



## FOREWORD

Thirty years ago, with two young children in tow, I started meeting up with a group of my friends at a park. While pushing the kids on the swings, we exchanged good advice and tips on family life, discussing anything from floral arrangements to healthier snacks for kids. During one of those meetings, the question was raised: “How can a mom pass on a vibrant Catholic faith to her children?” Since the mom is the heart of the family, and since attention to detail is part of her natural make up, she sets a very important tone by the way she lives her faith. I then saw some insecure and uncomfortable looks on the faces of the mothers at the park. They felt that they could have been doing a better job of knowing, explaining, and living their faith.

I also thought back to my experience as a third grade teacher at a Catholic school. I remembered looking out at the classroom full of students and feeling very unprepared as I taught them religion. I was apprehensive because I didn’t know the “whys” behind many Catholic teachings. I had gone to Catholic school all the way through college -- but had I acquired true understanding and real conviction? Not completely. I never read as much about my faith as I did that year. Having to teach really tests your understanding. And every mom must be a teacher in her home!

Children are like sponges, they soak in everything around them. They learn their faith from every word and action. They not only want clear explanations, but they want to witness authentic examples of Christianity. As the first and most important educators of their children, parents give personal testimony to the value and meaning of life. For Christian parents, this testimony must always be based on a deep knowledge and love of Jesus Christ. A mom cannot transmit this understanding if she doesn’t have it herself.

This is a program designed for gathering young moms together to explore how God reveals the purpose of our lives. More than just studying the facts of our faith, by going deeper into Our Lord’s immense and supportive love for each one of us, we may then fan the embers of our love for Him into blazing fires, touching off new fires of love in our husbands, children, friends and neighbors.

With a heightened awareness and deeper understanding of the faith, mothers can become examples of Catholic conviction for their families and society. The Catholic faith is not a blind faith -- instead, it is faith that is eminently reasonable, even though it does contain some mysteries that surpass our ability to comprehend. The challenge we have (and always have had) is to do our best to understand, accept, obey, and love the Catholic faith. The way we live our lives and form our children is the ultimate proof of this effort.

This is a program designed to review and refresh basic Catholic beliefs. It is not an in-depth study of each topic. With the bibliography provided, those wanting further study can pursue it on their own.

For more than twenty-five years, several of us moms have been teaching this program to friends in our neighborhoods. It is time now to offer the program more widely. Hopefully, you will find it a helpful tool in the process of fostering a vibrant Catholic faith, one mom, and one family at a time.

