

**CATHOLIC PARENT KNOW-HOW: CALL TO FAITH
PARENT MEETING PRAYER SERVICE**

Leader: **In the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.**

All: **Amen.**

Leader: **The grace of God our Father, who has made us his children by adoption, be with you all.**

All: **And with your spirit.**

Leader: **(click on slide #2-Family around a table)**

In Psalm 128 we read: “Your children will be like olive shoots around the table.” For children are the sign and pledge of God’s blessing. They are the living proof of God’s presence, because when God blesses the family with the gift of children, he fills its life with joy and happiness. Children should therefore be cherished and respected. But they should also be taught reverence for God, so that with a sense of responsibility they will grow in wisdom and grace, hold in their thoughts and actions to whatever is true, upright, and virtuous, and live in the world as Christ’s witnesses and heralds.

So, now I invite you to think of a moment when you looked into the eyes of one of your children and were deeply aware of God’s presence. Was it in the delivery room, the first time you saw him or her? Was it a quiet moment in the middle of a night as you were rocking your child to sleep? Was it a moment when he or she ran to you with such joy, you thought your heart would burst?

With your eyes closed, be with that moment right now and recall the blessing.

Reader: **Brothers and sisters listen to the words of the holy gospel according to Matthew: (Slide # 3-Jesus and the children)**

Children were brought to Jesus that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked the parents, but Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” After he placed hands on the children, he went away. (Mt. 19:13-15)

Reflection Hymn (Optional): **Seeds** by Kathy Mattea
(may be downloaded from iTunes)

Reflection **(Slide # 4-Fertile soil)**

Think of three things that make your family “fertile soil” for your child to grow as God’s beloved son or daughter.

Think of three things that might be “sand” in your family, three things that are an obstacle for your child to grow into the fullness that God imagines for him or her.

Leader: The Lord Jesus taught us to call the almighty God our Father. Let us then pray to him saying:

“Father, all-holy, watch over our children.”

Reader: Loving Father, you so loved the world that you gave your only Son; keep us, your children reborn in baptism, in your love. We pray,

Your favor rested fully on the Son you loved; grant that each one of us may successfully carry out the responsibilities entrusted to us as parents. We pray,

As your Son was growing up, you placed him in the tender care of Mary and Joseph; grant that all your children may grow in the full maturity of Christ. We pray,

You show a special love for those who are alone and abandoned; through the help of our Catholic community let all children who are deprived of a family’s love know that you are their Father, through our love and care. We pray,

(Slide # 5-Family praying)

**Leader: Father,
inexhaustible source of life and author of all good,
we bless you and we thank you
for brightening our communion of love by your gift of children.
Grant that our children will find in the life
of this family the fertile soil
that they need to strive for what is right and good.
And one day, by your grace,
reach their home in heaven.**

We ask this through Christ our Lord,

All: Amen.