

# DIOCESE OF ORANGE



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP  
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September 20, 2011

Dear Parents,

Congratulations on being the parent to one or more of the 31,000 children in the Diocese of Orange who attend religious education classes each year. I commend you for this important choice, and I appreciate the sacrifices it takes to provide this foundation for your children.

As you know, religious education is an important part of raising children in the Catholic Faith, however more is required. Your active involvement in a parish community is essential if your child is to grow into adulthood as a faithful, committed Catholic. It concerns me when I observe that family life seems too busy to include a solid foundation of regular and consistent attendance at Sunday Mass.

With this in mind, I would like to invite you to reflect on the following questions:

- Are you celebrating your Catholic faith within a community of believers - your parish - at a Saturday evening or Sunday Mass each week?
- How are you showing your child the importance of gratitude and service to others by specific things that you do as an individual and as a family?
- How can we be sure that what we teach young people about our Catholic faith really makes a difference in their lives?

Faith formation can only be effective when it is reinforced by an active faith life in the home. The Pew Forum's *U.S. Religious Landscape Survey*<sup>1</sup> affirms that young people learn more from what they observe at home by parent example than from a religion class alone. Children need to observe that Sunday Mass, family prayer and the reading of scripture are important in your life.

**Let's work together to address this. Would you please reflect upon the** faith practice of your family? Begin with a conversation about what it means to be a Catholic family. For the third year, I invite you to consider the attached "**Parent Faith Formation Pledge**". Your signature on this pledge lets me know that you are ready to support what your children learn in class by continuing their faith formation at home. You are welcome to include your own suggestions, comments, and observations about ways we can work to foster stronger Catholic family life. I look forward to a day when we experience 100% parent involvement in each child's life of faith.

Again, thank you for your commitment to faith formation. I pray that you and your family will experience a most enriching and successful year.

In Christ our Savior,



The Most Reverend Tod D. Brown  
Bishop of Orange

<sup>1</sup> <http://religions.pewforum.org/reports>

# PARENT FAITH FORMATION PLEDGE

Christian husbands and wives are cooperators in grace and witnesses of faith for each other, their children, and all others in their household. **They are the first to communicate the faith to their children and to educate them by word and example for the Christian and apostolic life.** They prudently help them in the choice of their vocation and carefully promote any sacred vocation which they may discern in them.

*APOSTOLICAM ACTUOSITATEM* (Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity)  
SOLEMNLY PROMULGATED BY HIS HOLINESS,  
POPE PAUL VI ON NOVEMBER 18, 1965



Dear Bishop Brown,  
I have chosen to enroll



\_\_\_\_\_ (child / children's names)

In \_\_\_\_\_ program.  
(parish)



The program exists to support my role  
as my child's primary educator in the ways of faith.

I understand that the main purpose of the religious education program  
is to teach the rituals and traditions of the Catholic Faith.

The program cannot be successful in this mission unless its teachings are reinforced  
by my own example and practice of the faith.

**Therefore, I promise to support  
my child's faith formation by:**

- Regularly attending Mass as a family
- Praying in our home and at family meals
- Reading the Scriptures in our family



\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent (Guardian) Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent (Guardian) Signature

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(number) (street) (city) (zip)

\_\_\_\_\_, 2011  
Date

*Please return this Faith Formation Pledge to your parish by October 15, 2011.  
It will be forwarded to the Diocesan Office of Faith Formation.  
[Or you can mail it directly to: Parish Faith Formation, Diocese of Orange, 2811 E Villa Real Dr, Orange, CA 92867]*