

Adapting Family Catechesis in these Times

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Engaging Families During These Times



*In every crisis
lies the seed
of opportunity*

A crisis is defined as:

a crucial or decisive point or situation —
a turning point

- Depending on the **crisis**, it **could** be the **opportunity** to undertake new thoughts and implement alternate strategies

“In times of profound change,
the learners inherit the earth,
while the learned
find themselves
beautifully equipped to deal
with a world
that no longer exists.”
- *Eric Hoffer*



This time poses the greatest leadership crisis any of us have faced. It can be a moment of amazing creativity, though it also is going to be a time of unavoidable pain and loss. We will discover that while many resources are suddenly unavailable to us, the most essential resource is still available, and the most important reality has not changed. The reality is that God has called us to a time like this, given us a mission and a community to serve alongside, and **we still have the most important resource, which is trust in the context of love.** Everything depends on how quickly and thoroughly we move to build on that resource, starting today.

(Andy Crouch, Kurt Keilhacker, Dave Blanchard)

“Religious education continues in different format during pandemic”

One thing diocesan and parish leaders do not want to do at this time is add a home-school religious education dimension to parents who are already overseeing their children’s online school learning and juggling working at home or, conversely, the challenges of being furloughed or unemployed



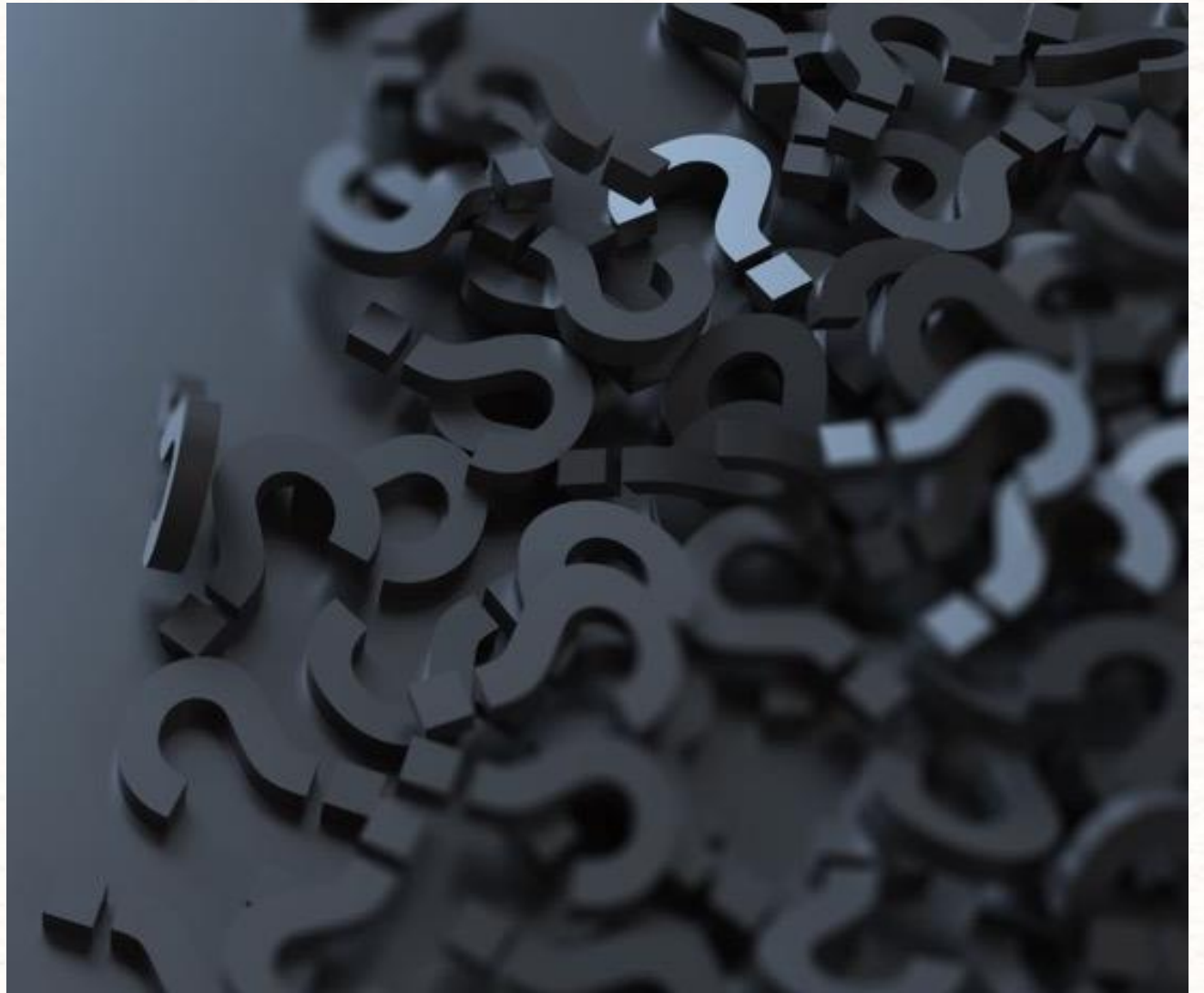
Carol Zimmermann, Apr 26, 2020
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

**HOME SCHOOLING
UPDATE:**

MY CHILD JUST SAID

**I HOPE I DON'T
HAVE THE SAME
TEACHER NEXT YEAR**

Questions & Uncertainties



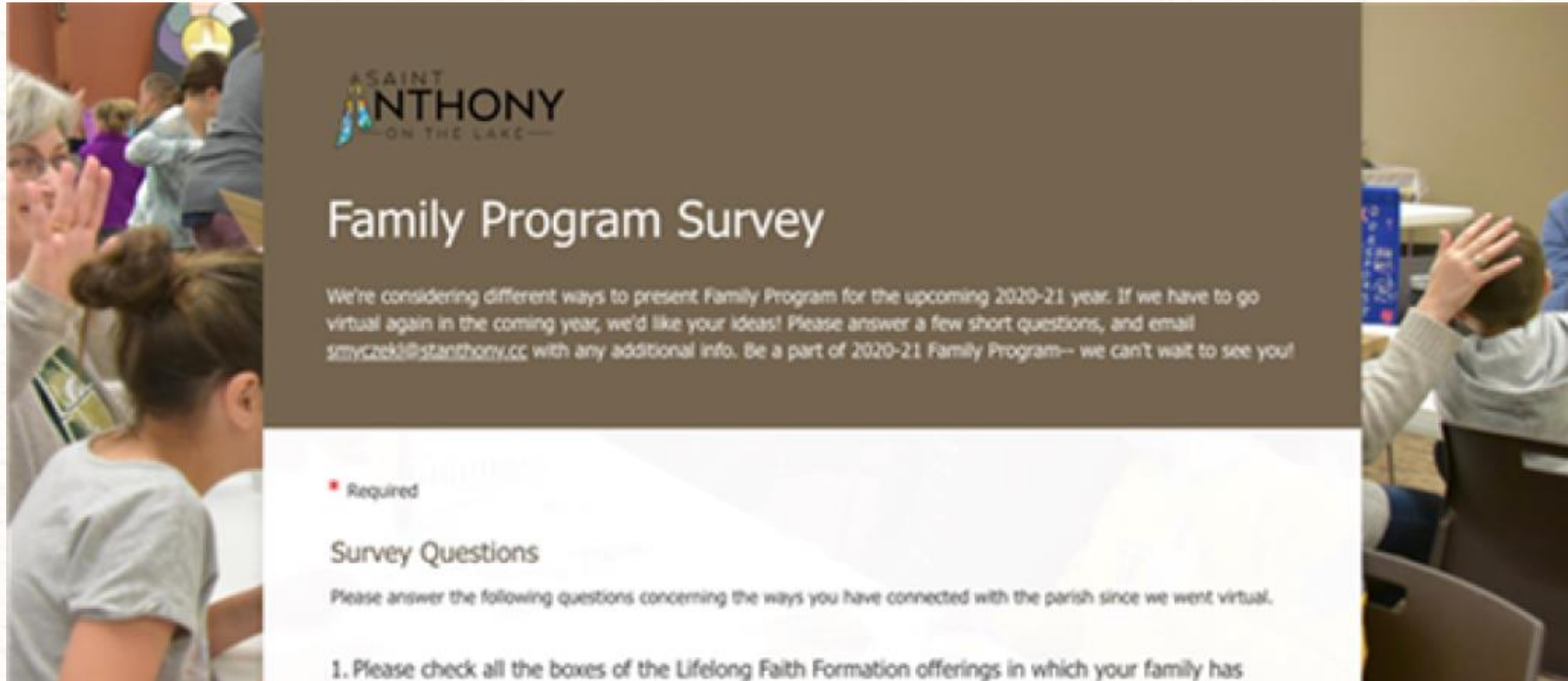
What is Constellation Planning?

Think of the sky full of many stars! Looking for a constellation is a way to make meaningful connections in that sea of stars. In knowing and looking for the organizational pattern of certain stars we make meaning out of the sky.

Consider multiple ways, a constellation of strategies, to engage your families.

- Layer your plans
- Prioritize the importance of an ongoing process to assess how effective are the strategies
- Continually consult with parents with children, the age in your ministry
- Be prepared to adapt if health conditions change or methods need adaptations

Assessing Your Efforts



SAINT ANTHONY
ON THE LAKE

Family Program Survey

We're considering different ways to present Family Program for the upcoming 2020-21 year. If we have to go virtual again in the coming year, we'd like your ideas! Please answer a few short questions, and email smyczek@stanthony.cc with any additional info. Be a part of 2020-21 Family Program-- we can't wait to see you!

Required

Survey Questions

Please answer the following questions concerning the ways you have connected with the parish since we went virtual.

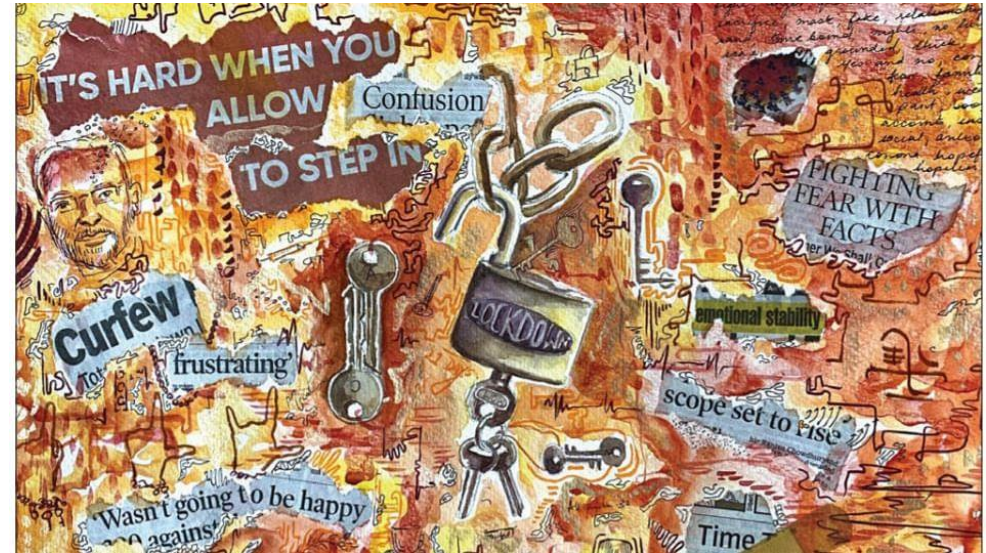
1. Please check all the boxes of the Lifelong Faith Formation offerings in which your family has



Blizzard, Winter,
or Ice Age?

Grieving or Coming to Grips with Reality

- Certainty to Uncertainty
- Tested Answers to New Questions
- Loyal Followers to Adventurers
- Managing Numbers to Seeking New Friends
- Inviting, Inviting, Inviting!



Opportunities? Adaptations?

If you were intentionally physically engaging families... How will you continue?

How will you adapt to:

- Social distancing
- Group size
- Safety protocols
- Cleaning and disinfecting procedures
- Entering and exiting
- Materials

...And how will we remain
effective, engaging and relevant?



AND JUST LIKE THAT



HOMESCHOOLING BECAME MANDATORY

imgflip.com

In Home Formation

Material sent home or explained over email or internet that family does as a family unit at home.

Opportunities:

- Easiest to implement
- Controllable
- Can insure comprehensiveness

Challenges:

- Can be difficult to assess effectiveness
- Can be challenging to motivate a family to take the time to implement
- Don't know if it engaged family or just parent /child?

MIDDLE SCHOOL MINISTRY CONTINUES!

Keep your Middle School Youth connected to our faith community even while you stay Safe at Home.

- Weekly Zoom Meetings for fun
- Weekly Bible Study Zoom Meetings
- Resources





YDISCIPLINE

Easter Season at Home Rosary - Pray

LEARN!



About the history
& meaning
of the Rosary.

ACT!



Make a Rosary
at home.

PRAY!



Pray the Rosary with
Parishioners.
Choose the
mysteries of the day.

Supplies:
*1 ft length of yarn
for each person

Worry Knots Prayer Activity

Read 1 Peter 5:7

“Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.”

Consider how amazing this verse is: God, the Creator of the universe, loves you so much that you are invited to "give all your worries and cares over to God." Take a few moments and think of all the worries and concerns in your life. For each situation or person you are worried about, tie a prayer knot in your yarn.

Hear these words from Jesus: “I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid” (John 14:27). Jesus also said, “Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?...So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today” (Matthew 6:27, 34).

Pray. Be still.

If you are able, untie your knots as a symbol of letting go of these worries and concerns and leaving them in God’s capable hands.

Keep your string in your pocket and repeat these steps as needed.

FamilyMinistryTools.Org





Near and Far

How Do We Stay Connected?"





Staying Near to God



NEAR & FAR: How Do We Stay Connected?

Appreciation & Affirmation

Every day, show your child how much you love them with your **WORDS**, with your **TOUCH** & with your **THOUGHTFULNESS**.

WORDS:

- ~ Remember that how you say something is as important as what you say.
- ~ Never waste an opportunity to tell someone that you love them.
- ~ Find opportunities and ways to compliment your family members at least 2x per week.
- ~ When talking about your family members, be positive and enthusiastic.
- ~ Tell your children often how terrific they are and that you trust them.
- ~ Tell your spouse that they're your best friend... and mean it... and treat them that way.
- ~ When you arrive home from work, let the first thing you say brighten a family member's day!
- ~ Let your children & spouse hear you saying complimentary things about them to others.
- ~ Compliment even small improvements.
- ~ Whenever you say I love you, look the other person in the eye and mean it.
- ~ Encourage anyone who is trying to improve mentally, spiritually or physically.
- ~ Write a letter of affirmation every birthday, or keep a journal for your children as they grow up.
- ~ Mail your loved one a note of appreciation, but cut up the note like a jigsaw puzzle.

TOUCH:

- ~ Hold your child's hand every chance you get. The time will come all too soon when he/she won't let you.
- ~ No matter how old you get, hug and kiss your mother whenever you see her.
- ~ Give homemade coupons for hugs, and tell them to use them whenever they want.
- ~ Take your loved one's hand and plant a kiss in their palm. Tell them it's for use any time they feel alone.

THOUGHTFULNESS:

- ~ Save an evening a week for your spouse/children/family.
- ~ Attend your children's athletic events, plays and recitals... and find the good in them.
- ~ Use a favorite picture of a loved one as a bookmark. Tell them about it and let them help you pick it out.
- ~ Remember that no time spent with your family is ever wasted.
- ~ Every year, celebrate the day you and your spouse had your first date.
- ~ Let your children see things you do for your spouse that lets them know how much you treasure him/her.
- ~ Buy a favorite snack/beverage/song to share. Stream a favorite movie.
- ~ Do a family member's chore for them as a gesture of appreciation.
- ~ Get up extra early one morning and take a family member out to breakfast for one-on-one time together.
- ~ Set up a scavenger hunt in your house where your family member tracks down clues to find a special gift.

God, we ask you to move our hearts to help us to listen to our children, communicate with our children, teach our children right from wrong and be a good role model for them, educate our children in mind, body and soul, work to provide a stable family life for our children, pray for—and see God in—our children and in all children, and speak out for my and other people's children's needs. Amen.



HOPE IS A
MUSCLE

Fr. James Keller, M.M., Founder, The Christophers

Hope looks for the good in people instead of harping on the worst.
Hope opens doors where despair closes them.
Hope discovers what can be done instead of grumbling about what cannot.
Hope draws its power from a deep trust in God and the basic goodness of human nature.
Hope 'lights a candle' instead of 'cursing the darkness.'
Hope regards problems -- small or large -- as opportunities.
Hope cherishes no illusions, nor does it yield to cynicism.
Hope sets big goals and is not frustrated by repeated difficulties or setbacks.
Hope pushes a head when it would be easy to quit.
Hope puts up with modest gains, realizing that 'the longest journey starts with one step.'
Hope accepts misunderstandings as the price for serving the greater good of others.
Hope is a good loser because it has the divine assurance of final victory.

Reflection Questions

1. What does hope mean to you? What does hope look like?
2. How does it look for a life to be "hopeless?" What would a hopeless world look like?
3. What robs YOU of hope?
4. When was the last time you felt hopeful? How did it feel?
5. Who/what makes you feel hopeful right now?
6. How can you cultivate moments of hope in your life?
7. How can you honor your hope in small ways, even when it's hard?
8. Who is someone in your life who needs your hope?
9. What is it about today's world that makes you most long for hope?
10. What inspires your hope in God and God's future?

HOPE IS A MUSCLE

- Share one small "next step" that you feel God is calling you to take in the next 7 days.
- Take action this week to write down ways you see God on display in your life.
- Pray that God puts you in the path of someone so you can point them to the real hope of God.
- Look for ways to bless others around you.

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

-Jeremiah 29:11

REJOICE IN HOPE,
BE PATIENT IN TRIBULATION,
BE CONSTANT IN PRAYER.

~ROMANS 12:12

Classic Models

Gathered

Families gather in groups as large allowed by directives with accommodations to safe social distancing

- May present challenging logistics
- But shows evidence of effectiveness

Virtual

Using digital tools for effective online programming: synchronous (real time programming) and asynchronous

- May be challenging technology
- Avoids safety issues

Small Group Gathered- Match families in predetermined pairs or small groups (3-10 families) to work together on activity or session the parish designs

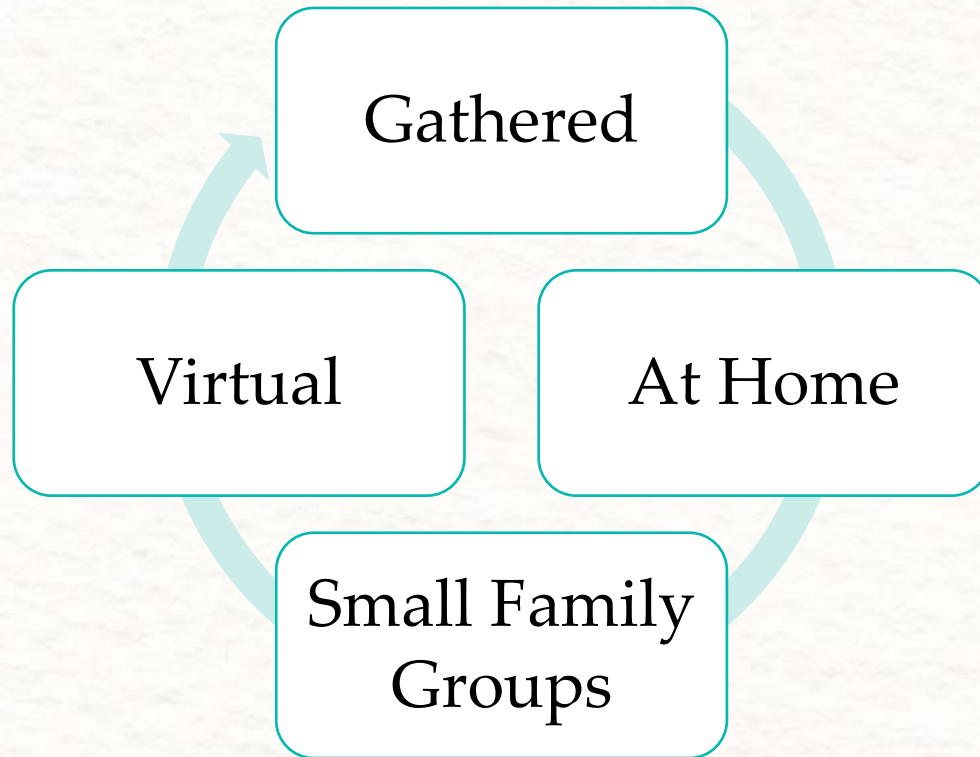
Small Group Gathered

- Predetermine groupings – will require planning
- Catechetical leader designs session
- Will more likely to be effective if designated facilitator
- Can be achieved considering small groups within large group

Small Group Virtual

- Predetermine groupings- will require planning
- Catechetical leader designs session
- Will more likely to be effective if designated facilitator
- Important to establish before there is a crisis.

Designing Faith Formation



- Online and Blended Approaches
- Prepare for physical settings when conditions allow
- Inform families of alternate possibilities
- Watch educational trends
- Consult parents

Family Ministry

- Family Ministry is always about partnering with parents
 - We are in a supportive role in catechetical ministry so think how can I use this time to cultivate that relationship stronger
 - If we are sending things home think about how we can integrate some kind positive reinforcement for those who follow through. Incentive? Feedback?
 - Augment age-specific comprehensive systematic curriculum with ways parents can be supportive
 - If you do Virtual learning, consider make it very simple. Light a candle. Pray Hail Mary to begin. Read short Scripture.
 - Virtual learning, allow time for interaction, not just delivery of curriculum.
 - In person may need to consider social distancing.
 - I know what you taught but what did they learn?

Virtual Family Program Plan

Fruits of the Holy Spirit

Objective: To learn about the fruits of the Holy Spirit: reflect on ones you have and need in your own family

Setup Needed: Bible

List of families in your group

Welcome/ Prayer Introduction The significance of “fruits”

Why they are important to the Church

Why we care about this

Where you find them in Scripture



Small Groups (session guided by Facilitators)

Welcome! Could someone please read that Bible citation for all of us? Call on one family/person to read it aloud.

Now, let's introduce ourselves Thanks, everyone! The Fruits of the Spirit are the ways in which we see the Spirit at work in one another. Some of the fruits are easy to see in one another, and sometimes we are aware that we wish we had more of a particular fruit of the Holy Spirit. Look at the Bible citation again, with your family. Maybe you'll *want* to re-read those verses. Then, as a family, discuss these 2 questions: *Which fruit of the Spirit do you see most reflected in your family? Which fruit do you think would be especially helpful, if you had more of it?* Please mute yourself while you discuss with your family, and when you are ready to share, just raise your Zoom hand. I will put those questions in the Chat box in case you'd like to see them. Let's take a few minutes to discuss.

Put questions into Chat box.



After 5 minutes or so, say: **Okay, it looks like we're ready to go! Let's share our answers to the FIRST question: Which fruit of the Spirit do you see most reflected in your family?**

Call on each family. Invite them to share examples if there's time.

Thank you! Isn't it great to recognize those fruits of the Spirit in one another? The second question was: *Which fruit do you think would be especially helpful, if you had more of it?* We can pray for one another, so I will ask each family to share which fruit they would like the others here to pray for, for them to have more of. Call on families by last name, making sure to get to all of them.

We'll close with this prayer on the Fruits of the Holy Spirit. Your response is: _____ Thank you so much for joining us today for our Virtual Family Program! We look forward to seeing you next time.

Dear friends,

Thanks so much for joining us tonight for our first sample virtual Family Program session! We hope you enjoyed learning about the Fruits of the Holy Spirit with your family and others.

We need your **feedback** on how you think it went, so please reply to this email to answer these questions:

1. What worked best for your family?
2. What really didn't work well for your family, if anything?
3. What did you most enjoy?
4. Did you find anything difficult or cumbersome?
5. Any suggestions of your own?

Here is the **follow-up** on the gifts of the Holy Spirit we told you about: Whenever you observe someone practicing one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit, write it down on a small piece of paper (or a **picture of a piece of fruit**—see attached) and put it in a mini “fruit bowl” on your kitchen counter. See if your family can fill up your fruit bowl by the end of the summer!

Attached are the closing **prayer** from our session, so you can pray it at home, and a sheet with images of fruit you can print out, cut, and write on for that fruit bowl.

Thank you again, and we look forward to hearing back from you.
It will really help with our planning for the coming year of Family Program!

1. Well organized and nice to use camera to see all those involved. Having mute until people spoke was good to keep things organized and clear to hear. Good use of break away sessions as well.
2. Hard to get full interaction by all family members but I think that was more about the short period of time (trial process) than anything else. Otherwise all good.
3. The personal aspect of doing this vs not doing things because of restrictions with face to face meetings.
4. All good – We use video software for work and school all the time so very comfortable.
5. None

What will make this work?

- Keep content focused and clear
- Know your objective and state it for the participants
- Facilitator needs to be prepared, pleasant and keeps a sense of humor
- Know Zoom protocol like muting to reduce ambient sound
- Call on families with older children first
- Have a visual aid like a handout with fruits of the spirit send ahead of time
- And/or send a follow-up resource
- Include simple prayer

What Not To Do This Year

- This is **not** the year to create a family program session consisting of an interpretive liturgical dance, performed to a Hamilton-like original score, followed by a hilarious yet theologically meaningful skit, culminating several hours later with punch and homemade cookies for all. 😊



What To Do This Year of Constellation Planning

- Focus on spiritual fundamentals
- Whatever you do, in person or virtual, keep it short! Families don't need anymore "busy work." Keep activities you ask them to do targeted and meaningful
- Remember many families are challenged and even struggling at this time. Be kind. Be patient. Be helpful.
- Keep it **Simple, Short, Safe**



QUESTIONS



Dear COVID-19,

You have silenced our streets.
You have separated us from those we love.
You have locked us down, closed our doors.
You have shaken us and you have exhausted us.
And it seems like you're only getting started.

But know this, you're never going to win.
We are not defined by our circumstances but by our faith.
We know that family extends beyond our own homes.
And our generosity will never be contained by borders.

We will love like Christ even from behind windows, walls and masks.
We will never stop caring for the marginalized and the vulnerable.

We will not back down.
We will not give up.
Because together, we rise as one.

Sincerely,

Us