

Children of the Light



The theme for Catholic Schools Week 2008, "Light the Way," reminds us of the responsibility entrusted to us at our child's baptism—ensuring that our child "is to walk always as a child of the light." Most of us can recall our child's baptism as if it happened only a few months ago. We remember who was there and our child's facial expressions or outcries. We remember how we felt holding our child as we presented him/her for this sacrament that welcomed our child into the life of the Church. We remember the water, the oil, the candle and the white garment.

During the rite of baptism, the celebrant presented a lighted candle to us, the parents, and the godparents. Someone from the family, usually the father or godfather, ignited the candle from the Easter candle, our sign of the living Christ. Then the celebrant said, "... this light is entrusted to you to be kept burning brightly. This child of yours has been enlightened by Christ. He (she) is to walk always as a child of the light. May he (she) keep the flame of faith alive in his (her) heart." Parents take this responsibility seriously and fulfill it in a variety of ways. We attend Mass as a family. We pray together at meal times and bedtime. We display religious symbols or art in our homes. We share Bible stories, especially those about Jesus' life. We establish family traditions and rituals. We teach our children to share and eventually how to reach out to others. Most importantly, we do these things with the support of family, friends, and a faith community.

The Catechist partners with parents in handing on our faith and teaching our children how to live it. An understanding that every person deserves to be treated with dignity and respect is fostered. In Catholic education, parents, catechists and the DRE all work together to teach the importance of following the way of Jesus and walking as a child of the light.

Personal Reflection for Parents:

1. How do you live as a child of the light?
2. Who are the people that support and encourage you to walk as a child of the light?
3. Who are some people who are models of faith for you?
4. What hopes and dreams did you have for your child/ren at baptism?
5. How do you help your child/ren walk as a child of the light?
6. What has been the greatest resource or source of support to you as a parent in helping you raise your child/ren as a child of the light?

Discussion and Activities for Families:

1. Share baptism stories with one another. Get out photos and other keepsakes. Tell your child about your own baptism and share the details of your child's baptism. Be sure to include why it was such an important day for you.
2. Talk about how your parish helps all family members to walk as children of the light.
3. Talk about how each family member lives as a child of the light.
4. Talk about how you support and encourage one another to live as children of the light. How do you "light the way" for one another?
5. Name some ways that your family can "Light the Way," at school, at work, in the community, on the playing field, or in dealing with people.
6. Read together Matthew 5:14-16. What is Jesus' message?
7. Choose a service activity to do together as a family that will show you live as children of the light and "light the way" for others.

Lord Jesus, Son of God,

***Thank you for the gift of Catholic Education.
Day after day, week after week, you give us
many opportunities to grow and learn. Help us
respond to the gift of faith so that we may be
recognized as your disciples.***

Amen.