

You are invited  
to.....

Join a  
Catholic Family  
Small Group!!!

"How precious is the family as the privileged place for  
transmitting the faith!"

~ Pope Francis



Amoris Laetitia Family  
Year 2021 - 2022

Family Love:  
A Vocation &  
A Path to Holiness

A Toolkit to Celebrate Families



Created by:





## FAMILY PRAYER CHALLENGE



*As a parish community, invite each family to grow closer to the Lord and one another through prayer and other activities.*

*This challenge gives families an opportunity to build the habit of prayer in their domestic church!*

## FAMILY SMALL GROUPS

*Families have a unique role in handing on the faith within their Domestic Church. Invite parish households to join together to encourage, form, and strengthen each other in becoming places where the Gospel takes on flesh.*



## GATHER AT THE TABLE



*As we wrap up celebrating the Year of the Family with the rest of the world, we invite you to celebrate the families of your parish over a shared meal. Consider your unique identity as a parish and ways that you could expand on a simple pot luck.*





# Family Prayer Challenge

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# INTRODUCTION

Venerable Patrick Peyton was known for saying, “The family who prays together, stays together.” A Family Prayer Challenge gives your parish the opportunity to help families grow in the habit of prayer while spending quality time together. It can help them stretch outside their comfort zone, learning a new prayer or prayer style. It helps them get to know one another better, discovering their preference in prayer, best time of day to pray, as well as allowing them to be more vulnerable and open with one another. There are also opportunities for them to witness their faith and share their gifts with others. A Family Prayer Challenge may offer incentives or prizes, but the true gain will be growing in relationship with God and one another.



# SETTING UP THE CHALLENGE

- **Decide on a length for the challenge.** Knowing the families in your parish community, determine how long the challenge should be (e.g., week, month, liturgical season such as Lent or Easter). Choose a start & end date and when you will begin promotions.
- **Consider including other ministries.** Collaborate with other parish ministries in the parish (i.e., Knights of Columbus) to provide incentives for families who participate. This could be providing prizes for each participating family (medal, ticket to a Pancake Breakfast, cash scholarship, etc.) or a donation to a local charity in honor of the families at your parish.
- **Provide signs of celebration.** Utilizing the Family Prayer Challenge Window Design, provide signs that families can personalize and display in their windows to show their participation in the challenge. Print off copies or have an easy way for families to download it. Give them talking points to use if neighbors, postal carriers, delivery person, or others ask what it means. Be sure to display a decorated sign at the parish as well!



[Click here  
for social media  
graphics](#)



[Click here  
for the Family  
Prayer Challenge  
Window Design](#)

# PROMOTIONS

- **Advertise. Advertise. Advertise.** Get the word out by using all available channels (bulletin, announcements, schools, Faith Formation programs, social media, etc.). Ask families to invite their friends and extended family as well!
- **Make this a fun and easy experience for families.** Give the challenge a prominent place on your parish website that is easy to find. Have a parish staff member that they can contact if there are any questions. Make all the materials available (easily downloadable or in a convenient place to pick-up). The clearer it is for parents to know what is expected and when, the easier it will be for them to participate.
- **Empower parents & instill confidence.** Families may not be familiar with all of the prayer styles you are introducing or may not feel comfortable leading their children in that prayer style- that is okay. When questions arise, offer praise and encouragement as well as share resources that may assist them. We have included some links in the online document to assist.



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## BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENT

We invite you & your family to join in the **Year of the Family Prayer Challenge!** We are currently in the Amoris Laetitia Year of the Family, which will end at the World Meeting of Families in June. Pope Francis has written often about the importance of family and this prayer challenge gives us a great opportunity to celebrate and pray with and for the families at our parish! Stay tuned for more details on how your family can be part of this very special year!





# YEAR OF THE FAMILY

## Prayer Challenge

We are so excited your family is joining in *The Family Challenge!*

We are currently in the *Amoris Laetitia* Year of the Family, which will end at the World Meeting of Families on J

Pope Francis has written often about the importance of family and this prayer challenge gives us a great opportunity to celebrate and pray with and for the families at our parish!



Knowing that each family is unique, this prayer challenge is for you to make your own! You are encouraged to complete a challenge each day for the next month. You can pick the order; just write which date you completed it on the

<p><b>Pray the Rosary together as a family.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p><b>Write a family mission statement. How will your family show God's love?</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p><b>Listen to Good Good Father and share what the lyrics mean to you.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p><b>Go out to eat as a family and make sure to pray Grace together.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p><b>Spend 5 minutes in silence with the Lord.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>
<p><b>Read 1 Corinthians 13 &amp; discuss what love means to you.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p><b>Write a letter to God about your day.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p><b>Go to Confession and celebrate forgiveness afterward.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p><b>Pray the Guardian Angel Prayer.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p><b>Create a prayer space in your home.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>
<p><b>Create art (drawing, music, poetry) expressing thanksgiving to God.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p><b>Pray the St. Michael Prayer.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p><b>FREE</b></p> <p>Your Family's Choice!</p>	<p><b>Read the story of the Last Supper &amp; then take turns washing each others' feet.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p><b>Do an act of service for a neighbor.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>
<p><b>Pray the Stations of the Cross together (at home or Church).</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p><b>Pray the Litany of Trust.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p><b>Reflect on the Examen.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p><b>One person blesses every other family member.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p><b>Invite another family over to dinner and pray before your meal.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>
<p><b>Choose a patron saint for your family and ask for their intercession.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p><b>Attend Eucharistic Adoration as a family.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p><b>Take turns sharing prayer requests. Finish with the Glory Be.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p><b>Pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p><b>Pray the Prayer of the World Meeting of Families.</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p>

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# ENGAGEMENT & SUPPORT

- **Prayers of the Faithful.** Include an intention each week of the challenge at all masses for those participating.
- **Utilize Flocknote or your current electronic communications.** Send notes throughout the challenge letting families know that you are praying for them and to keep up the great work! Remind them that the goal is not for perfection, but simply to take the time to pray together. You can also include an invitation to connect via your parish social media channels so that they can connect with other families.
- **In the classroom.** Have catechists or teachers utilize some of the prayer styles so that children can experience at the parish what they are also experiencing at home.
- **Phone calls.** Call families throughout the challenge to thank them for participating and ask if they have any intentions they would like the parish to pray for through your parish intercessory prayer team.
- **Social media.** Use your parish social media channels to send out encouraging messages, pictures of staff members or clergy participating in the challenge, and invitations to families to post pictures of their prayer experiences on your channels. Invite everyone doing the challenge to use this hashtag so they can connect with families all over Region VI (Michigan and Ohio) who are doing Family Prayer Challenges: #FamilyPrayerChallenge.



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for social media  
graphics](#)







# Family Small Groups

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# *INTRODUCTION*

## **Catholic Families: Living the Domestic Church**

The Christian family has been called the Domestic Church since the early days of Christianity. This title recognizes the unique role of the family in the life of the Church and places great emphasis on the importance of the family in handing on the faith, not merely within the family, but in the world around them as well. Regardless of your cultural, economic, or personal origin, 'Catholic parents must learn to form their family as a domestic church, a church in the home as it were, where God is honored, his law is respected, prayer is a normal event, virtue is transmitted by word and example, and everyone shares the hopes, the problems, and sufferings of everyone else.' The home must be a place where the Gospel takes on living flesh.



# *BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENT*

## **Start a Catholic Families Small Group!**

When was the last time you joined another family in your parish for dinner, prayer, and a time to play? Come find out how to grow in your faith by walking alongside other families in family small group gatherings. Being intentional in reaching out to one family at a time (like Jesus did) helps us grow as one family in Christ. Stay tuned for more details!



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graphics](#)





# CATHOLIC FAMILIES

## Small Groups

Let Us Help  
You Start  
Today!

### INVITE A FAMILY

It doesn't need to be complicated or overly formal, just pick a family and invite them over!!



### GATHER AT HOME

Share a meal, play games - keep it simple!



### SHARE CHRIST

Read scripture, share how God has moved in your life, pray for each other's intentions, sing together God's praise!



Amoris Laetitia  
Family  
Year 2021 - 2022

# STARTING SMALL GROUPS

## Preparation

- Develop or discover material for small groups several months before the process begins.
- If you are developing the material, make sure several people have input into the process.
- Identify potential small group leaders (facilitators) during this same period.
- Ask for other potential small group leaders about two months before the program starts. There are parishioners who can lead small groups whom the parish might not already know.
- Determine what kind of orientation small group leaders will need; have them go through this orientation at least a month before the small groups begin.

(from <https://www.pemdc.org/freeresources/parish/small-groups/recruiting-for-small-groups/>)

## Ideas to help kick-start family small groups:

- Offer a Parish Mass to kick-off the World Meeting of Families (June 22-26, 2022).
- Identify and invite family leaders (6-8 couples or families) to invite other families to the Mass.
- Invite all parishioners to join a small group which best supports their day-to-day walk as domestic churches.



[Click here  
for social media  
graphics](#)



## RESOURCES FOR FAMILY GROUPS

- Christian Family Movement (CFM); [https://www.cfm.org/resources\\_for\\_parishes](https://www.cfm.org/resources_for_parishes)
- Strong Catholic Families/Fortaleciendo Familias; <https://nfcym.org/programs/strong-catholic-families/scf-locations/>
- Six Dates for Catholic Couples; The Beatitudes: A Couple's Guide to Greater Joy; and The Virtues: A Program for Couples;
- Beloved: Finding Happiness in Marriage: A marriage enrichment program; <https://www.augustineinstitute.org/program-categories/marriage-beloved>.
- Teaching the Way of Love: Parenting with the Heart of Christ; <https://twl4parents.com/>.
- Finding the Passion of Christ in Our Story, for families who have lost a child, from Red Bird Ministries <https://www.redbird.love/programs>.
- The Grand Adventure: A New Call to Grandparenting, from Christian Family Movement [https://www.cfm.org/program\\_book\\_descriptions](https://www.cfm.org/program_book_descriptions).
- Divorce and Beyond with free downloadable facilitator guide; also available in Spanish <https://www.smp.org/search/?s=products&q=divorce+and+beyond>.
- Surviving Divorce: Hope and Healing for the Catholic Family <https://www.catholicdivorce.com/>.





# Gather at the Table

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## *BULLETIN INVITATION*

### **Celebrate the Culmination of the Year of the Family with Your Parish Family!**

As we wrap up observance of the Year of the Family with the rest of the world, we invite you to celebrate the families of our parish over a shared meal. All parish households are invited to a Parish Potluck on [date & time]. Sign up [here] to attend and prepare a favorite family recipe to share!



[Click here for social media graphics](#)



## *BULLETIN POST EVENT*

### **Our Parish Potluck: Many Families United as One Family!**

Last week we celebrated families as part of the Year of the Family activities through a Parish Potluck. It was wonderful to see all forms of families share a festive meal and enjoy conversation with others. Check out the parish social media to see photos from the event. We hope that all families of the parish will continue to reach out to others, including the aged, the lonely, and marginalized households. As Catholic families, let us nurture these relationships as a part of the family of Jesus Christ!

# *Gather at the Table*

## **PARISH POTLUCK**



**Celebrate families over a shared meal!**

All parish individuals and households are encouraged to join and prepare a favorite family recipe to share with the whole parish!



check the parish website  
for details!



# EVENT DETAILS

## Pre-Event

- Choose a time and location for the event.
- Decide how sign-ups will work , and what the parish will provide.
- Recruit volunteers to make the event enjoyable for everyone: set up/take down crew, traffic crew, and an emcee to welcome attendees and facilitate the event.
- Begin promotion! Adapt sample bulletin announcements , flyer and social media using templates on following pages [links on sidebar]. Remind families at the end of Mass.

## On Potluck Day

- Orient volunteers, set up space for the meal and test the sound system.
- Welcome families to drop off their meal contributions and find seating.
- At the arranged time, announce the start of the meal & lead grace.
- See additional ideas for activities during the event.
- Thank those who have attended and send them off with a blessing.

## Follow-Up to Event

- Post photos of the event on social media.
- Include a message in the next Sunday's bulletin, thanking the families for participating and celebrating them.



[Click here  
for social media  
graphics](#)



## ADDITIONAL IDEAS

- Provide activities for families such as coloring sheets or other activities.
- Provide participants with a prayer card for the World Meeting of Families.
- Host a themed potluck, where families supply recipes based on a specific theme such as:
  - o *Laudato Si: Go Green*— Ask families bring their own utensils and plates; share information from *Laudato Si*. <https://laudatosimovement.org/#join>
  - o *Evangelii Gaudium: Be Joyous*— Suggest parishioners invite someone they know that has fallen away from the church to come and enjoy a meal. Or perhaps a priest can hear confessions somewhere near the event.
  - o Refugee's, Mental Health, Cultural Awareness, or Blessings — Gather parish leaders and discuss something that your parish feels called to celebrate within their families.
- If pandemic pre-cautions curtail the event indoors, host the event outside.
  - o Instead of having families bring potluck, consider a parish tailgate. Ask families to decorate their cars in celebration of their family.
  - o If parish resources allow, bring in Food Trucks and a Band/DJ or musicians willing to perform instead. Consider hosting this in combination with a canned-good drive.
  - o Set up socially distanced activities like corn-hole or other yard games.





# ACTIVITIES & PRINTABLES

Family Love Prayer Cards (English/Spanish):

<https://store.usccb.org/collections/new/products/family-love-prayer-card>

<https://store.usccb.org/collections/new/products/family-love-prayer-card-spanish>

WMOF 2022 official prayer (& resources):

<https://www.romefamily2022.com/en/prehiera/>

WMOF 2022 official image (video catechesis):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vT-nJBcvKUU>

WMOF 2022 official hymn video (& other hymn resources for the parishes):

<https://www.romefamily2022.com/en/prehiera-inno/>

WMOF 2018 official hymn video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=APiQ0KM2PqQ>

WMOF 2018 family love cube activity:

[https://amoris.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Communion\\_Amoris\\_Cube.pdf](https://amoris.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Communion_Amoris_Cube.pdf)

WMOF 2018 home water blessing :

[https://amoris.ie/wp-](https://amoris.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Easter_Water_Blessing_Homes.pdf)

[content/uploads/2018/03/Easter\\_Water\\_Blessing\\_Homes.pdf](https://amoris.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Easter_Water_Blessing_Homes.pdf)

Various children's coloring pages:

<https://www.thecatholickid.com/category/catholic-coloring-pages/church/>

<https://sermons4kids.com/last-supper-colorpg.htm>

<https://sermons4kids.com/god-s-promises-no-laughing-matter-6>

<https://sermons4kids.com/nativity-sunday-school>



#FamilyChallenge

How can we be  
praying for your  
family?

Share your intentions below!!!





#FamilyChallenge

"The family that  
prays together,  
stays together."

-Venerable Patrick Peyton



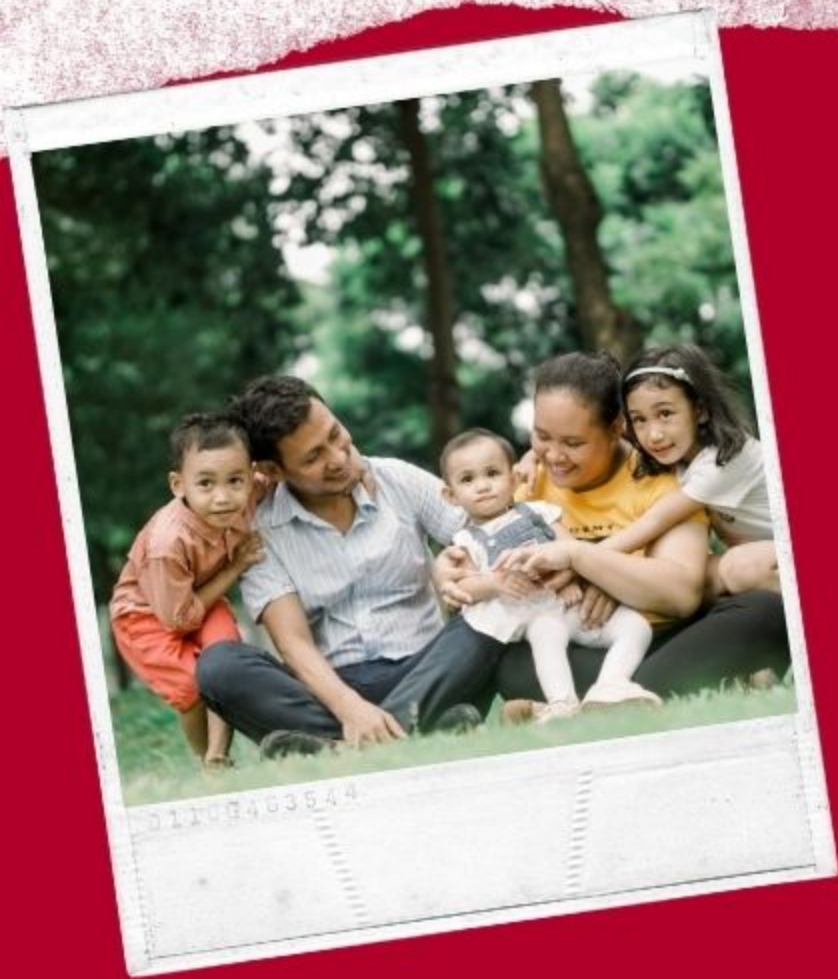


#FamilyChallenge

“Let us love one another as  
God loves each one of us.  
And where does this love  
begin? In our own home.  
How does it begin? By  
praying together.”

-St. Teresa of Calcutta





#FamilyChallenge

“May each family  
rediscover family prayer,  
which helps to bring about  
mutual understanding and  
forgiveness.”

- Pope Francis





# Family

## PRAYER CHALLENGE

Thank you for participating in our Family Prayer Challenge!

We invite you to decorate the sign below and hang it in your window or somewhere prominent in your home as a sign of your commitment.

Have each family member draw, color, sticker, or add a photo to reflect your family.

This can serve as a reminder to you,

as well as a talking point with friends/family who may ask you what this prayer challenge is all about.

If needed, here are a few talking points to have on hand for easy reference:

- *We are currently in the Amoris Laetitia Year of the Family because it is the 5-year anniversary of when Pope Francis wrote this document, which focuses on families.*
- *Pope Francis is also hosting the World Meeting of Families this year in June in Rome.*
- *Our parish wanted to celebrate those occasions by doing something special with, and for, families.*
- *We are doing a prayer challenge. In our challenge we..... (explain what your prayer challenge is).*
  - *It is open to everyone! (Invite them to join and they want to, let them know how.)*
  - *Feel free to share any highlights of your challenge so far.*

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to the parish for support!

Thank you again for being part of this challenge and being a witness to God's love!



Growing  
in  
Faith.

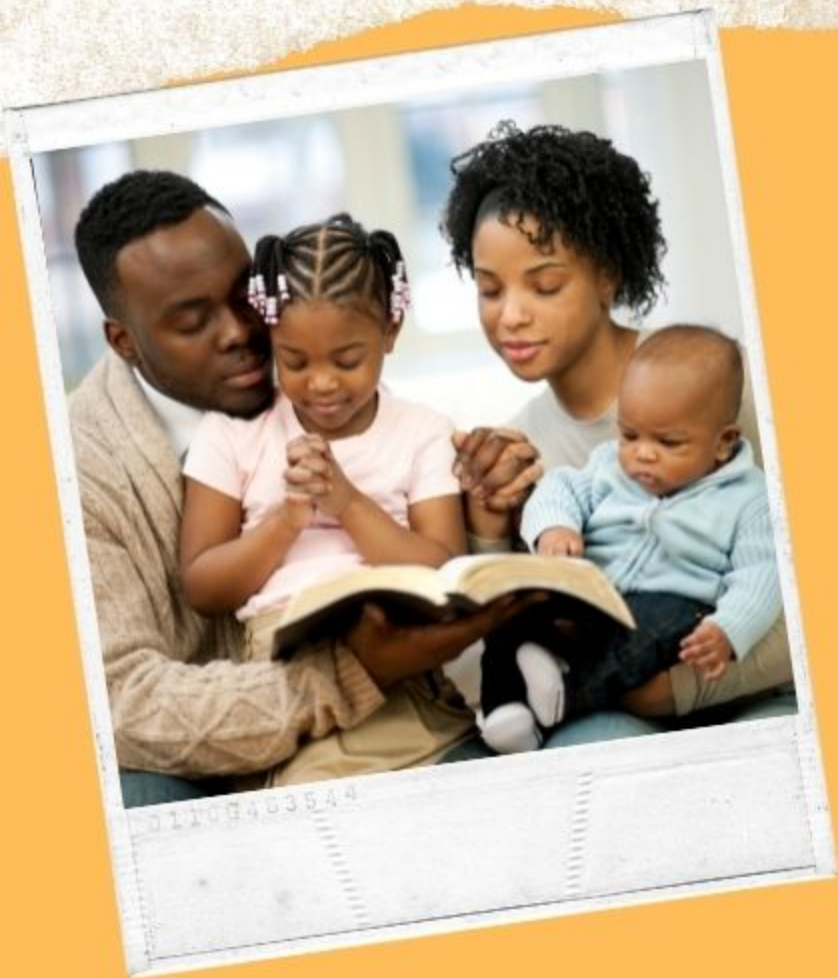
Having  
Fun  
Together.



Fulfilled in Christ.

Our family is part of the....

[#FamilyChallenge](#)



You are invited  
to.....

Start a  
Catholic Family  
Small Group!!!

Invite a Family. Gather at Home. Share Christ.



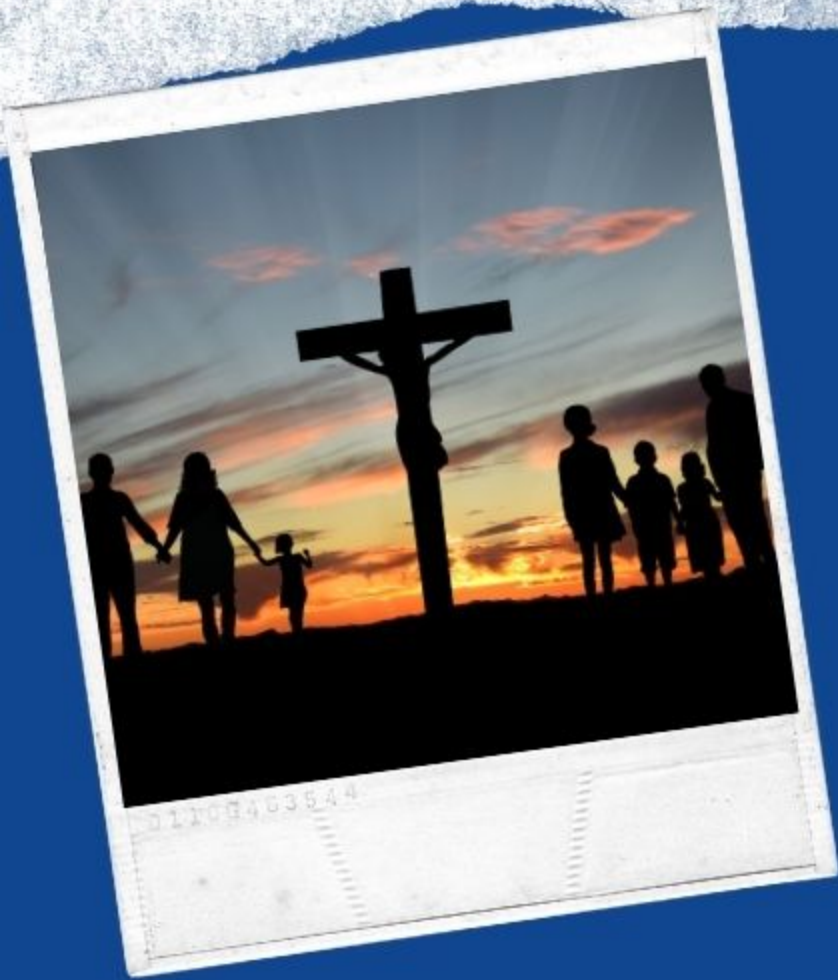


## Come Gather at the Table

Celebrate the  
Culmination of  
the Year of the Family  
with Your Parish Family!

"The family is the salt of the Earth and light of the world,  
it is the leaven of society."

~ Pope Francis



**Thank You for  
Joining Us In  
Celebrating  
Families!**

"As the family goes, so goes the nation,  
and so goes the whole world in which we live."

~St. Pope John Paul II