



7-DAY PREPARATION FOR
FAMILY CONSECRATION

To Jesus, through Mary, in Union with St. Joseph



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Nihil Obstat: Rev. James Dunfee, Vicar General, Diocese of Steubenville, May 13, 2019

Imprimatur: Most Rev. Jeffrey M. Monforton, Bishop of Steubenville, May 13, 2019

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ISBN: 978-1-7330744-0-7





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“THE CONSECRATION OF THE FAMILY MAKES THE FAMILY ONE HEART FULL OF LOVE, IN THE HEART OF JESUS, THROUGH MARY. AND, I THINK, BY BRINGING PRAYER, BY BRINGING JESUS INTO THE LIFE OF OUR PEOPLE, IT CHANGES [THEM]. EVEN OUR HINDU FAMILIES ASK ME TO CONSECRATE THEIR FAMILIES, BECAUSE THEY’VE SEEN THE CHANGE IN OUR FAMILIES AFTER THE CONSECRATION.”

— ST. TERESA OF CALCUTTA

INTRODUCTION TO FAMILY CONSECRATION

WHY FAMILY CONSECRATION?

Family Consecration brings our Catholic Faith to life. Today, when many young people are abandoning religion, it's important to engage your kids in the Faith from an early age. (And to embrace it yourself!) Making and living Family Consecration is one way to get started.

Family Consecration gives spiritual blessings and protection to your family. This spirituality is a powerful safeguard against the evil that threatens to tear so many families apart.

An act of consecration to the Holy Family, made as a family, is a renewal of your baptismal consecration. It is a deliberate choice to follow Jesus Christ more fully, with the help of Mary and Joseph, and to set your family apart for God.



ENTHRONEMENT OF THE HOLY FAMILY

When you consecrate your family to the Holy Family using this little book, you will enthrone their image in a place of honor. Why? By setting up this image, centered on the Sacred Heart of Jesus, you publicly acknowledge Jesus as the King of your hearts and home. You commit to making Him the center of your personal and family life, with the help of our Blessed Mother Mary and St. Joseph.

Jesus gives special blessings and protection to those who enthrone the image of His Sacred Heart. In the 1670s, Jesus appeared to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque and revealed His Sacred Heart. He promised, "I will bless every place where a picture of My Heart shall be set up and honored."

The image of the Holy Family is also a visible reminder of your consecration. Your family can look to the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, as a model of virtue and loving relationships.

To learn more about the Holy Family of Fatima image recommended for this consecration, turn to page 33.



DO WE NEED TO PREPARE?

Taking time to prepare will help your family understand what consecration means, so that you can more fully receive the graces God wants to give you through it. Imagine if you didn't prepare before you welcomed a guest into your home. Where would they sleep? What would they eat? Would anyone be home to let them in? These seven days of preparation will help you get your heart ready to receive Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

CHOOSING A TIME FOR YOUR CONSECRATION

You can do the preparation and consecration at any time. To make it more memorable, we suggest choosing a special day.

- A family anniversary
- Christmas
- Feast of the Holy Family (First Sunday after Christmas)
- Feast of St. Joseph (March 19)
- Feast of the Annunciation (March 25)
- Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (Friday after the second Sunday after Pentecost)
- Feast of the Immaculate Conception (December 8)

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

When you do the activities in this book, try to get each member of your family involved. Help your children participate in a way that is appropriate for their age. Let each child be responsible for a different part of the activity. For example, older children could read part of the reflection. Younger children might be good helpers who can pass out the materials you will be using.

CREATING A FAMILY ALTAR

Before you begin your preparation, create a family altar in your home. This altar could be a simple table, mantelpiece, or even a shelf, placed in a central part of your home. We recommend placing your altar near where you plan to hang the Holy Family of Fatima image and your Family Consecration certificate.

During the seven days of preparation, gather at the family altar for each activity. You'll be adding items to the altar each day. Once you've made your consecration, the altar can remain as a unique reminder to your family of the Holy Family's presence in your home.

ITEMS YOU'LL NEED

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- Table, mantelpiece, or shelf for a family altar (near where you plan to hang your image of the Holy Family)

DAY 1:

- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Pens, pencils, or crayons
- Glue stick
- Family photo (optional)

DAY 2:

- Candle
- Matches or lighter

DAY 3:

- Bottle of Holy Water (optional)

DAY 4:

- Picture of the Holy Family of Fatima (included in kit)

DAY 5:

- Rosaries (included in kit)

DAY 6:

- Hardware and tools needed to hang image of the Holy Family
- Frame, hardware, and tools needed to hang certificate

DAY 7:

- Paper
- Pens, pencils, or crayons

DAY 8:

- Bible
- Holy Family of Fatima image (included in kit)
- Holy Family of Fatima prayer cards (included in kit)
- Consecration certificate (included in kit)
- Frame for certificate
- Pen

FAMILY IS IMPORTANT

1.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAY TOGETHER:

All for the Sacred and Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, all through the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, all in union with St. Joseph. Amen.



2.

READ:

Our family is called to be “a community of life and love” (*Familiaris Consortio* 17), where each person can discover and develop their identity. Within our family, we also learn about God and receive the light of Faith. This is why the family is often called the “domestic church” (*Lumen Gentium* 11). Our family can support one another to live and grow in our Catholic Faith. Mom and Dad have an “irreplaceable” duty to help their children develop humanly and spiritually (*Familiaris Consortio* 60). But “as living members of the family, children contribute in their own way to making their parents holy” (*Gaudium et Spes* 48). Each one of us has a special role in our family.



3.

MAKE A FAMILY TREE:

- Cut or print out a heart for each family member. (Grandparents can also be included.)
- Allow each person to decorate and write their name on their heart.
- Attach the hearts to a background. Grandparents at the top, then parents, then kids.

WHILE MAKING YOUR FAMILY TREE, TALK ABOUT:

- Why is family important?
- What does being in our family mean to you?
- What do you love about our family?
- What makes our family special?

Place the family tree (or a family photo) on the family altar.



4.

PRAY:

Heavenly Father, thank You for making us a family, a community of life and love where we can support one another to live and grow in our Catholic Faith. Thank you for [name each family member]. We ask You to bless and protect us always. Amen.

“The Christian **FAMILY** is a **COMMUNITY OF PERSONS**, a sign and image of the communion of the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit...The family is the community in which, from childhood, **ONE CAN LEARN MORAL VALUES, BEGIN TO HONOR GOD, AND MAKE GOOD USE OF FREEDOM.**”

— *Catechism of the Catholic Church 2205–2207*



BAPTISMAL CONSECRATION

1.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAY TOGETHER:

All for the Sacred and Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, all through the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, all in union with St. Joseph. Amen.

2.

READ:

Today we remember our baptism, when we were freed from original sin and consecrated to God as His beloved sons and daughters. On the day of our baptism, a candle was lit from the Easter candle and given to our parents and godparents with the words, "Receive the light of Christ."

3.

LIGHT A CANDLE:

- Pass it from one family member to the next saying, "Receive the light of Christ."
- Place the candle on the family altar.



4.

READ:

The light of this candle represents the life of Christ, which God placed in our souls at Baptism. "I am the light of the world," Jesus tells us. "Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12). Because the life of Jesus was placed in our souls at Baptism, we received a new identity: children of God. We are called to live in this identity and keep our light of faith burning brightly by following Jesus as His disciples and serving God and one another. "You are the light of the world.... Your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father" (Matt 5:14, 16).



5.

TALK ABOUT:

- What happened in our souls when we were baptized?
- What does the candle given to us at Baptism represent?
- What is the new identity given to us at Baptism?
- How can we keep our light of faith burning brightly?

6.

PRAY:

Heavenly Father, thank You for making us Your children through Baptism. Help us to live in our identity as Your children, to allow the light and life of Christ to grow within us, and to give You glory by living as Your Son's disciples. Amen.



"Through **BAPTISM** we are freed from sin and reborn as **SONS OF GOD**; we become **MEMBERS OF CHRIST**, are incorporated into the Church, and made **SHARERS IN HER MISSION.**"

— *Catechism of the Catholic Church 1213*

DAY 3:

WHAT ARE CONSECRATION & ENTHRONEMENT?

1.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAY TOGETHER:

All for the Sacred and Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, all through the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, all in union with St. Joseph. Amen.

2.

READ:

When we were baptized, our parents and godparents promised for us that we would turn away from sin and live as God's children. Now, we are preparing to make a personal consecration. St. Louis de Montfort teaches us that consecration is a "perfect renewal of the vows and promises of Baptism" (*True Devotion to Mary* 53). Through this personal consecration, each of us is making our own choice to live our baptismal promises. We can make our consecration as a family, because it is in our family that we discover and grow in our identity as children of God.

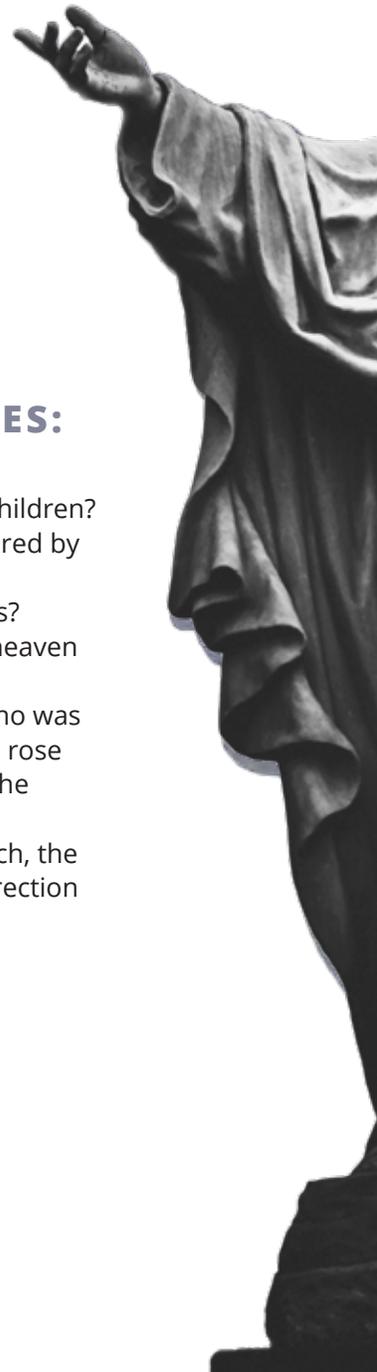
3.

RENEW YOUR BAPTISMAL PROMISES:

After each question, reply "I do!"

- Do you reject sin, so as to live in the freedom of God's children?
- Do you reject the glamor of evil, and refuse to be mastered by sin?
- Do you reject Satan, father of sin and prince of darkness?
- Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?
- Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead and is seated at the right hand of the Father?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

(The Rite of Baptism for Children)



4.

BLESS YOURSELF WITH HOLY WATER:

(Optional)

- Allow each family member to make the Sign of the Cross with Holy Water.
- Place the Holy Water bottle on the family altar.



5.

READ:

At the end of our preparation, we will pray an act of consecration and enthrone an image of the Holy Family above our altar. This picture, with Jesus at the center, will remind us of our consecration to Jesus as the King of our family. It will call to mind our commitment to follow Him as faithful disciples, with the help of Mary and Joseph.

6.

PRAY:

Heavenly Father, as we prepare to make our act of consecration as a family, we ask You for the grace to turn away from sin so that we can follow Your Son Jesus as His disciples and grow in our identity as Your beloved children. Amen.

“FAITH IS A PERSONAL ACT—the free response of the human person to the initiative of God who reveals himself. But faith is not an isolated act....The believer has received faith from others and should hand it on to others....I cannot believe without being carried by the faith of others, and **BY MY FAITH I HELP SUPPORT OTHERS** in the faith.” — *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 166

CONSECRATION TO JESUS

1.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS & PRAY TOGETHER:

All for the Sacred and Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, all through the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, all in union with St. Joseph. Amen.

2.

ADORE THE SACRED HEART:

- Pass around (or hold up) the Holy Family of Fatima picture.
- Allow each family member to look at the Sacred Heart of Jesus for a moment.

3.

TALK ABOUT:

- Where is Jesus at in the picture of the Holy Family?
- Where do we want Jesus to be in our family?





4.

READ:

Jesus is our Savior. He “became man, suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day” for us (Nicene Creed). Because of His sacrifice, the gates of Heaven were opened, and we were able to receive God’s divine life in our souls at Baptism. Jesus, the perfect Son of God, is also our model for how to live as God’s children. From Jesus we learn to be obedient to God’s will in all things, to selflessly love and serve each other, to forgive, and to silently sacrifice the trials of daily life. When we consecrate ourselves to the Sacred and Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, we imitate His life and gift of self. We strive to become like Jesus, because we love Him and want Him to reign as King of our hearts and home.

5.

TALK ABOUT:

- Who is Jesus?
- What did Jesus do for us?
- How can we imitate Jesus’ love for us?

6.

PRAY:

Jesus our Savior, thank You for showing Your great love for us in Your life, Death, and Resurrection. Make our hearts like Your Heart—obedient to God’s will, ready to serve, forgiving, and willing to sacrifice for others. Come be the King of our hearts and home and teach us to truly live as God’s children. Amen.



“But assuredly among those things which properly pertain to the worship of the Most Sacred Heart, a special place must be given to that consecration, whereby we **DEVOTE OURSELVES** and all things that are ours to the **DIVINE HEART OF JESUS**, acknowledging that we have **RECEIVED ALL THINGS** from the everlasting love of God.” — Pope Pius XI, *Miserentissimus Redemptor* 4

CONSECRATION THROUGH MARY

1.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS & PRAY TOGETHER:

All for the Sacred and Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, all through the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, all in union with St. Joseph. Amen.



2.

READ:

Jesus gave us Mary as our mother, at the foot of the Cross, when He said, "Woman, behold your son," and "Behold your mother" (John 19:26-27). He also gave her all the gifts she would need to be our true mother. Just as she protected, loved, and nurtured Jesus, Mary will protect, love, and nurture the life of Jesus in us. "All graces

come to us through her, just as Our Lord Himself came through her," St. Maximilian Kolbe wrote. Through Mary, we can also offer everything we are or do back to Jesus. She will purify, sanctify, and embellish our gift. "As soon as her pure hands touch the offerings of her children they cleanse them, make them perfect. She makes them much more beautiful by adorning them with her own perfections," wrote St. Louis de Montfort in *True Devotion to Mary* (64).



3.

TALK ABOUT:

- How can we say that Mary is our mother?
- What can Mary do for us?
- How does Mary help the life of Jesus to grow in us?
- What does Mary do when we give our good works to Jesus through her?

4.

READ:

Today, we are going to pray a decade of the Rosary in honor of Mother Mary. As we pray, think about the mystery of the wedding at Cana, when Mary told the servants, "Do whatever he tells you" (John 2:5). We can ask Mary to help us do God's will like she did.

5.

SAY THE ROSARY:

- Pass out a rosary to each family member.
- Light the candle.
- Say a decade of the Rosary. Take turns leading the prayers. (Ex: Dad leads the Our Father, the children lead the Hail Marys, Mom leads the Glory Be.)
- Collect the rosaries and place them on the family altar.

6.

PRAY:

Blessed Mother, thank you for protecting, nurturing, and forming Jesus within our souls. We thank you for giving us all the graces we need to grow in our identity as God's children. We entrust all our prayers, good works, and sufferings to you. Please make them pleasing to your Son, Jesus. Amen.



“I would like to recall, among the many witnesses and teachers of this [Marian] spirituality, the figure of Saint Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort, who proposes **CONSECRATION TO CHRIST THROUGH THE HANDS OF MARY**, as an effective means for Christians to live faithfully their baptismal commitments.”

— Pope St. John Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater* 48

CONSECRATION IN UNION WITH ST. JOSEPH

1.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS & PRAY TOGETHER:

All for the Sacred and Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, all through the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, all in union with St. Joseph. Amen.

2.

READ:

St. Joseph lived in the presence of Jesus and Mary throughout his life. Because of his role as father of the Holy Family, he knows how to live in union with Jesus and Mary more than any other saint. Scripture tells us that St. Joseph was “a righteous man” (Matt 1:19), who always did what was virtuous. “Virtue is a habitual and firm disposition to do good” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1833). How many virtues can we name?

3.

MAKE A LIST OF VIRTUES:

- Write down a list of virtues as you discuss them.
- Place your list on the family altar, or hang it in a place where all the family members will see it (ex: on the bathroom mirror).

4.

READ:

St. Joseph was the first person to consecrate himself to Jesus through Mary, explains Fr. Stanley Smolenski (*St. Joseph's Place in the Third Millennium*). As we strive to live our baptismal consecration, we can look to St. Joseph as our example of virtue, spiritual father, protector, and guide. On earth, he protected and guided the Holy Family. Now in Heaven, he protects and guides our family and the entire Mystical Body of Christ, the Church. The protection of St. Joseph and the tender care of Mother Mary help the life of Jesus to grow within us, so that we can become more and more like Him.



5.

PREPARE A PLACE FOR THE HOLY FAMILY:

- Carpenter's tools are often used as symbols for St. Joseph.
- Measure and place the nail, screw, or other hardware in the wall where you will hang the Holy Family of Fatima portrait. (Have a statue? Skip this part.)
- Measure and place the hardware for your Family Consecration certificate.

6.

AS YOU PREPARE A PLACE FOR THE PORTRAIT, TALK ABOUT:

- Why can we look to St. Joseph as an example?
- What can he teach us?
- How can St. Joseph help us to live our baptismal consecration?

7.

PRAY:

Dear St. Joseph, thank you for being our spiritual father, guide, and model of virtue. Just as you watched over the Holy Family, watch over and protect our family from spiritual harm and help us to do all things for God's glory. Amen.

“Some saints are privileged to extend to us their patronage with particular efficacy in certain needs, but not in others; but our holy patron **ST. JOSEPH HAS THE POWER TO ASSIST US IN ALL CASES**, in every necessity, in every undertaking.” — *St. Thomas Aquinas*

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

1.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS & PRAY TOGETHER:

All for the Sacred and Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, all through the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, all in union with St. Joseph. Amen.

2.

READ:

Through Baptism, we were consecrated to God. This sacrament gave each of us a share in Jesus' life and called us to live in our new identity as children of God.

3.

DRAW:

- Each family member can draw their own picture, or you can draw one together.
- Write "Life of Jesus through Baptism" in the middle of your paper and draw a circle around it.
- Draw another circle around that one and label it "Me."

4.

READ:

We can renew our baptismal consecration and fully choose to live it by making a personal act of consecration to Jesus, through Mary, in union with St. Joseph. Our whole family can make the consecration together, because it is within the family that each person's identity as a child of God is discovered and nurtured.



5.

DRAW:

- Draw a third circle around the others.
- Label it "Our family."

6.

READ:

Jesus, our Savior and model, lives in us. Because Jesus lives in us, Mary and Joseph become our true spiritual parents. They are there to protect and nurture the life of Jesus in us as we seek to live our consecration.

7.

DRAW:

- Draw a fourth circle around the others.
- Label this circle "Holy Family."

8.

READ:

The Holy Family lived an ordinary but virtuous life together in Nazareth. We can look to them as a model for how to live a holy family life and relate to one another with love.

9.

PRAY:

Heavenly Father, thank You for consecrating us and making us Your children through Baptism. We ask You to bless us as we prepare to ratify our baptismal promises by making an act of consecration to Your Son Jesus, through Mary, in union with St. Joseph. Give us the grace to be faithful in our commitment to You. Amen.



“The Holy Family is the beginning of **COUNTLESS OTHER** holy families.”

— Pope St. John Paul II, Letter to Families 23

CONSECRATION & ENTHRONEMENT CEREMONY

1.

PREPARE:

- Light the candle.
- Pass out the Holy Family of Fatima prayer cards (included in your kit).

2.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS & PRAY TOGETHER:

All for the Sacred and Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, all through the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, all in union with St. Joseph. Amen.

3.

READ:

A reading from the Gospel according to John: "I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. Consecrate them in the truth. Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I sent them into the world. And I consecrate myself for them, so that they also may be consecrated in truth." The Gospel of the Lord.

REPLY:

Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

4.

ENTHRONE THE FAMILY BIBLE:

Place it reverently on the altar.





5.

ENTHRONE THE HOLY FAMILY:

Reverently hang your image of the Holy Family of Fatima on the wall in the place prepared. (If you have a statue, place it reverently on the altar.)

6.

TOGETHER, RECITE THE CONSECRATION PRAYER:

The consecration prayer can be found on the back of the Holy Family of Fatima prayer cards.

Lord Jesus, Your hidden years with Your Blessed Mother and St. Joseph at Nazareth showed us the beauty of the community of life and love that the family is meant to be. You taught us the value of selfless love, humble obedience, and silent sacrifice. You showed us how to sanctify the daily give-and-take of family life.

Today, we, the members of the _____ family, publicly acknowledge You as the true Head of our family and the King of our home. We pledge ourselves to model our family after the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph of Nazareth.

We consecrate to You, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Your Mother, in union with St. Joseph, our work, our play, our sorrows, and our joys, along with our interior and exterior possessions, including the value of our good actions—past, present, and future. This is the covenant we make with You, Lord.

In return, Lord Jesus, we ask You to bless and protect us, keeping us ever faithful to this covenant, and helping us to sanctify our lives by faithfully fulfilling the responsibility of each present moment only for Your glory.

Jesus, King of Families, come and reign over our family!

Mary, Queen of Families, take possession of our hearts!

St. Joseph, Protector of Families, help us to be absorbed in and reflect the love of the Holy Family!

7.

SIGN YOUR CERTIFICATE:

- Each family member should sign the consecration certificate, as a reminder of the covenant that you have made with the Holy Family.
- If one of your children is too young to write their name, another family member can sign for them. Frame and place the certificate on the family altar, or hang it near the image of the Holy Family.

8.

PRAY THE ROSARY



The Twelve Promises of the Sacred Heart to St. Margaret Mary

- 1) I will give them the graces necessary in their state of life.
- 2) I will establish peace in their families.
- 3) I will comfort them in all of their afflictions.
- 4) I will be their secure refuge during life, and above all in death.
- 5) I will bestow a large blessing upon all their undertakings.
- 6) Sinners shall find in My Heart the source and the infinite ocean of mercy.
- 7) Tepid souls shall grow fervent.
- 8) Fervent souls shall quickly mount to high perfection.
- 9) I will bless every place where a picture of My Heart shall be set up and honored.
- 10) I will give to the priests the gift of touching the most hardened hearts.
- 11) Those who shall promote this devotion shall have their names written in My Heart, never to be blotted out.
- 12) I promise you in the excessive mercy of My Heart that My all-powerful love will grant to all those who communicate on the First Friday in nine consecutive months the grace of final penitence; they shall not die in My disgrace nor without receiving the sacraments; My Divine Heart shall be their safe refuge in this last moment.



LIVING OUT YOUR CONSECRATION

Family Consecration is more than a one-time event. It's a joyful, balanced way of life. Living out your consecration means striving to live as a child of God. It means seeking to allow the life of Jesus to grow within you, so that you can become more like Him.

We recommend renewing your consecration every day. This helps you to remember and live your commitment in daily life. Here's a simple prayer you can pray to renew your consecration.

DAILY PRAYER TO RENEW YOUR CONSECRATION

All for the Sacred and Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, all through the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, all in union with St. Joseph. Amen.

SEVEN KEYS TO GOD-CENTERED FAMILY LIVING

To live out your consecration, we suggest you focus on seven aspects of being Catholic. We like to call these the Seven Keys to God-Centered Family Living.

1.

KEY 1: PRAYER LIFE

BUILDING A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Daily prayer helps each family member to build their personal relationship with God and more deeply embrace their identity as His child. Family members should pray together and individually. In particular, the AFC recommends the daily family Rosary and a few minutes of reading and reflection on Sacred Scripture. As Venerable Fr. Patrick Peyton said, "The family that prays together stays together."

Learn more: *Familiaris Consortio* 59–62

2.

KEY 2: SACRAMENTAL LIFE

GROWING IN GRACE

The sacraments give special grace to grow in holiness and union with God. The AFC encourages families to go to Mass (at least on Sundays and holy days of obligation), Eucharistic Adoration, and Confession—to increase in the life of grace and to worship Our Eucharistic Lord in union with the whole Church.

Learn more: *Catechism of the Catholic Church* Part Two

3.

KEY 3: LEARNING THE FAITH*KNOWING GOD HELPS US TO LOVE HIM*

Learning the truths of the Catholic Faith helps families to grow in love of God. Knowledge of the Faith also protects families from the false values of the world and equips them to more confidently defend, live, and share the Faith with others. To learn the Faith, spend 10–20 minutes each week studying the Catechism as a family, or talk about a faith topic during dinner.

Learn more: *The Apostolate's Family Catechism*, online at AFC.org

4.

KEY 4: LIVING THE VIRTUES*FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE LEAD TO FREEDOM AND UNITY*

The graces received through prayer, the sacraments, and learning the Faith, empower families to live a life of virtue. As they grow in faith, hope, and love, families are led to greater unity, peace, and freedom.

Learn more: *Catechism of the Catholic Church 1803–1845*

5.

KEY 5: SERVING OTHERS*PUTTING LOVE INTO ACTION*

Serving others, both in the home and outside the home, is one of the best ways families can express their faith and love for God. By putting their love for each other and those around them into action, families satisfy Jesus' thirst for love.

Learn more: *Evangelii Nuntiandi 70–72*

6.

KEY 6: SHARING THE FAITH*ANSWERING THE CALL TO MAKE DISCIPLES*

Families that have deepened their union with God are inspired to evangelize by leading others to an encounter with Jesus. Sharing the Faith can take many forms, such as sharing one's testimony, opening up the home to others, and treating everyone with charity.

Learn more: *Familiaris Consortio 53–54*

7.

KEY 7: SANCTIFYING DAILY DUTIES*OFFERING UP EACH MOMENT "ALL FOR" THE HOLY FAMILY*

By embracing and joyfully offering the present moment to God, each family member can sanctify their daily duties and help to repair for sin. That way, when confronted with trials or difficulties, the family can remain at peace, recognizing that everything is either willed or permitted by God and that He draws good out of everything.

Learn more: Sanctifying Daily Duties video, online at AFC.org/family-consecration/

IDEAS FOR HOW TO LIVE

THE SEVEN KEYS TO GOD-CENTERED FAMILY LIVING

KEY 1: PRAYER LIFE

- Pray the daily Rosary as a family.
- Spend 10 minutes a day quietly reading the Bible. Reflect on what you read.
- Learn and practice mental prayer. (See 10 Steps to Mental Prayer included in kit.)

KEY 2: SACRAMENTAL LIFE

- Make a short visit to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.
- Go to Confession together.
- Spend a few minutes after Mass cherishing the gift of Our Lord in the Eucharist.

KEY 3: LEARNING THE FAITH

- After Mass, talk about what you heard in the readings and the homily.
- Read one question from *The Apostolate's Family Catechism* each week. (Online at AFC.org.)
- Memorize a new Scripture verse weekly (or monthly).

KEY 4: LIVING THE VIRTUES

- Make one conscious act of gratitude each day.
- Make an act of trust or surrender to Our Lord, accepting everything that He allows to happen.
- Forgive and pray for a person who has wronged you.

KEY 5: SERVING OTHERS

- Do an act of love for one of your family members. See if you can keep it a secret.
- Volunteer at or donate to a ministry that serves the poor.
- Invite a new family in your parish or neighborhood over for dinner.

KEY 6: SHARING THE FAITH

- Smile and say "hello" to someone you wouldn't normally talk to.
- Invite someone who doesn't practice the Faith to come to Church with your family.
- Teach your children a new prayer.

KEY 7: SANCTIFYING DAILY DUTIES

- Try to do your work or chores without complaining.
- Throughout the day, make a conscious effort to offer each task to Jesus.
- Call to mind Jesus' presence with you before you respond to another person.

PARISH CONSECRATION TO THE HOLY FAMILY

PREPARATION

The topics and activities covered in this book can be adapted into a seven-day parish mission, or a seven-week homily series, in order to prepare the parish family for consecration to the Holy Family. The daily topics could also be grouped together to shorten the number of days needed for preparation within the parish (ex: days 1–3, days 4–6, and days 7–8).

At the conclusion of the time of preparation, a consecration ceremony can take place and the image of the Holy Family can be enthroned in the church. A copy of the image can also be blessed and given to each family to enthrone at home.

CONSECRATION CEREMONY

Priest: Dear brothers and sisters, the Lord has inspired us to entrust our parish and consecrate ourselves wholly to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, in union with St. Joseph. We are enthroning the image of the Holy Family to inspire us to live our lives as reflections of the Holy Family. We are consecrating ourselves to live as sons and daughters of God and to be for all our brothers and sisters a light and an example of Christian life so we can become better instruments of His grace for the conversion and sanctification of all our community. Do you here wish, therefore, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to do this consecration?

All: Yes, we do.





RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES

Priest: This act of consecration will lead us to live our Baptism fully. For this reason we now renew the promises that our parents and godparents made for us.

- Do you reject sin, so as to live in the freedom of God's children?
- Do you reject the glamor of evil, and refuse to be mastered by sin?
- Do you reject Satan, father of sin and prince of darkness?
- Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?
- Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead and is seated at the right hand of the Father?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

After each question, the parishioners reply: I do!

OUR PARISH'S COVENANT WITH THE HOLY FAMILY

The consecration prayer can be found on the back of the Holy Family of Fatima prayer cards.

All: Lord Jesus, Your hidden years with Your Blessed Mother and St. Joseph showed us the beauty of the community of life and love that the family is meant to be. You taught us the value of selfless love, humble obedience, and silent sacrifice. You showed us how to sanctify the daily give-and-take of family life.

Today, we, the members of the _____ parish family, publicly acknowledge You as the true Head of our families and the King of our homes. We pledge ourselves to model our families after the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph of Nazareth.

(Continued on next page)

We consecrate to You, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Your Mother, in union with St. Joseph, our parish, our schools, our work, our play, our sorrows, and our joys, along with our interior and exterior possessions, including the value of our good actions—past, present, and future. This is the covenant we make with You, Lord.

In return, Lord Jesus, we ask You to bless and protect us, keeping us ever faithful to this covenant, and helping us to sanctify our lives by faithfully fulfilling the responsibility of each present moment for Your glory.

Jesus, King of Families, King of our Church, come reign over us!

Mary, Queen of Families, Queen of our Church, take possession of our hearts!

St. Joseph, Protector of Families, Patron of our Church, help us to be absorbed in and reflect the love of the Holy Family!

Amen.

BLESSING OF THE HOLY FAMILY PORTRAIT

Priest: Let us pray: Almighty and merciful God, who through the apparitions at Fatima and the final vision of the Holy Family, has deigned to work great wonders on earth, bless these images, so that all who honor them in love and veneration might enjoy Your protection and gain Your mercy. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Priest: Receive this holy image, enthrone it in your homes with faith, and venerate it with love.

All: Amen.

A Holy Family of Fatima portrait is given to each family in the parish. The family should take the image home and enthrone it in a place of honor.

ABOUT THE HOLY FAMILY OF FATIMA IMAGE

DEPICTS A VISION FROM OUR LADY'S OCTOBER 13, 1917 APPARITION AT FATIMA

In 1917, the Blessed Mother appeared six times to three children—Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta—in Fatima, Portugal. She came on the thirteenth of each month, asking people to repent of their sins, do penance, and pray the Rosary.

This special image of the Holy Family, commissioned by AFC founder Jerome Coniker, depicts a vision that the children of Fatima saw during the final apparition on October 13, 1917. On that day, a phenomenon known as the “Miracle of the Sun” took place. During the “Miracle of the Sun,” the sun seemed to swirl in the sky, flooding the entire plateau of Fatima, Portugal with great shafts of color. The sun then appeared to plummet towards the earth, and many of the over 70,000 people present thought that it was the end of the world.

At the same time, the children of Fatima saw the following vision, as described by Sr. Lucia:

“When our Lady disappeared in the immense distance of the sky, next to the sun, we saw St. Joseph holding the child Jesus and Our Lady dressed in white with a blue mantle. St. Joseph and the child seemed to be blessing the world, making the Sign of the Cross” (Letter from Sr. Lucia to her Bishop, December 8, 1941, Tuy, Spain).

APPROVED BY SR. LUCIA, ONE OF THE FATIMA VISIONARIES

Jerome Coniker, founder of the Apostolate for Family Consecration, with permission granted by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, personally talked with Sr. Lucia on December 12, 2001. He asked for and received her blessing on the painting of the Holy Family of Fatima. During the half-hour interview, Mr. Coniker explained to her that the portrait, with additional symbolism, was meant to illustrate the October 13, 1917 apparition of the Holy Family.

Sr. Lucia noticed some of the added symbolism—the back of the Miraculous Medal on the breast of St. Joseph, the rays of Divine Mercy coming from the Heart of the Infant Jesus, and Our Lady stepping on the serpent. She acknowledged that it was a nice combination of prophecy, tradition, and the reality of Fatima, and that as best as is humanly possible, it was a faithful representation of the Holy Family. Two copies of the image were given to Sr. Lucia for her keeping.

SYMBOLISM OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

The image of the Sacred and Eucharistic Heart of Jesus is at the center of the portrait. When Our Lord explained the Twelve Promises of His Sacred Heart to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, He said that He would “bless every place where a picture of My Heart shall be set up and honored.”

The same love that comes from the Sacred Heart is granted to us in Holy Communion, which is symbolized by the Eucharist encircling the Sacred Heart. Rays of Divine Mercy pour forth from the Sacred Heart, reminding us of the vision of Our Lord to St. Faustina, an apparition that Pope St. John Paul II held up to the entire Church, in which Our Lord asked that His Divine Mercy image be venerated.

SYMBOLISM OF OUR BLESSED MOTHER MARY

In the October 13, 1917 apparition, Our Lady also revealed herself as Our Lady of the Rosary, Our Lady of Sorrows, and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. In this portrait, the Rosary and the Scapular in her left hand remind us of Our Lady of the Rosary and of Mt. Carmel. These symbols summarize the message of Fatima, when Our Lady specifically asked that we pray the Rosary every day, wear the Brown Scapular, and practice the Five First Saturdays devotion as a way to make reparation to her Immaculate Heart. Mary's Heart pierced with the sword of sorrow depicts Our Lady of Sorrows (cf. Luke 2:35), who suffers in union with her Son for our sins.

The Scapular is the sign of our consecration to Jesus through Mary and is an act of faith when worn with reverence. The family Rosary is the primary prayer that will protect the family. The Rosary becomes a window through which we can see, with eyes of faith, the interior life of the Holy Family and the principal mysteries of our Faith.

The Fatima message is the formula for drawing down Divine Mercy. Once enough families live this message and are consecrated to Jesus through Mary in the truths of our Faith, and live these truths with great fervor, the era of peace promised by Our Lady of Fatima will be granted to the world.

Mary standing on the world and stepping on the head of the serpent (cf. Gen 3:15) reminds us of the image on the front of the Immaculate Conception medal, popularly known as the Miraculous Medal.

SYMBOLISM OF ST. JOSEPH

The reverse side of the Miraculous Medal (a cross intertwined with an "M" and the two Hearts of Jesus and Mary, encircled by twelve stars) is shown on the breast of St. Joseph. This symbolizes his love for the Hearts of Jesus and Mary and his protection over the Church, indicated by the twelve stars representing the twelve Apostles.



“WHOEVER VENERATES A HOLY IMAGE VENERATES THE PERSON PORTRAYED. THIS VENERATION OF MARY AND THE SAINTS—AND IMAGES OF THEM—DIFFERS FROM THE ADORATION THAT BELONGS TO GOD ALONE.”

—UNITED STATES CATHOLIC CATECHISM FOR ADULTS 344

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ABOUT THE AFC

OUR HISTORY

Our ministry was founded in 1975 by Jerry and Servant of God Gwen Coniker, parents of thirteen. As they raised their children, the Conikers looked for support in the Faith, but found little to help them live a holy Catholic family life. Through their experience, the Conikers recognized a call from God to support other Catholic families to grow in holiness, so they started the Apostolate for Family Consecration (AFC).

OUR MISSION

The Apostolate for Family Consecration supports and challenges Catholic families to grow in holiness, grow in truth, and grow together, so that they can become fully alive in Christ.

Through our events ministry and online formation, we lead families to an encounter with Jesus and accompany them in their journey of faith. Every day, our celibate members, married members, youth missionaries, and devoted staff pray and work for families. We want families to be holy and happy!

OUR MESSAGE: FAMILY CONSECRATION

Holiness leads to happiness, the true happiness for which you were created: union with God. One way your family can grow in holiness is to renew your baptismal promises through an act of consecration to Jesus, through Mary, in union with St. Joseph and to live that consecration every day. The Seven Keys to God-Centered Family Living form a pathway to follow on the journey to eternal happiness with God in Heaven.

SEVEN KEYS TO GOD-CENTERED FAMILY LIVING

1. PRAYER LIFE
2. SACRAMENTAL LIFE
3. LEARNING THE FAITH
4. LIVING THE VIRTUES
5. SERVING OTHERS
6. SHARING THE FAITH
7. SANCTIFYING DAILY DUTIES

This spirituality of Family Consecration is *one of the best ways we know of for families to grow in holiness* and become fully alive in Christ!

To learn more about our ministry, visit AFC.org.

