

# Raise them Well Intellectual Maturity

February 4, 2019 at 7 pm



## Key terms from the webinar:

- **Intellectual Maturity:** Coming to know, choose and act according to what is good, true and beautiful.
- **Prudence:** The cardinal virtue of knowing what is good and making a plan to get it.
- **Moral Life:** How our choices affect who we become.
- **Moral Law:** The law given to us by God to shape who we become. The moral law is divided into “natural law,” which guides us to live more fully human lives, and “divine law,” which guides us to live as children of God.
- **Conscience:** Our intellectual ability to think about the moral law and to apply it to specific circumstances in our daily life.

## Nurturing Conscience Formation

Below are various ways you can help your children to know what is good and to form their conscience to help them choose the good in specific circumstances of their daily lives. Perform a self-examination by checking if you do these things regularly, sometimes, or rarely. Then decide what items from the list you can work on as a parent.

How often do you...	Regularly	Sometimes	Rarely
Engage your child in daily conversation?			
Stand firm when your child is emotional?			
Calmly face issues that arise during emotional outbursts?			
Spend one to one time with your child?			
Ask your child to STOP and THINK before ACTING impulsively?			
Dialogue with your children about their friends?			
Monitor the media that’s available in your home?			

Talk with your child about the negative aspects of drugs, alcohol and pornography?			
Eat a meal with your family?			
Provide a calm and quiet home for your child?			
Intentionally show your child what is right, good, true and beautiful?			
Make yourself available for conversation and active listening?			

The three behaviors that I want to do regularly are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Here are my ideas on how I will make these happen.

# The Examen Prayer

Saint Ignatius of Loyola encouraged a daily examination of conscience. However, unlike the traditional examination of conscience (see below), Saint Ignatius encouraged a broader review of our day. The Examen prayer makes a great family bedtime prayer!

[Learn more about the Examen Prayer here.](#)

## **Step 1. Become aware of God's presence.**

Ask the Holy Spirit to help your family to see God's presence in their day. Children and adults alike sometimes struggle to reflect on their day. Especially when our days seem either an unremarkable routine or a jumbled mess, finding meaning and understanding how God is working in our day can be a huge challenge. The Holy Spirit can help us see God's presence in the routine and in the mess.

## **Step 2. Review the day with gratitude.**

A great way to teach our children to identify the God-given good in their lives is to practice a daily habit of gratitude. Ask each family member to recall something good that happened to them that day that they are grateful for. If someone can't think of anything from that day, ask them to name something he or she is grateful for in general.

## **Step 3. Pay attention to your emotions.**

Saint Ignatius is a great example of a Catholic teacher who was very balanced in what he taught about emotions (refer to our last webinar on emotional maturity). On one hand he warns against measuring your spiritual life based on emotion. On the other hand, he teaches that emotions can often indicate things that God is doing in our lives, or areas where we need God's help. Children will especially need help walking through their emotions. Ask good questions, such as, "How did you feel about that?" Or "What made you so angry"? Feelings like peace, joy, anger, guilt or even boredom can tell you a lot about the state of your heart or where God may be leading you.

## **Step 4. Choose one feature of the day and pray from it.**

Is there something that happened during the day that bothered you? Is there something you wish you could get a "do-over" for? Is there something that you're especially proud of or happy about? Choose one thing from your day and pray about it. Ask for guidance, forgiveness, or help. Always ask for God's will to be done.

## **Step 5. Look toward tomorrow.**

Think about your coming day. Are you facing anything that makes you excited, apprehensive, or doubtful? Ask God to give you wisdom and strength to face the challenges of tomorrow.

## **Family Modifications of the Examen Prayer**

Don't be afraid to modify the Examen (or any prayer) to fit your family. Here's one example of modifying the examen prayer to help conscience formation:

1. Prayer of gratitude
2. Share one way you showed love to a family member today, or one way you failed to show love when you could have.
3. Share one way you exercised one of the virtues **or** share an opportunity you missed to exercise a virtue.
4. Share anything someone needs to seek forgiveness for or that you need to talk about as a family.
5. Share anything coming up tomorrow that you need God's help with.

## Examination of Conscience

An examination of conscience isn't just something we do before we receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. A regular examination of conscience can help us understand where God wants to change our hearts and minds to grow in holiness. A regular examination of conscience can also help us embrace our vocation to marriage and family life more completely. We encourage you to use the following examination of conscience as parents first. If there are elements of this examination that fit your family, feel free to add them to your family prayer.

### Responsibilities to God:

- Have I gone to Mass every Sunday? Have I participated at Mass or have I day dreamed or been present with a blank mind?
- Have I prayed every day (15-20 minutes)?
- Have I read the Bible? Have I studied the truths of our faith and allowed them to become more part of the way I think and act? Have I read any spiritual books or religious literature?
- Have I told God that I want to love him with my whole heart, mind and strength?
- Do I hold any resentments toward God?
- Have I recognized my need for Jesus and his salvation? Have I asked the Holy Spirit to empower me to live the Christian life, to be a proper husband/wife and parent?
- Have I been financially generous to the Church? Have I participated in parish or religious activities
- Have I held resentments toward the Church or Church authorities? Have I forgiven them?

### Responsibilities to my spouse:

- Have I cared for my spouse? Have I been generous with my time? Have I been

affectionate and loving? Have I told my spouse that I love him or her?

- Have I been concerned about the spiritual well-being of my spouse?
- Have I listened to my spouse? Have I paid attention to his other concerns, worries, and problems? Have I sought these out?
- Have I allowed resentments and bitterness toward my spouse to take root in my mind? Have I nurtured these? Have I forgiven my spouse for the wrongs he or she has committed against me?
- Have I allowed misunderstanding, miscommunication or accidents to cause anger and mistrust? Have I nurtured critical and negative thoughts about my spouse?
- Have I manipulated my spouse in order to get my own way? Have I tried to bully or overpower my spouse?
- Have I spoken sharply or sarcastically to my spouse? Have I spoken in a demeaning or negative way? Have I injured my spouse through taunting and negative teasing? Have I called my spouse harsh names or used language that is not respectful?
- Have I physically abused my spouse?
- Have I gossiped about my spouse?

- Have I undermined the authority and dignity of my spouse through disrespect and rebelliousness?
- Have I been moody and sullen?
- Have I bickered with my spouse out of stubbornness and selfishness?
- Have I lied or been deceitful to my spouse?
- Have I misused sexuality? Have I used sexual relations solely for my own selfish pleasure? Have I been too demanding in my desire for sexual fulfillment? Have I been loving and physically affectionate in my sexual relations or have I used sexual relations in a way that would be demeaning or disrespectful to my spouse? Have I refused sexual relations out of laziness, revenge or manipulation?
- Have I refused to conceive children out of selfishness or material greed? Have I used artificial means of contraception?
- Have I had an abortion or encouraged others to have one? Have I masturbated?
- Have I flirted or fostered improper relationships with someone else, either in my mind or through words and actions?
- Have I used pornography: books, magazines or movies? Have I committed adultery?
- Have I misused alcohol or drugs?
- Have I been financially responsible?
- Have I prayed with them?
- Have I been persistent and courageous in my training and teaching? Have I disciplined them when necessary? Have I been lazy and apathetic?
- Have I talked with them to find out their problems, concerns and fears? Have I been affectionate toward them? Have I hugged them and told them that I love them? Have I played or recreated with them?
- Have I been impatient and frustrated with them? Have I corrected them out of love in order to teach them what is right and good? Have I treated them with respect? Have I spoken to them in a sarcastic or demeaning way?
- Have I held resentments against them? Have I forgiven them? Have I been of one heart and mind with my spouse in the upbringing of the children? Or have I allowed disagreements and dissension to disrupt the training, educating and disciplining of our children?
- Have I undermined the role of authority in the eyes of my children by speaking negatively against God, the Church, my spouse or others who hold legitimate authority over them? Have I been a good Christian witness to my children in what I say and do? Or do I demand one standard for them and another for myself?
- Have I been properly generous with my children regarding money and physical and material well-being? Have I been miserly? Have I been extravagant, thus spoiling them?

## **Responsibilities to children:**

- Have I cared for the spiritual needs of my children? Have I been a shepherd and guardian as God has appointed me? Have I tried to foster a Christian family where Jesus is Lord? Have I taught my children the Gospel and the commandments of God?

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# More Resources

## Knowing and Choosing the Good

We wrote this newsletter article on the same theme of the webinar. It offers some more practical strategies for helping our children form their conscience well. [Click here to read the newsletter article.](#)



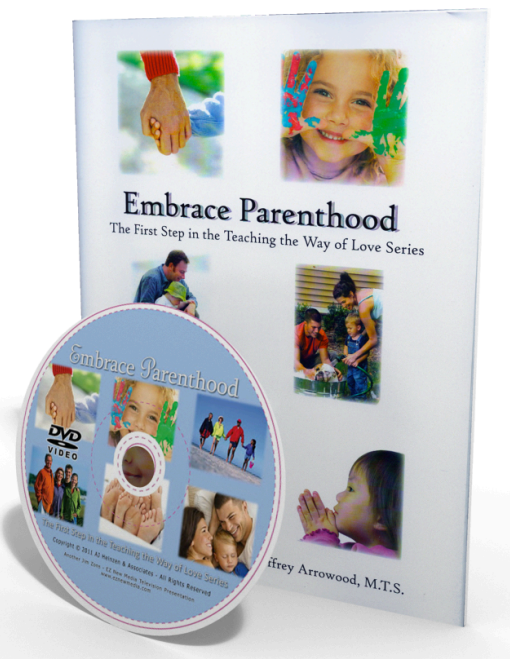
### Ready to Develop a Parenting Plan to Guide Your Child Through Puberty?

Growing in the Way of Love empowers parents to guide their children through puberty to adulthood. It covers how to help children navigate the physical changes that come with puberty and how to discuss fertility appreciation. But it also teaches you how to guide your child to maturity emotionally, socially, and in other areas of life as well.

This is the parenting program this webinar series is based on.

You can purchase as a DVD/workbook set, get 30 days of access to the program online, or purchase 7-day online access to specific segments of the program.

[Click here to see all of your purchasing options.](#)



### Need to Learn the Fundamentals of Catholic Parenting?

Embrace Parenthood teaches the eight foundations of good Catholic parenting. It is intended for all parents, but especially for parents of younger children. Putting these eight principles into practice early in your child's life will lay a solid foundation on which to build when your child is older.

This is the parenting program last year's webinar series was based on.

You can purchase as a DVD/workbook set, get 30 days of access to the program online, or purchase 7-day online access to specific segments of the program.

[Click here to see all of your purchasing options.](#)