

Why is this Important? A Call to Action

- Studies show the impact a father's influence has on the future spiritual lives of his children. **Only 2% of children will attend** Church regularly as an adult if their father did not go to Church. This compares to the almost **80% who will attend** Church as an adult if their father went to Church regularly.¹
- The Bible gives instructions for men to raise children in the faith. (Eph 6:4). We are to **"recite God's words** when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you get up... Write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your gates" (Dt 6:6-9).
- The Catholic Church emphasizes the importance of raising children in the faith. **"The right and the duty** of parents to educate their children are primordial and inalienable."²

Characteristics of Men as Spiritual Leaders

- In order to be a spiritual leader, one must **know the faith** and be able to explain it. It is important to be visibly engaged in the faith and to actively participate in the sacraments.
- Husbands **love your wives** as Christ loved the church. Sacrifice to her in marriage. The institution of marriage is ordered to the procreation and education of the offspring and it is in them that it finds its crowning glory.²
- Being a **servant-leader**—Strive to be like Christ: kind, gentle, compassionate, humble, forgiving, and strong. "The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve" (Mt 20:28).
- **Protects his family**—As today's culture unceasingly attacks the family, there needs to be protection not only from physical danger but from cultural threats, such as harmful media.

How to Be a Spiritual Leader for Your Family

- **Pray with your wife**—Bring God into your marriage
- **Pray with your children**
- **Lead Family to Mass** each Sunday
- **Sing at Mass**—Singing is praying twice and gives visible witness to your engagement
- **Lead prayer** before each meal
- **Discuss faith** as a family
- **Lead the family in service** and outreach, demonstrating the importance of helping others
- **Leading the family spiritually** is not the sole responsibility of the father nor the mother. Both are intended to lead together

PRAYER

Heavenly Father,
Grant me the strength, courage,
and wisdom to lead my family to
your heavenly gates.

Lord Jesus,
Teach me to sacrifice myself for my
family and walk alongside me as
I lead them closer to your kingdom.

Holy Spirit,
Dwell in me and counsel me so that
I may fulfill my duties as husband
and father.

I pray that I can be a witness to men
in this world that as for me and my
house, we will serve the Lord.

St. Joseph, patron saint of husbands
and fathers, pray for us.



More Information

For more reading, check out the Catechism, specifically paragraphs 2221-2226 and 1652-1660, as well as Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation on love in the family, paragraphs 176-177. Both of these are accessible online.

Sources

1. Werner Haug; Phillipe Warner (Jan 2000). "IV. The demographic characteristics of linguistic and religious groups in Switzerland." The Demographic Characteristics of National Minorities in Certain European States. Population Studies No. 31. Volume 2. Germany: Council of Europe. p.154.
2. Catechism of the Catholic Church. Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1994.

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EXPECTATIONS OF MEN AS SPIRITUAL LEADERS

Why is it important for men
to be spiritual leaders of
their families?

What does it mean to be a
spiritual leader?

How can you be a spiritual
leader for your family?



Look inside for these answers and more!