妹，承认我在思、言、行为上的过失。

(静默片刻，省察忏悔)

我罪，我罪，我的重罪。为此，恳请终身童贞圣母玛利亚，天使、圣人，和你们各位兄弟姊妹，为我祈求上主，我们的天主。阿们。

众：忏悔诗：《我主！求祢垂怜》（颂恩#560）

我主！求祢垂怜，
並可憐我們，
因為我們得罪了祢。

我君王主基督，是万民救主，
今我大罪人，真诚痛悔求恕，
恳祢施仁慈，听我们哀诉。

我主！求祢垂怜，
並可憐我們，
因為我們得罪了祢。

万古君王耶穌，战胜我敌仇，
负恩重罪人，伏祢台前頓首，
无上真天主，把我们拯救。

(对经一)

领一：天主，求你给我再造一颗纯洁的心，*
求你使我心重获坚固的精神。

领二：天主，求你按照你的仁慈怜悯我，*
左：依你丰厚的慈爱，消灭我的罪恶。

右：求你把我的过犯洗尽，*
求你把我的罪恶除净，

左：因为我认清了我的过犯，*
我的罪恶常在我的眼前。

右：我得罪了你-，惟独得罪了你，*
因为我作了你视为罪恶的事。

左：在你的判决上-，显出你的公义，*
在你的断案时，显出你的正直。

右：你喜爱那出自内心的诚实；*
求在我心的深处教我认识智慧。

左：求你洁净我-，使我纯洁无暇，*
求你洗涤我-，使我皎洁胜过白雪。

右：求你赐我听见快慰和喜乐，*
使你粉碎的骨骸重新欢跃。

左：求你掩面别看我的罪过，*
求你除掉我的一切罪恶。

右：天主，求你给我再造一颗纯洁的心，*
求你使我心重获坚固的精神。

左：求你不要从你的面前把我抛弃，*
不要从我身上将你的圣神收回。

右：求你使我重获你救恩的喜乐，*
求你以慷慨的精神来扶持我。

左：天主，我的救主，求你免我罪债，*
我的舌头必要歌颂你的慈爱。

右： 我主，求你开启我的口唇，*
我要亲口宣扬你的光荣。

右： 天主，我的祭献就是这痛悔的精神，*
天主，你不轻看痛悔和谦卑的赤心。

左： 愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。*

右： 起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。

众： 天主，求你给我再造一颗纯洁的心，* 求
你使我心重获坚固的精神。

（静默片刻）

（对经二）

领二： 我主，求你开启我的口唇，* 我要亲口宣
扬你的光荣。

领一： 上主是我的牧者，*

右： 我实在一无所缺。

左： 他使我卧在青绿的草场 -，又领我走近
幽静的水旁，*
还使我的心灵得到舒畅。

右： 他为了自己名号的原由，*
领我踏上了正义的坦途。

左： 纵使应走过阴森的幽谷，*
我不怕凶险，因你与我同在。

右： 你的牧杖和短棒，*
是我的安慰舒畅。

左： 在我对头面前 -，你为我摆设了筵席；*
在我的头上傅油 -，使我的杯爵满溢。

右： 在我一生岁月里，*
幸福与慈爱常随不离；

左： 我将住在上主的殿里，*
直至悠远的时日。

右： 愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。*

左： 起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿
们。

众： 我主，求你开启我的口唇*，我要亲口宣
扬你的光荣。

（聆听天主圣言）

主礼：‘请上主发言，你的仆人在此静听’

读经员 (Lector)：（依 50：4-5）（慢慢读两
遍，之间静默 30 秒）

吾主上主赐给了我一个受教的口舌，叫我会用
言语援助疲倦的人。他每天清晨唤醒我，唤醒
我的耳朵，叫我如同学子一样静听。吾主上主
开启了我的耳朵，我并没有违抗，也没有退
避。

（对答咏）

领二： 从太阳东升到西坠，愿上主的圣名受赞
美。

众： 从太阳东升到西坠，愿上主的圣名受赞
美。

领二： 祂的光荣，凌驾苍穹。

众： 愿上主的圣名受赞美。

领二： 愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。

众： 从太阳东升到西坠，愿上主的圣名受赞
美

(谢主曲)

领一： 天主，求祢运用手臂，大施神威，* 把心高气傲的人击溃，* 提拔弱小卑微。

众：
我的灵魂颂扬上主，
我的心灵欢跃于我的救主、天主。
因为祂垂顾了祂卑微的使女，

今后万代的人都要称我有福。
全能者给我作了奇事，
祂的名号何其神圣。

祂对敬畏祂的人们，广施慈爱，千秋万世。
祂运用手臂，大施神威，
把心高气傲的人击溃。

祂从高位上推下权贵，却提拔了弱小卑微。
祂使饥饿者饱飧美味，
却使富有者空手而回。

祂扶助了祂的仆人以色列，*因为祂常念及自己的仁慈。
正如祂曾应许我们的先祖：
永久眷顾亚巴郎和他的家族。

愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。
起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。

众： 天主，求祢运用手臂，大施神威，* 把心高气傲的人击溃，* 提拔弱小卑微。

(祷词)

主礼： 主，你说，“那里有两个或三个人，因我的名字聚在一起，我就在他们中间。”现在，然我们以诚恳的心愿求上主：

主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

领二： 主，拯救我们摆脱罪恶的奴役，——恢复我们做天主儿女的自由。

主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

领二： 愿我们着手所做的事，常蒙祢的助佑，——结出好果实，惠及我们和他人。

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

领二： 求祢的慈颜光照我们每一家，——使我们常生活在你的宽恕与平安中。

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

领二： 求祢祝福我们的孩子，——使他们在智慧和身量上，日渐增长，在祢前，在人前，常受恩爱。

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

领二： 求祢恩赐已亡的亲友恩人，参加祢诸圣的行列，——使我们有朝一日也能与诸圣为伍。

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

主礼： 现在让我们静默片刻，将各自心中的祈求交托给上主

(静默片刻)

主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

(天主经)

主礼： 现在我们按主耶稣教给我们的，向天父同声祈祷

众： 我们的天父，愿祢的名受显扬；愿祢的国来临；愿祢的旨意奉行在人间，如同在天上。求祢今天赏给我们日用的食粮；求祢宽恕我们的罪过，如同我们宽恕别人一样；不要让我们陷于诱惑，但救我们免于凶恶。

（结束祷词）

主礼：主、全能的天主，感谢祢使我们又度过了一天，求祢使我们向祢所作的祈祷，成为祢所悦纳的祭品。以上所求是靠祢的子，我们的主天主耶稣基督，祂和祢及圣神永生永王。阿们。

（结束语）

主礼：愿全能的天主降福我们（✠），保护我们免于灾祸，引领我们到达永生。

众：阿们。

（若神父或执事在场，用以下结束词）

神父或执事：愿主与你们同在

众：也与你的心灵同在

神父或执事：愿全能的天主，圣父圣子圣神降福你们

众：阿们

神父或执事：平安去吧。

众：感谢天主！

Salve, Regina

Salve, Regina, mater misericordiae;

Vita, dulcedo et spes nostra salve.

Ad te clamamus, exsules filii Hevae.

Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes
in hac lacrimarum valle.

Eia ergo, advocata nostra,

illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte.

Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui,
nobis post hoc exsilium ostende.

O clemens, o pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria

万福母后诵（又圣母经）

万福母后！仁慈的母亲；我们的生命，我们的甘饴，我们的希望。厄娃子孙，在此尘世，向妳哀呼。在这涕泣之谷，向妳叹息哭求。我们的主保，求妳回顾，怜视我们，一旦流亡期满，使我们得见妳的圣子、万民称颂的耶稣。童贞玛利亚，妳是宽仁的，慈悲的，甘饴的。天主圣母，请为我们祈求，使我们堪受基督的恩许。阿门。

Cycle Five Part II - A: Study Notes to Share with the Parents

(English Translation for the Thesis Project)

Theme of the gatherings on March 19th and 21st – “Parents’ temper and language”

Last time, we discussed dealing with a child's negative emotions. First, do not ignore her/his emotions, but accept them by listening carefully, giving the emotion a name, and giving them space to tell us what happened. The key word here is "acknowledgment," not "agree" or "disagree."

However, in addition to emotions, we must also pay attention to the content of the words. The next time we meet, we will discuss "agree" or "disagree". This is often what parents need to give, and the question is how to give it.

There are also two parts to what parents say to their children. One is emotion (tone, volume of voice, etc.), and the other is content (what we say). If our tone is filled with negative emotions, it will close the children's ears. What they hear is our negative emotions, not what we say.

So, if we are in a bad mood (seeing a mess at home after getting off work, clothes thrown on the floor, chatting with classmates online, and not doing homework...), it is best to calm ourselves down first (count 1, 2, 3, 4, 5... tell ourselves not to say anything for the time being... walk away, take three deep breaths... etc.)

When speaking, Adele & Elaine suggest using description, giving information, and one word. For example, instead of saying, "It's so cold outside, you're wearing so little, are you looking for something to do?" you can say, "It's minus 10 degrees outside, it's easy to catch a cold if you're wearing so little." When facing clothes on the ground, instead of saying many reproachful words, you can point to the clothes on the ground and say just one word, "Clothes!" But we know this is hard unless you calm down first.)

What we say is extremely important. Compared to emotions, the damage caused by emotions is temporary (mom and dad are very angry), but the damage caused by harsh words to children is often deep and lasting. Therefore, as parents, we must know that our words can cause double damage (emotional and verbal). Adele and Elaine's advice is never to say words that belittle personality but to stick to the facts and not slander people, such as "There is no one as stupid as you" and "You are a disgusting person!" "The house is so dirty, are you a pig!" "You dare to lie on your report card, and you will definitely be a person that no one believes when you grow up!"

Next Sunday, we will hear the first reading: Isaiah 50:4-5: “The Lord God has given me a learned tongue, so that I may speak a word in support of the weary. He awakens me every morning, he wakens my ears to listen like a schoolboy. The Lord God has opened my ears; I have not rebelled nor turned aside.”

God opens people's ears. You and I are God's children. We should also learn from our loving Heavenly Father to open our children's ears rather than close them due to our momentary emotions, which can easily cause children to disobey or withdraw. In his 2016 Apostolic Exhortation "Amoris Laetitia," Pope Francis reminded us that the words of the Lord Jesus are always words of building up: "'Take heart, child!' (Matthew 9:2); 'Great is your faith!' (Matthew 15:28); 'Get up!' (Mark 5:41); 'Go in peace!' (Luke 7:50); 'Do not be afraid!' (Matthew 14:27). His words will not insult others, cause them sadness or anger, nor will they be contemptuous of others. We should also learn to speak kindly in the family like Jesus. "(100)

There are questions and answers for parents in the book, one of which you might be interested:

Question: I must confess that in the past, I've said everything to my daughter that you're not supposed to. Now I'm trying to change, and she's giving me a hard time. What can I do?¹

Answer: The child with heavy criticism may be super sensitive. Even a gentle "your lunch" may seem to her like one more indictment of her "forgetful nature." This child may need a lot overlooked and a great deal of approval before she can hear anything resembling the slightest hint of disapproval.... There will likely be a transition period in which she might react suspiciously and even with hostility to her parents' new approach.

But don't let your daughter's negative attitude discourage you. All the skills you've read about are ways of showing respect to another person. Most people respond to that eventually.

That's all for today. I hope you will read this again, think about it, and put it into practice when dealing with your children.

In a day or two, I will send you a short story that you can discuss with your children.

God bless,

Deacon Paul

Cycle Five Part II - B: 1-Pager Story and Parent Night Discussion Questions

INSULT OR INJURY? (by Nesanel Yoel Safran)

"Judy, get ready; it's almost your turn again," Linda smiled at her friend and star of their summer camp's Olympics gymnastics competition.

But instead of getting a smile back from the talented, athletic girl, her comment was met with a frown. "Why should I bother?"

"What?"

"What's the point of doing a gymnastics routine if no one appreciates it?" Judy said with a toss of her head.

"What are you talking about?" Linda asked, confused. "You got amazing scores from the counselor- judges - almost all 'nine's' out of ten - on your last routine. You're a champ, a real winner."

"Apparently judge number three doesn't think so."

"Huh?"

"In case you didn't notice, she only gave me a 'six' when she held up her scorecard."

"Really?"

"Yes, and to tell you the truth, I think it's quite insulting that..."

"Next up, Judy Rider," the master of ceremonies announced over the microphone.

The girl didn't move.

"Hurry, Judy," Linda urged.

"Go tell the MC that I'm dropping out of the competition."

"Dropping out? No way, you can't be serious. You practiced so hard all summer for this event and you're almost a shoe-in for the gold medal!"

Judy shrugged. "I don't care. I'm just very offended over that terrible score the judge gave me."

"But that was only *one* judge out of *six*," Linda said. "There were *five* judges who thought you did great. Besides, why should you care what *anyone* else says? You know you worked hard, you know you have talent and you love gymnastics. Go out and do the routine, not for the judges-but for *yourself*!"

Judy looked into her friend's pleading eyes. What she was saying did make some sense. Should she really blow off the highlight of her summer just because of someone's low opinion of her?

"Last call for Judy Rider," the announcer said.

Judy dashed to the stage, and, putting her previous offense behind her, threw herself into her routine and got a standing ovation.

She looked up at the large, printed scorecards the judges were holding up. Straight 'nine's! Even from the judge who'd previously given her a 'six' - she'd won the gold!

She walked to the judges' stand to receive her camp Olympics gold medal.

"Sorry about the mix-up," counselor-judge number three smiled at her as she placed the medal over Judy's head.

"What do you mean?" the girl asked.

"I was a little embarrassed when I held up the scorecard upside-down on your previous routine."

"Upside down?"

"I realized afterward that the upside-down 'nine' must have looked a lot like a 'six,' but don't worry; I wrote the correct score of 'nine' on the score sheet. Sorry about the unfortunate mistake."

"That's okay," Judy said as her mind spun around over the nearly much more unfortunate - and foolish - mistake *she* almost made of messing herself up by getting insulted and letting someone's opinion change her own opinion of herself.

Discussion Questions at Parents Night: If you were Judy's mom or dad, what would you say/do when Judy wanted to quit? Are your words consistent with what you would do when you feel misjudged at work, in the church, or the family?

Cycle Five Part III: Discussion Questions with your children at Family Snack & Story Time

1. What would be the result if Judy quit? Would she feel better or worse after? (<7)
2. If you were Judy, what would be your reaction? Have you ever mistakenly mistreated your friends? What would you expect him/her to respond? (age 7-11)
3. What if counselor-judge number three never realized her mistake? Is her mistake (or perceived mistake) a legitimate reason for Judy to quit? Have you ever been in the position of "counselor-judge number three," and admitting your mistake means embarrassment? What would you do? (12+)

第五周期第二部分 A：学习笔记 家长聚会讨论的问题

， 三月十九、二十一日聚会主题 – “家长的脾气和语言”

上次我们讨论了如何应对孩子的负面情绪，首先是不是忽视她/他的情感，而是接纳这一情感通过认真倾听，给这负面情感一个名子，给与孩子空间告诉我们发生了什么。这里关键的字是“acknowledgment” (认知)，不是“agree” 或 “disagree.” (认可或不认可)

但是，除了情感，话的内容也是要关注的，下次聚会我们要讨论的是有关 “agree” 或 “disagree” 这往往是家长需要给与的，问题是如何给与。

在家长对孩子的话中，也有两个部分，一个是情绪（语气，声音大小等等），一个是内容（所说的话）如果我们的语气充斥着负面的情感，所起到的作用是封闭孩子的耳朵，他们听到的是我们的负面情绪，而不是所说的话。

所以，如果我们的情绪不好（下班看到家里一团糟，衣服丢在地上，和同学网上聊天还没做功课。。。），最好是先让自己静一下（数 1, 2, 3, 4, 5。。。告诉自己暂时话不要出口。。。，走开，深呼吸三次。。。等等）

开口时，Adele & Elaine 建议用描述 (Describe)，给与信息 (Give Information)，和一个字 (one word) 的方式，譬如，与其说“外面这么冷，你穿这么少，是想没病找病吗！”可以说，“外面零下 10 度，穿这么少很容易冻病。”面对地上的衣服，与其说许多责备的话，可以指着地上的衣服只说一个词，“衣服！”但我们知道，除非自己先静下来，这很难做到。

我们所说的话极为重要，相比于情绪，情绪造成的伤害是暂时的，（妈妈爸爸很生气）但**刻薄的言语对孩子所造成的伤害常是深而持久的**。所以，做家长，要知道我们的话会造成双重伤害（情感的和语言的）Adele 和 Elaine 的建议是绝不让贬低人格的话出口，就事说事，不诋毁人，如“没有你这么笨的人” “你实在是个让人讨厌的人！” “屋子这么脏，你是头猪吗！” “你敢成绩单撒谎，你长大一定是个没人相信的人！”。。。。。。

下个主日，我们会听到读经一：依撒依亚先知书 50: 4-5 “吾主上主赐给了我一个受教的口舌，叫我会用言语援助疲倦的人。他每天清晨唤醒我，唤醒我的耳朵，叫我如同学子一样静听。吾主上主开启了我的耳朵，我并没有违抗，也没有退避。”

天主开启人的耳朵，你我是天主的儿女，也要学习慈爱的天父去开启孩子的耳朵，而不是用自己一时的情绪封闭孩子的耳朵，容易引起孩子要么违抗，要么退避。教宗方济各在他 2016 “爱的喜乐”¹宗徒劝谕中提醒我们主耶稣的话总是建树人的话，“「孩子，你放心！」（玛 9:2）；「你的信德真大！」（玛 15:28）；「起来！」（谷 5:41）；「平安回去罢！」（路 7:50）；「不必害怕！」（玛 14:27）。祂说的话不会侮辱别人、使人忧伤或忿怒，也不会轻蔑别人。我们也要学习在家庭里，像耶稣一样亲切地说话。

“ (100)

我们都知道，学习只是开始，实践需要不断地努力，但向天主喜悦的方向迈一步也好过原地踏步，我们一起学习，千里之行，始于足下。

书中有父母问答，其中一个供分享：

问：我必须承认，过去我对女儿说了所有不该说的话。现在我正在努力改变，但她却让我很难受。我该怎么办？

答：受到大量批评的孩子可能非常敏感。即使是一句温和的“你的午餐”在她看来也可能是对她“健忘天性”的又一次指责。这个孩子可能需要被忽视很多小错，并得到大量的认可，然后她才能开始听到任何类似于最轻微的反对的暗示……可能会有一个过渡期，在此期间，她可能会对父母的新方法做出怀疑甚至敌意的反应。

但不要让你女儿的消极态度让你气馁。你所读到的所有技巧都是向他人表示尊重的方式。大多数人最终都会对此做出回应。

今天就说这些，希望你再读一遍，思考一会，并在对待孩子时有所实践。

过一两天，我会发一个小故事，对孩子也使用，方便你和孩子讨论。

主佑平安！

Deacon Paul

第五周期第二部分 B：故事与家长聚会讨论的问题

侮辱还是伤害？（作者：Nesanel Yoel Safran）

“朱迪，准备好；快轮到你了，”琳达对她的朋友和夏令营奥运会体操比赛的明星微笑。

但是，这位才华横溢、运动能力强的女孩并没有回报她的微笑，而是皱起了眉头。“我为什么要费心？”

“什么？”

“如果没有人欣赏，做体操有什么意义？”朱迪摇了摇头说。

“你在说什么？”琳达困惑地问道。“你上次的体操表演得到了辅导员兼评委的惊人评分——几乎都是十分中的九分。你是冠军，真正的赢家。”

“显然三号评委不这么认为。”

“嗯？”

“以防你没注意到，她举起记分卡时只给了我六分。”

“真的吗？”

“是的，说实话，我觉得这很侮辱……”

“接下来，朱迪·莱德，”司仪通过麦克风宣布。

女孩没有动。

“快点，朱迪，”琳达催促道。

“去告诉主持人我退出比赛。”

“退出？不可能，你不是认真的。你整个夏天都在为这次比赛努力练习，你几乎肯定会获得金牌！”

朱迪耸耸肩。“我不在乎。我只是对裁判给我的糟糕分数感到非常生气。”

“但那只是六名裁判中的一名。”琳达说。“有五名裁判认为你做得很好。此外，你为什么要在乎别人怎么说？你知道你很努力，你知道你有天赋，你热爱体操。出去做这个动作，不是为了裁判，而是为了你自己！”

朱迪看着朋友恳求的眼神。她说的话确实有道理。她真的应该因为某人对她的低评价而放弃她夏天最精彩的时刻吗？

“最后一次点名朱迪·莱德，”播音员说。

朱迪冲上舞台，把之前的过失抛在脑后，全身心投入到表演中，赢得了全场起立鼓掌。

她抬头看着评委举着的大型印刷记分卡。连续九分！即使是之前给她六分的评委——她也赢得了金牌！

她走到评委席上领取夏令营奥运会金牌。

“抱歉弄错了，”三号辅导员兼评委微笑着对她说道，她把奖牌放在朱迪的头上。

“你是什么意思？”女孩问道。

“当我把你之前表演的记分卡倒过来拿的时候，我有点尴尬。”

“倒过来了？”

“后来我意识到倒着的‘九’看起来很像‘六’，但别担心；我在计分表上写的是正确的分数‘九’。很抱歉犯了这个不幸的错误。”

“没关系，”朱迪说，她的脑海里回想着她差点犯下的一个更不幸、更愚蠢的错误：她因为受到侮辱而让自己陷入困境，并让别人的观点改变了她对自己的看法。

家长聚会讨论问题：如果你是朱迪的妈妈或爸爸，当朱迪想辞职时，你会说什么/做什么？当你在工作、教堂或家庭中感到被误解时，你所说的话与你会做的事情一致吗？

第五周期第三部分：家庭零食和故事时间与孩子讨论问题

1. 如果朱迪辞职会有什么结果？她会感觉好些还是更糟？（<7）
2. 如果你是朱迪，你会有什么反应？你曾经错误地虐待过你的朋友吗？你希望他/她做出什么反应？（7-11 岁）
3. 如果第三位顾问法官从未意识到她的错误会怎样？她的错误（或被认为是错误）是朱迪辞职的正当理由吗？你是否曾经处于“第三位顾问法官”的位置，承认你的错误意味着尴尬？你会怎么做？（12 岁以上）

Cycle Six (Chinese)

Part I: Evening Prayer

(Apr 2/4, 2024)

(Note: The English version of the Evening Prayer was not provided for Parent Night due to the prayer being in Mandarin. The format is the same as Cycle One, except the two psalms are taken from Psalm 23 and 91. The Lectio Divina reading is from Ps 118:22-24, part of the Psalm reading of the 2nd Sunday of Easter Year B on April 7th, 2024.)

主礼 (Presider)：天主，求祢快来拯救我
(✙)；

众：上主求祢速来扶助我。
愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。
起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。
阿肋路亚。

主礼+众：我向全能的天主和各位兄弟姊妹，承认我在思、言、行为上的过失。

(静默片刻，省察忏悔)

我罪，我罪，我的重罪。为此，恳请终身童贞圣母玛利亚，天使、圣人，和你们各位兄弟姊妹，为我祈求上主，我们的天主。阿们。

众：赞美诗：《主已复活众欢欣》(颂恩#216)

主已复活众欢欣， Al-le-lu-ia!

齐声高歌赞主恩， Al-le-lu-ia!

我们共奏凯旋曲， Al-le-lu-ia!

庆贺光荣救世君， Al-le-lu-ia!

上主因祢圣复活， Al-le-lu-ia!

复我生命与希望， Al-le-lu-ia!

偕主复活度新生， Al-le-lu-ia!

从此心灵寄天主， Al-le-lu-ia!

(对经一)

领一：我主，求你开启我的口唇*，我要亲口宣扬你的光荣。

领二：上主是我的牧者，*

左：我实在一无所缺。

右：他使我卧在青绿的草场 -，又领我走近幽静的水旁，*
还使我的心灵得到舒畅。

左：他为了自己名号的原由，*
领我踏上了正义的坦途。

右：纵使我应走过阴森的幽谷，*
我不怕凶险，因你与我同在。

左：你的牧杖和短棒，*
是我的安慰舒畅。

右：在我对头面前 - 你为我摆设了筵席；*
在我的头上傅油 -，使我的杯爵满溢。

左：在我一生岁月里，*
幸福与慈爱常随不离；

右：我将住在上主的殿里，*
直至悠远的时日。

左：愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。*

右：起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。

众：我主，求你开启我的口唇*，
我要亲口宣扬你的光荣。

(静默片刻)

(对经二)

领二：祂要用翅膀荫庇你；黑夜的恐怖，将不会使你怕惧。

领一：上主站在你的右边，*

右：作你的护卫和保安。

左：白天太阳必不伤你，*
黑夜月亮也不害你。

右：你应该在上主面前安心依靠，*
不要因万事顺当的人而烦恼

左：不要因图谋不轨的人而暴躁；*
你应控制愤恨 - ，免得再犯罪过。

右：那含泪播种的人，*
必含笑获享收成；

左：他们边行边哭 - ，出去播种耕耘，*
他们载欣载奔，回来背着禾捆。

右：上主保护你于任何灾患，*
上主保护你的心灵平安。

左：上主保护你出外 - ，保护你回来，*
从现在起一直到永远的世代。

右：愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。*

左：起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。

众：祂要用翅膀荫庇你；黑夜的恐怖，将不使你怕惧。。

(聆听天主圣言)

主礼：‘请上主发言，你的仆人在此静听“

读经员 (Lector)：（慢慢读两遍，之间静默 30 秒）

（咏 118：22-24）匠人弃而不用的废石，反而成了屋角的基石；那是上主的所行所为，在我们眼中神妙莫测。这是上主所安排的一天，我们应该为此鼓舞喜欢。

(对答咏)

领二：这是上主安排的一天，我们要欢欣鼓舞，阿肋路亚。

众：这是上主安排的一天，我们要欢欣鼓舞，阿肋路亚。

(谢主曲)

领一：天主，求祢运用手臂-，大施神威，* 把心高气傲的人击溃，* 提拔弱小卑微。

众：

我的灵魂颂扬上主，
我的心灵欢跃于我的救主、天主。
因为祂垂顾了祂卑微的使女，

今后万代的人都要称我有福。
全能者给我作了奇事，
祂的名号何其神圣。

祂对敬畏祂的人们，广施慈爱，千秋万世。
祂运用手臂，大施神威，
把心高气傲的人击溃。

祂从高位上推下权贵，却提拔了弱小卑微。
祂使饥饿者饱飧美味，
却使富有者空手而回。

祂扶助了祂的仆人以色列，*因为祂常念及自己的仁慈。
正如祂曾应许我们的先祖：
永久眷顾亚巴郎和他的家族。

愿光荣归于父、及子、及圣神。
起初如何，今日亦然，直到永远。阿们。

众： 天主，求祢运用手臂，大施神威，* 把心高气傲的人击溃，* 提拔弱小卑微。

(祷词)

主礼： 主基督，祢为我们死而复活，如今在天上，常为我们转祷；现在我们满怀信心地恳求祢：
主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

领二： 基督，祢是万民的光明，万民的救星，
—— 我们欢欣庆祝祢的复活，求祢以圣神的爱火炽热我们的心灵。

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

领二： 愿中华儿女认识祢是他们所长久期望的基督，—— 并愿普世万民都认识祢的光荣。

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

领二： 祢是我们身心的良医，
—— 求祢以爱心眷顾我们，治愈我们的创伤。

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

领二： 求祢安慰病苦的人，减轻他们的痛苦

—— 也赐给他们面对疾病的力量。

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

领二： 求祢援助遭患难和被压迫的人，
—— 求祢也救助贫困的人。

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

领二： 在这清明时节，求祢恩赐我们去世的亲友，及所有去世的人，在祢的光荣中得以复活，—— 使他们永远获享祢的慈爱。

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

主礼： 现在让我们静默片刻，将各自心中的祈求交托给上主

(静默片刻)

主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

众： 主，求祢俯听我们的祈祷！

(天主经)

主礼： 现在我们按主耶稣教给我们的，向天父同声祈祷

众： 我们的天父，愿祢的名受显扬；愿祢的国来临；愿祢的旨意奉行在人间，如同在天上。求祢今天赏给我们日用的食粮；求祢宽恕我们的罪过，如同我们宽恕别人一样；不要让我们陷于诱惑，但救我们免于凶恶。

（结束祷词）

主礼： 天主，今日祢的唯一圣子战胜了死亡，为我们打开了永生之门，我们欢欣庆贺祢的复活，求祢派遣圣神革新我们的生活，使我们也同基督一样获得复活的光荣。祢是天主和祢及圣神永生永王。阿们。

（结束语）

主礼： 愿全能的天主降福我们（✙），保护我们免于灾祸，引领我们到达永生。

众： 阿们。

（若神父或执事在场，用以下结束词）

神父或执事： 愿主与你们同在

众： 也与你的心灵同在

神父或执事： 愿全能的天主，圣父圣子圣神降福你们

众： 阿们

神父或执事： 平安去吧。

众： 感谢天主！

Salve, Regina

Salve, Regina, mater misericordiae;

Vita, dulcedo et spes nostra salve.

Ad te clamamus, exsules filii Hevae.

Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes

in hac lacrimarum valle.

Eia ergo, advocata nostra,

illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte.

Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui,

nobis post hoc exilium ostende.

O clemens, o pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria

万福母后诵（又圣母经）

万福母后！仁慈的母亲；我们的生命，我们的甘饴，我们的希望。厄娃子孙，在此尘世，向妳哀呼。在这涕泣之谷，向妳叹息哭求。我们的主保，求妳回顾，怜视我们，一旦流亡期满，使我们得见妳的圣子、万民称颂的耶稣。童贞玛利亚，妳是宽仁的，慈悲的，甘饴的。天主圣母，请为我们祈求，使我们堪受基督的恩许。阿门。

Cycle Six Part II & III: Parent Night Discussion Questions & Family Snack & Story Time

(Sent on March 31, 2024)

The Lord is risen, Alleluia!

The theme of our next gathering is “Celebrate with your children.” The word “celebrate” means participating in a special joyful activity to show the importance of a particular occasion. The word was first used in the Bible in the Book of Exodus, “Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, “This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: “Let my people go, that they may have a festival to worship me in the wilderness” (Exodus 5:1). The word “festival” here is the English word “celebrate.” It is related to human freedom to worship God. When Jesus told the story of the prodigal son, he used the word “celebrate” several times.

“Celebrate” is translated into Chinese as “庆祝”. I think this Chinese word is especially insightful. It expresses two layers of meaning. The first is “庆” which represents joy, and the second is “祝” which represents blessing. So when parents celebrate with their children, firstly, the parents are happy for their children, and secondly, the children are blessed by their parents, which ultimately points to God's blessing.

Topics for our next gathering:

1. Do you celebrate with your children?
2. When do you celebrate with your children?
3. How do you celebrate with your children?

In addition, I will need your help to fill out the questionnaire survey. I hope everyone will be able to make it so that the data will be more complete.

Thank you, and Happy Easter!

Deacon Paul

第六周期第二及第三部分： 家长聚会讨论及家庭故事分享主题

(三月三十一日发给大家)

主已复活，阿肋路亚！

我们下次聚会的主题是“和孩子一起庆祝”，“庆祝”这个词的意思是参加一个特别喜乐的活动以表明某特定事件的重要性。这个词第一次在圣经的出谷纪，“梅瑟同亚郎去见法朗说：「以色列的天主雅威这样说：「你应放我的百姓走，好叫他们在旷野里过节敬拜我。」（出 5：1）这里的“过节”就是“庆祝”它与人的自由有关，与感恩天主有关。主耶稣在讲述浪子回头的故事时，好几次用到“庆祝”。

中文的“庆祝”这个词真好，它表达了两层含义，第一层是“庆”代表喜悦，第二次是“祝”代表祝福。所以当父母与孩子一起庆祝的时候，一是父母为孩子而喜悦，二是孩子蒙父母的祝福，这份祝福最终指向天主的祝福。

下次聚会的话题供参考：

1. 你和孩子一起“庆祝”吗？
2. 一般是在什么时候，你们一起“庆祝”？
2. 你和孩子如何“庆祝”？

另：这次聚会，我需要占用十分钟做第二次问卷调查，希望大家尽量不缺席，这样数据会比较完整，多谢。

复活节快乐！

Deacon Paul