



● A SPOONFUL OF SUGAR

Engaging Young Adults in
Stewardship and Mercy

FAITH IS NOT EASY.

NEITHER IS LIFE.

OUR GOAL: SHOW THEM GRACE
AND MERCY IN **LIFE**, SO THEY
CAN FOCUS ON **FAITH!**





“My Church” by Maren Morris

**When Hank brings the sermon
And Cash leads the choir
It gets my cold coal heart burning
Hotter than a ring of fire
When this wonderful world gets heavy
And I need to find my escape
I just keep the wheels rolling, radio scrolling
Until my sins wash away**

**Can I get a hallelujah
Can I get an amen
Feels like the Holy Ghost running through ya
When I play the highway FM
I find my soul revival
Singing every single verse
Yeah I guess that's my church**



GIVE THEM THE REASON

- We must “get” their lives to earn their trust and then we must answer their question:

“Why does the Gospel matter and why should I let *this* church guide me in the way of Jesus?”



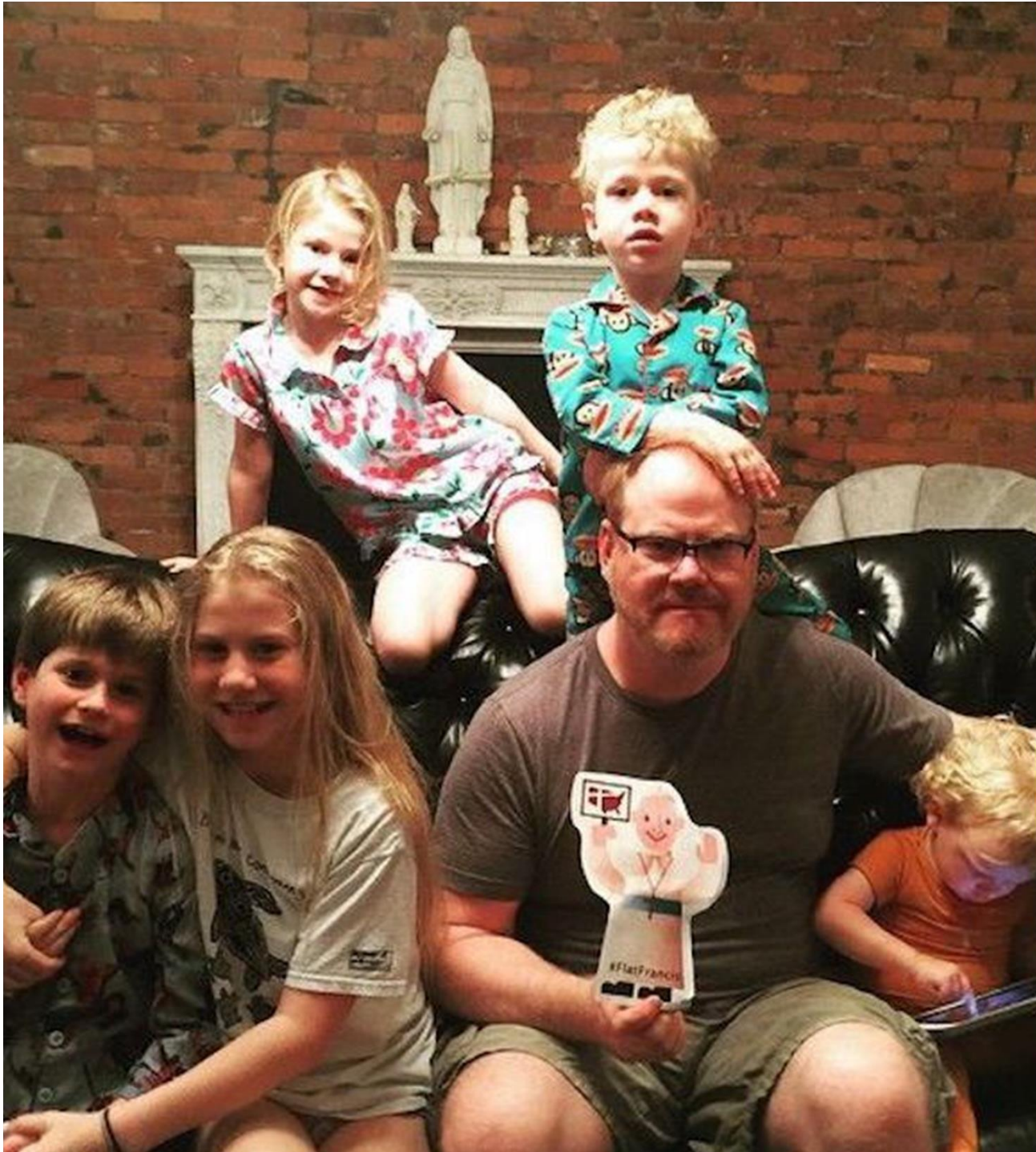
YOUNG ADULTS HAVE LESS LIFE AND MORE ROUGH EDGES!

Unpolished...



Polished!





JIM GAFFIGAN

“You know what it’s like having a fourth kid? Imagine you’re drowning, then someone hands you a baby.”

*Photo Courtesy of
Fatherly.com*



WE NEED TO BE THE ONES WITH THE LIFE-PRESERVER!

- Only then can we hand them a towel and suggest they wear a life-jacket next time...
- Encouraging them to wear the life jacket while they're floundering or treading water is an obviously silly idea!





MY FAVORITE SHIRT

TARGETS

- Young Couples and Young Adults with Children
 - There are countless other talented individuals who have given talks and written books about the single, young adult population.
 - They need us and that makes them a captive audience. They WANT us to serve them.
 - It's easier to feed and hold onto a young adult that is already in your pews, than to go out and find another one. Opportunity COST!



THE KEY IS EXPECTATIONS!

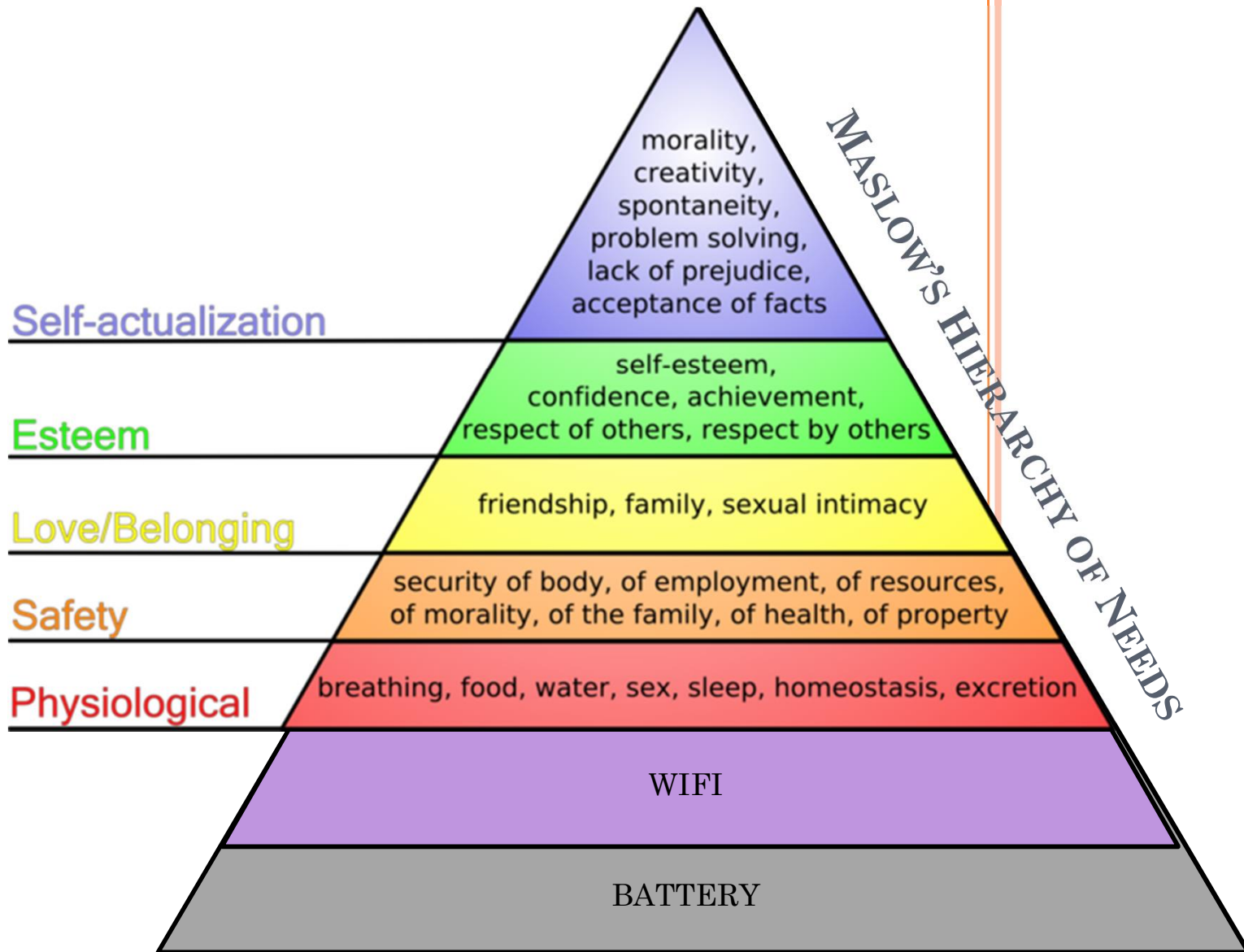
Too Much...

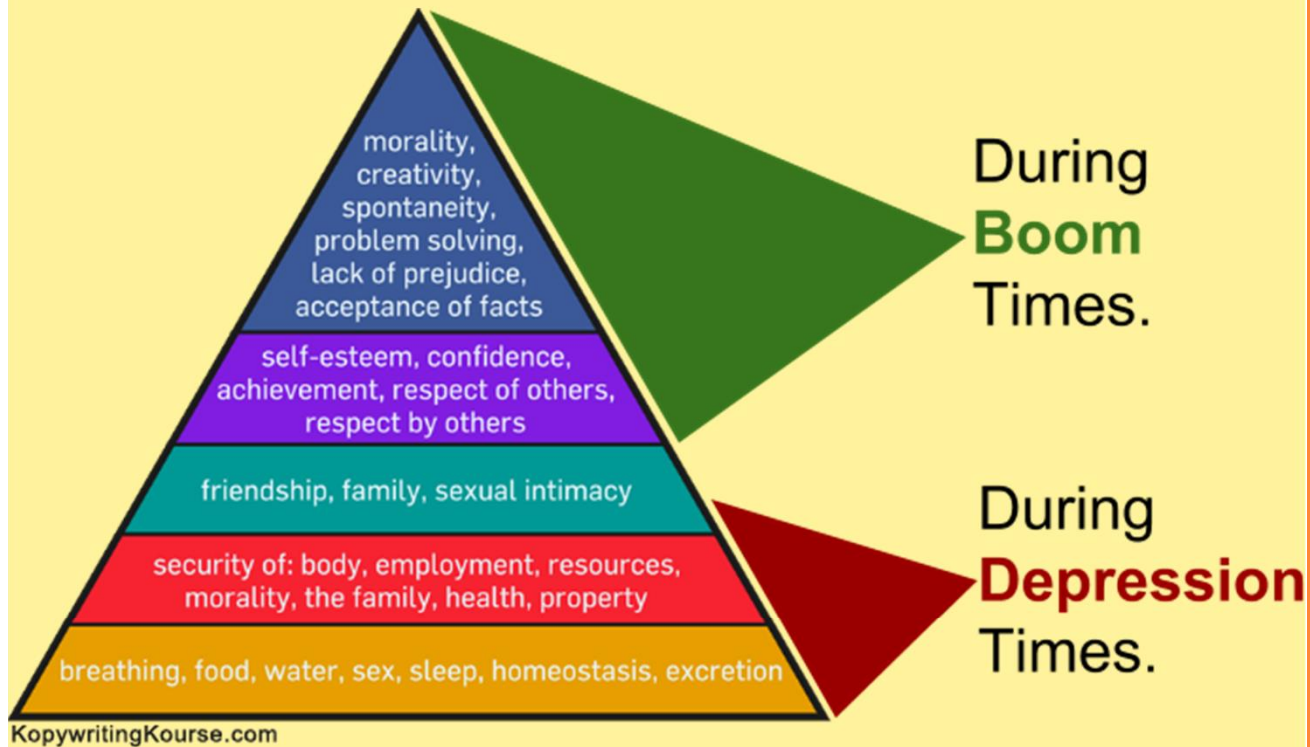
- They aren't the magic shot in the arm the church has been needing for decades.

Too Little...

- Get to know them well enough that they show up and you can ask them what they need and how they want to serve!

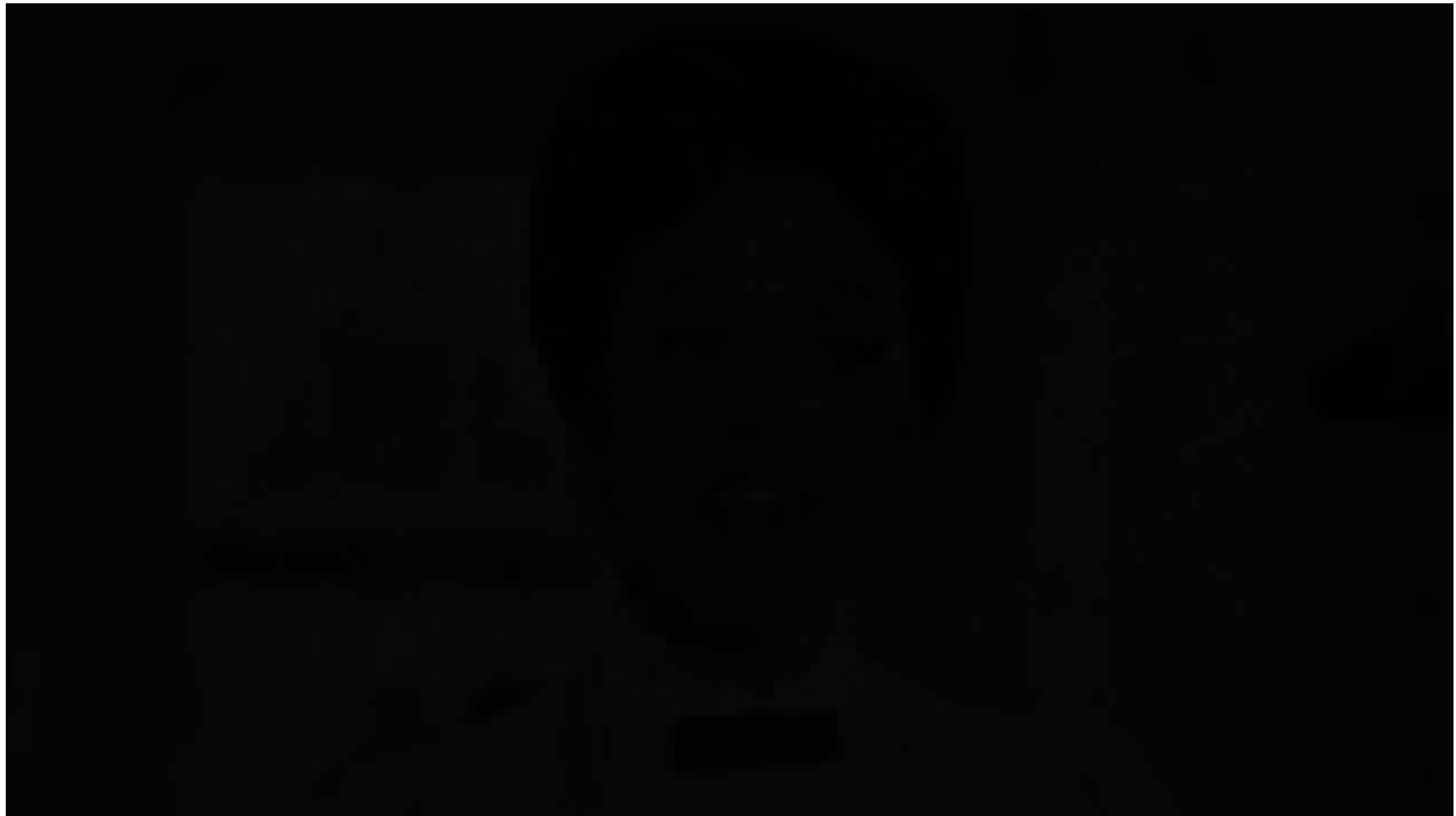






PARISH
FAMILIES
ARE
WITH
PEOPLE
AT ALL
TIMES!





“A SPOONFUL OF SUGAR” FROM MARY
POPPINS



FELT NEEDS – WHERE TO LOOK

Life Items:

- Calendar/Device
- Pocketbook
- Media Streaming Queues

Felt Needs:

- Married/Family Life
 - Childcare, Scheduling, Healthy Living
 - Communication, conflict management, date nights
- Financial Stability
 - Student loans, CC debt, medical expenses, mortgages



“BUT THAT’S NOT OUR JOB!”

**THERE IS A NEED THEY HAVE
THAT IS OUR JOB...**

...SACRAMENTS!



WHEN THEY ARE WITH US, BUILD RAPPORT AND TRUST

3 Steps

- Listen
- Respond
- Invite



LISTEN

- Young adults don't have the ability to give like the older generation – by age or by means.
- They DO have the interest in family, service and values.
- They want to belong. They want to be heard.
- We need to listen now! We need to care now!

We can't expect them to care and give later if we don't respect and hear them now.



RESPOND

- It's important to be concrete and not get too fancy.
- They are already overwhelmed and need to be able to insert faith into their life
- Example: Meals, Mass and Mystics
 - “You gave God 3 hours of your time this morning. The least I can do is give you a meal back.”





PRACTICAL IDEAS

BUILD RAPPORT AND TRUST

3 Steps

- Listen for their “felt” needs, sometimes ask
- Respond to their “felt” needs
- Invite them to grow in “Jesus’ way” with a tangible or manageable tool



MARRIAGE

Listen

- Does your website have a clear link for addressing these needs?
- Recognize wedding anniversaries
- Pray with them!!!!
Listen to what they are praying for...
- Sponsor a date night for the mentor couple and the engaged couple

Respond

- Consider offering sessions before or between Masses and feed them during their sessions! Two birds, one stone.
- Direct them to non-church tools for their growth
- Financial Planning, Estate Planning
- Consider a tool with couple prayer prompts
- Consider offering a tele-conference with the couple, mentor couple and parents
- Separation/Divorce – make info easy to get their fingertips on (persona marketing)



BAPTISM/EARLY FAMILY LIFE

Listen

- Does your website have a clear link for addressing this need?
- Create parish social media groups.
 - Be prepared to respond. Include mentors in the Facebook group and encourage them to interact!
- Offer a mom's/dad's night out – a paint and pint, a coffee and jazz night, a local pub and sporting event, a paintball event, etc.
- Give moms and dads “mentors”

Respond

- When are parents of babies often awake? At night, alone. Schedule social media posts to post at night when they are scrolling through their feed.
- Nursing moms? Consider decade pins or bracelets that can also be used to note what side she nursed on last!
- Offer sessions around Mass times and set aside a special area for them (not the front row!)
- During Baptism prep, make sure you have a fun activity (maybe even a young person to be with them) for any siblings in the family.
- Create a parish babysitter's list with names and ages



WELCOME

To parents of young children:

Relax! God put the wiggle in children; don't feel you have to suppress those wiggles in God's house.

- ▶ Consider sitting toward the front where it is easier for your little ones to engage.
- ▶ Quietly explain the parts of the service and actions of the pastors, musicians and leaders.
- ▶ Sing the hymns, pray and voice the responses. Children learn behavior by mimicking you.
- ▶ If you have to leave the Sanctuary with your child, feel free to do so,

FAMILY-FRIENDLY PEW CARDS



1ST RECONCILIATION/1ST EUCHARIST

Listen

- Set them up with social media from the start – don't forget that social media can and should be two-way communication!
 - Be prepared to respond! Mentors and catechists can be added as part of a group to help with the responses
- Consider witness talks before first reconciliation from other parents
- Ask parents and youth in older grades to plan, serve and eat a meal with the younger families
- Birthdays

Respond

- Blogs and website links are really great tools
- Know the programs around you and work with families to find the right fit (think Miracle on 34th Street!)
- Consider taping your sessions
- Give them key phrases for everyday learning and applying – Pope Francis' "3 Things"
- Prayer prompts for before school, after school or before bedtime
- Use tools! Wallet cards, magnets, lanyards, keychains, mugs, tshirts, bracelets, etc...



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OTHER PASTORAL CONCERNS

- Job Loss
- Illness
- Funerals
- Mental Health
- Miscarriage/Abortion
- Pornography
- Abuse
- Depression/Anxiety

Respond

- ???





“THY WILL BE DONE” BY HILLARY SCOTT



INVITE

- If you make headway with the listening and responding, inviting will come naturally.

Then you just have to:

Have
Courage
And Be
Kind



INVITE

- **Don't try to plug empty holes** – Invite with vision, not need. Give them “why”, not just “what”
- **Rethink your couch** – place and time is as important as the verbal invite, be hospitable!
- Invite them to participate in the “**mentor**” role of something they benefited from.
- If you're staff, don't do it yourself! **Animate a member** to make the invite.
- **Smile!** Enthusiasm and passion are contagious.

“God protect me from gloomy saints!”

St. Teresa of Avila



INVITE

- **Look at your initial ask as a first date** – don't expect a long-term commitment!
- If they say “no” to your initial invitation, **don't be afraid to ask again later** or follow-up about other interests.
- **Keep smiling!** Don't let your pride or need keep you from being hospitable. You're planting seed.
- Let's not forget that some of the things that keep our young people from participating in prayer, service and sharing are logistical – childcare, transportation, finances – **let's make sure those barriers are taken into consideration when we make an invitation.**



INVITE

Invitation Inspiration

- Minute for Mission cards
 - “Been There? Done That? Walk with someone else.”
 - “Baptism was the stone into the water: Become the ripple.”
 - “Will you follow us as we follow Christ?”
 - “Change a life, it could be your own. Just a little goes a long way!”
- Stewardship Seconds, call or text campaign
 - Publicize last minute opportunities for last-minute people
- 2-block radius welcome campaign
- **We are called to make disciples, not volunteers!**





CONCLUSION

It's a paradigm shift.

We must see them. We must truly hear their needs and desires. We must respond to their needs and desires in a meaningful way. Then and only then, can we, and **MUST** we, kindly and courageously invite them to join us in living like Jesus and bringing forth the reign of God.



**Go listen! Go respond! Go invite!
And go therefore and make
disciples!**