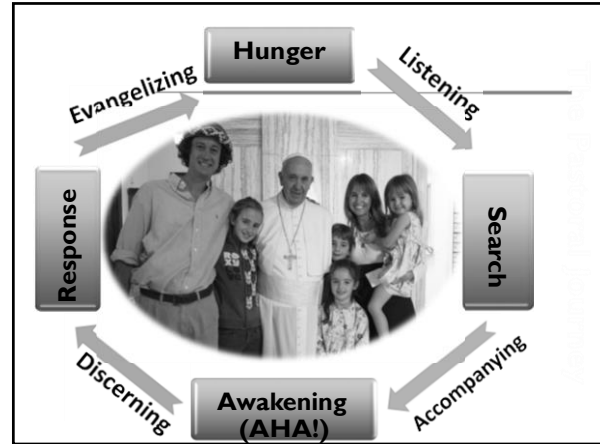




Start Where They Are
 (and other secrets to effectively engage families in faith)

Presented by
Michael Theisen
 NFCYM, Washington DC



“We need a church capable of walking at people’s side, of doing more than simply listening to them; a church which accompanies them on their journey...” WYD, 2013

An Intentional Journey

“The Church will have to initiate everyone – priests, religious and laity – into this art of accompaniment, which teaches us to remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other (cf. Ex 3, 5). (Evangelii Gaudium, 169).

Accompany

verb ac-com-pa-ny la- kemp-nē, -'kämp-; - kəm-pə-, - kām-l

•: to go somewhere with (someone) : to be a companion for (someone)

•: to go together with (something) : to be included with (something)

•: to happen or occur at the same time as or along with (something)

Which statement would you most like to offer to parents today?

Which statement do you think parents most want to hear from you/the Church?

1. We are sorry for having hurt you.
2. At Baptism you promised to raise your children in the Catholic faith.
3. What are your hurts? hopes? joys?
4. You are not alone.
5. What role do you want
6. Avoid that which separates
7. Tell us about your faith journey.
8. Marriage is a vocation and
9. How can the Church help
10. You are always welcome at our church
11. Parents are the most influential agents of catechesis for their children
12. Your family is a domestic church; sacred and holy.

live out your faith you/your family

serves as the foundation of the family and society.

the unitive and the procreative purposes of marriage.

faith to play in the lives of your children?



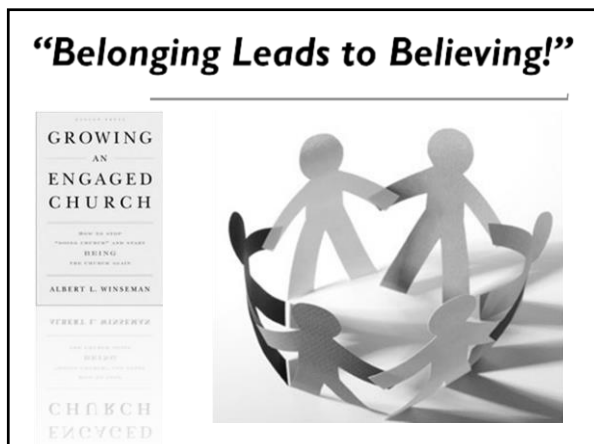
Rankings for Teens Living their Faith... Church Support Felt by Parents...

Level of Support	Mormon	Catholic
Extremely	65%	13%
Very	22%	27%
Extremely/Very	87%	40%
Little	5%	15%
Not	3%	11%
Little/Not	8%	26%



- Rankings for Teens Living their Faith... Church Support Felt by Parents...**
1. Mormons
 2. Conservative Protestant
 3. Black Protestant
 4. Mainline Protestant
 5. Catholic
 6. Jewish
 7. Non-Religious

Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers.




In the same grain as the Model, but with a different understanding...





Listening to Understand Another is a Sacred Act

The Critical Starting Point Question...



What role do you want faith to play in the life of your children when they are adults?



1. Don't let your kids be the most important people in your family (5K)
2. 6 ways good parents contribute to their child's anxiety (4K)
3. How to raise kinder, less entitled kids (4K)
4. Parenting beyond the dirty laundry (2.2K)
5. Why Catholics are leaving the faith by age 10 (2K)

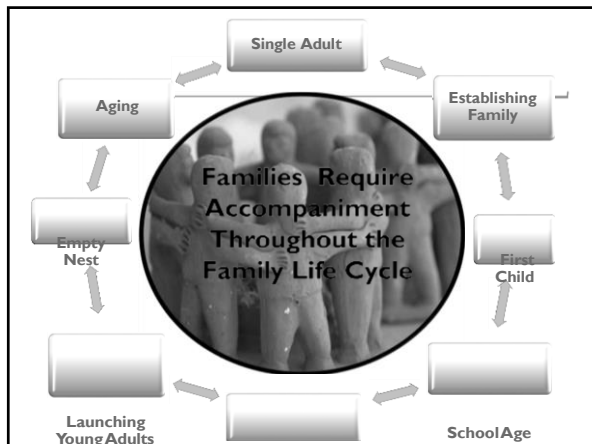
What if you could change anything about your family situation, what would it be?



"If you could change anything about your family situation, what would it be?"




Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers.



"To be parents"

"Why am I here?"

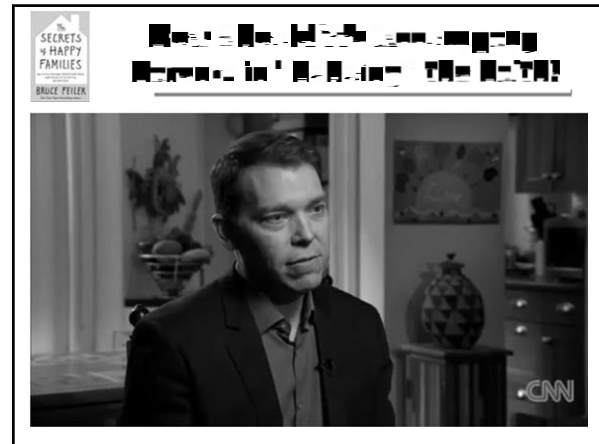
"I don't know"



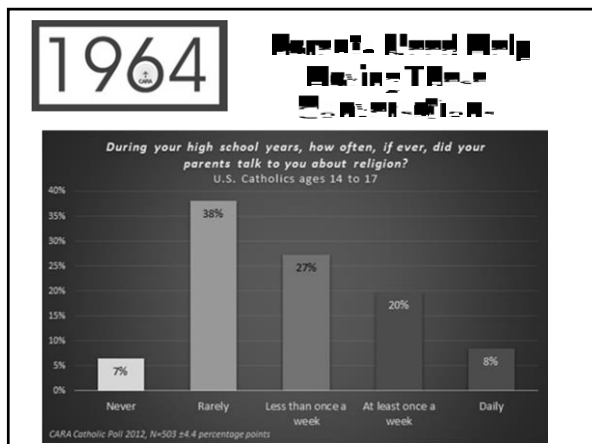
Two-thirds of teens and three-quarters of parents say they would be willing to give up a weeknight activity if it meant they could have dinner with their family. (CASA, 9/2009)

Adolescence

Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers.

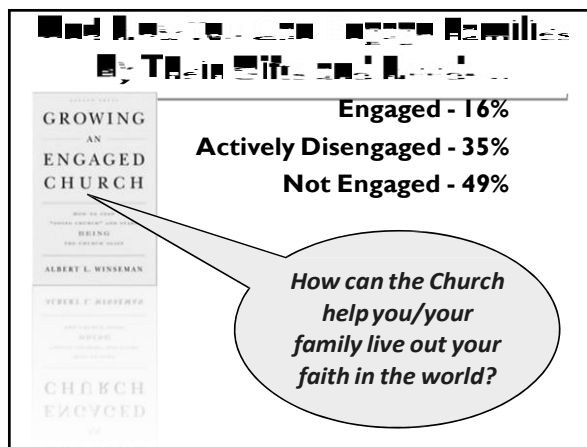
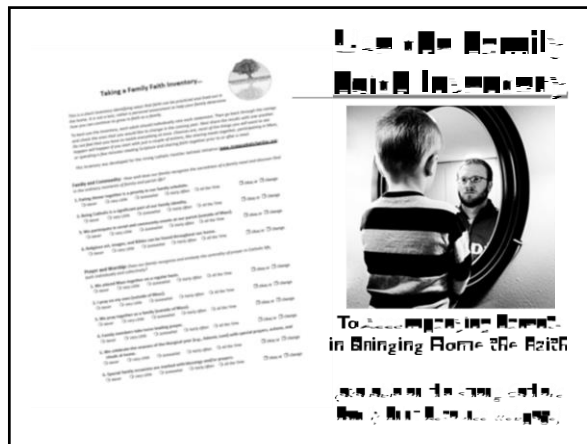


- Do you know where your grandparents grew up?
- Do you know where your mom and dad went to high school?
- Do you know where your parents met?
- Do you know of an illness or something really terrible that happened in your family before you were born?
- Do you know the story surrounding your birth?
- Do you know the story surrounding your parent's wedding day?




Which Leads to Sharing Their Faith Story!

- Why are your parents Catholic?
- What is a favorite scripture story of your parent(s)? Why?
- What would your parent(s) consider one of their memorable moments of faith?
- What is a favorite form of prayer for your parent(s)? Who taught them this?
- What family faith rituals do you celebrate and where did they originate?
- How would someone observing your family for a day know you were people of faith? A Catholic family?



Six Strategies to Engage Families Today




1. Listen first to families rather than sending messages that don't resonate or motivate.
2. Focus on building relationships, rather than providing programs.
3. Highlight families' strengths, even amid challenges, rather than adopting approaches based on negative stereotypes.
4. Encourage families to experiment with new practices that fit their lives, rather than giving them expert advice on what they need to do.
5. Emphasize parenting as a relationship more than a set of techniques.
6. Broaden coalitions focused on young people's success in order to actively engage families.

The Key to Success...

"The Church can contribute significantly toward strong, life-shaping families for young people by equipping, supporting, and encouraging families with adolescents to:

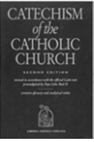


- * engage in family faith conversations
- * teach moral values
- * develop healthy relationships
- * good communication skills
- * celebrate family rituals
- * pray together
- * participate in shared service activities
- * explore and discuss vocations
- * nurture close parental relationships and parental faith."



Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry, USCCB 1997

The Role of Parents in Education

- "the role of parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute." (CCC 2221)
- "Parents are the most influential agents of catechesis for their children." (INDC 234)
- "...the Christian Community must help [parents] assume their responsibility of educating their children in faith." (GDC 227)
- "Every effort should be made to strengthen and develop pastoral care for the family, which should be treated as a real matter of priority, in the certainty that future evangelization depends largely on the domestic Church." (FAMILIARIS CONSORTIO)







Comparison Between Parent & Leader Responses

All	Parents	Leaders	Top 3 Messages You Want to Hear from the Church/Church Leaders
63%	1	1	You are always welcome at our church.
54%	2	2	How can the Church help you/your family live out your faith in the world?
29%	3	4	Parents are the most influential agents of catechesis for their children.
27%	5	3	Your family is a domestic church, sacred and holy.
26%	4	9	Marriage is a vocation and serves as the foundation of the family and society.
23%	7	5	You are not alone.
23%	6	8	What role do you want faith to play in the lives of your children?
18%	8	7	Tell us about your faith journey.
15%	9	6	What are your hurts/hopes? joys?
11%	10	10	We are sorry for having hurt you.
8%	11	11	Avoid that which separates the unitive and the procreative purposes of marriage.
4%	12	12	At Baptism you promised to raise your children in the Catholic faith.

All	Parents	Leaders	Rank Order Each Message from 1 as Highest and 12 as Lowest Priority
3.10	1	1	You are always welcome at our church.
4.63	2	2	Parents are the most influential agents of catechesis for their children.
5.11	3	3	How can the Church help you/your family live out your faith in the world?
5.47	4	4	What role do you want faith to play in the lives of your children?
5.90	5	9	Marriage is a vocation and serves as the foundation of the family and society.
6.23	6	7	You are not alone.
6.62	7	8	Your family is a domestic church, sacred and holy.
6.70	8	5	What are your hurts/hopes? joys?
7.01	9	6	Tell us about your faith journey.
8.26	10	11	At Baptism you promised to raise your children in the Catholic faith.
9.21	11	10	We are sorry for having hurt you.
9.65	12	12	Avoid that which separates the unitive and the procreative purposes of marriage.

The Single Most Important Influence on a Child's Faith

"Parents are the single most important influence on a child's faith." (NSYR)

The Strong Catholic Families Coalition

www.strongcatholicfamilies.org



Password Protected Sites

Strong Catholic Families
Username: nfcym
Password: scfscy

Fortaleciendo Familias en la Fe
Username: fff
Password: familias



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