



MANGALA JYOTHI

DIOCESAN BIBLICAL CATECHETICAL AND LITURGICAL CENTRE

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DIOCESE OF MANGALORE

Sunday Catechism Year 2025

“Hope Does Not Disappoint Us” (Romans 5:5)

Theme: Faith Formed – Hope Filled

A Message to the Parents of Sunday Catechism Children

Faith formation of children is the responsibility of the entire Church, but in a special and primary way, it rests with the parents. In this light, the essential role of parents, along with the guidelines and suggested initiatives for the Year of Hope, are outlined below. We kindly invite you to follow these guidelines and actively collaborate with the Parish in nurturing and guiding your children in the journey of faith.

I. The Role and Responsibilities of Parents in the Faith Formation of their Children

1. Your Role as the First Catechists

We sincerely appreciate your dedication in upbringing of your children in Catholic faith. As the first and most important catechists (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, CCC 2223; *General Directory for Catechesis*, GDC 226), you play a unique and irreplaceable role in forming your children in the Catholic faith. Your home is rightly called the “domestic Church” (*Lumen Gentium*, 11), where faith is first lived, nurtured, and celebrated.

2. Leading by Example in Faith

Your example of faith—through prayer, attending Mass, and engaging in the life of the Church—forms the foundation upon which the parish catechism program builds. “*Parents are the means that God uses for faith to grow and develop in their children*” (*Amoris Laetitia*, 287). However, this transmission of faith must be genuine, rooted in trust in God, and sensitive to each child’s spiritual development. As *Amoris Laetitia* (288) reminds us, formation in faith must be adapted to each child’s needs, offering the faith freely rather than imposing it.

3. Collaboration Between Parents and the Church

While parents have the first responsibility for faith formation (CCC 2223), the Church is called to cooperate with parents through pastoral support and structured catechetical programs (*Amoris Laetitia*, 85). This cooperation emphasizes that raising children in the faith is not a private or isolated task. *Canon Law* (Can. 774 §2) further affirms that parents are bound to form their children in faith and Christian living by word and example.

4. The Urgency of Catechesis Today

Catechism is especially vital today. In an age where secular ideologies often challenge Christian values, faith formation helps children form a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, equipping them to live virtuously and make sound moral choices. The *Directory for Catechesis* (2020) highlights that “catechesis is a privileged stage in the process of evangelization,” emphasizing its role in discipleship and spiritual grounding.

5. Practical Ways to Foster Faith at Home

Parents are urged to make faith a daily practice at home. This includes praying with children—even simple prayers at meals or bedtime, attending Sunday Mass regularly, talking about Jesus and the saints, and leading by example in Christian living. Children learn more from what they witness than what they are taught. Thus, your daily witness as Christian parents is both a duty and a grace-filled mission.

By embracing this responsibility and collaborating with the parish, you help your children grow into faithful, joyful disciples of Christ—rooted in the love of God and the life of the Church.

II. Instructions to the Parents of Catechism Children

To ensure the effective faith formation of your child through the Sunday Catechism programme, we humbly request your cooperation in following the guidelines below.

1. Regular Attendance

Catechism classes are held every Sunday and form an important part of your child's faith formation. Please ensure that your child attends regularly. Regular attendance helps maintain continuity in learning and instils a sense of commitment and responsibility.

2. Participation in the Holy Eucharist

Sunday Mass and catechism are closely connected. Please encourage and accompany your child to attend Sunday Mass regularly. Experiencing the Eucharist deepens their understanding of the lessons taught in class and strengthens their bond with Christ and the parish community.

3. Catechism Textbooks and Materials

Ensure that your child brings all necessary materials each week—catechism textbook, notebook, writing instruments, and the Bible. Promote in your child the habit of maintaining these materials with care and neatness.

4. Follow-Up at Home

Your engagement during the week is essential to reinforce what is taught in class. Spend time reviewing the Sunday lesson with your child. Assist them with homework, discuss key concepts, and help clarify doubts. If questions arise, encourage them to seek answers through prayer, Scripture reading, or consultation with their catechism teacher. This builds a strong faith dialogue within the home.

5. Discipline and Respect

Instruct your child to be respectful towards their, catechism teachers and fellow mates. Emphasize the importance of good behaviour, attentiveness during class, and reverence during prayer. A respectful attitude enhances their spiritual growth and helps maintain a positive, prayerful learning atmosphere.

6. Encourage Prayer Life

The foundation of all catechesis is a personal relationship with God. Make prayer a daily part of family life; before meals, bedtime, or in moments of need and gratitude. Teach your child to speak to God from the heart and to listen in silence. A home centered on prayer provides the fertile ground in which faith can grow deeply.

7. Model Christian Living

Children learn primarily by example. Live your faith openly; through acts of kindness, regular Mass attendance, reading Word of God and involvement in parish life. Show your children that Christianity is not just about knowledge, but about a life of love, service, forgiveness, and faith. Your example will speak louder than any words.

8. Communication with the Parish

Stay connected with your child's catechism teacher and the parish catechism coordinator. Attend all parent meetings, sacramental preparation sessions, and parish events related to catechism. Your involvement shows your child that their faith formation is a priority and builds a sense of community between families and the Church.

9. Rely on Grace and Prayer

"Through the grace of marriage, parents receive the privilege of evangelizing their children." (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2225) Trust in God's guidance and grace. Pray daily for your children, offering them to the Lord and seeking strength, wisdom, and joy in your role as faith leaders in the home. Remember that you are not alone; God walks with you in this mission of love and formation.

III. Filling Children with Hope in the year of Pilgrims of Hope

In a world often marked by uncertainty and anxiety, children need more than just encouragement—they need hope. True hope is deeply rooted in faith, and parents, as the primary educators of their children in the faith, have the sacred responsibility to instill this hope from a young age. When children grow up with a heart formed by faith, they naturally grow into lives filled with hope. The catechetical theme for the year "**Faith Formed – Hope Filled**" offers a timely invitation for parents to nurture this journey intentionally. Here are five meaningful ways parents can fill their children with hope through faith formation at home.

1. "God is With Us" – Instilling Confidence in God's Presence

Children often face moments of fear, stress, or sadness—whether it's during illness, school pressure, loneliness, or personal struggles. During these times, parents can offer the greatest gift: the assurance that **God is always near**. When a child feels anxious or discouraged, a parent might repeat the words of Jesus, "**And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.**" (*Matthew 28:20*) This kind of support teaches children to lean on God as their constant companion. Encouraging children to repeat simple affirmations like "*God is with me*" can empower them to face their fears with trust. Everyday challenges; like preparing for a test, visiting the doctor, or coping with disappointment; become opportunities to remind them: "*You are never alone. God is by your side.*" Visual reminders in the home, such as a Bible, crucifix in the child's room or a picture of the Divine Mercy, Sacred Heart of Jesus, further reinforce God's loving presence in their daily lives.

2. Living a Life of Hope Through the Word of God

The Scriptures are filled with promises of God's love, guidance, and faithfulness. They are the foundation of a life filled with hope. Parents can bring these promises alive by reading and discussing uplifting Bible verses with their children. Verses such as *Jeremiah 29:11* ("For I know the plans I have for you... plans to give you hope and a future"), *Isaiah 41:10* ("Do not fear, for I am with you..."), and *Romans 8:28* ("In all things God works for the good of those who love him") speak directly to a child's heart. Events in the Bible, too, vividly demonstrate God's faithfulness in action. The story of Noah and the Ark reminds us of hope after trials. Joseph's journey in Egypt shows how God can turn betrayal into blessing. Daniel in the lion's den is a powerful witness of God's protection and presence. Reading these stories before exams, bedtime, or during difficult moments helps children draw strength from the Word and see how God remains with His people in every circumstance.

3. Reading the Gospels Together as a Source of Hope

The Gospels ignite the faith and courage in young hearts. When families read the life, miracles, and teachings of Jesus together, children begin to see that God's love is real and active. Miracles such as the healing of Jairus' daughter (Mark 5:21–43) show that hope remains even in seemingly impossible situations. Jesus calming the storm (Mark 4:35–41) teaches children that Jesus brings peace in the midst of fear. The feeding of the 5,000 (John 6:1–14) reveals God's provision, and the Resurrection of Jesus (Luke 24) assures us of new life and everlasting hope. After reading, parents can guide a short reflection by asking, *"What did Jesus do here that gives us hope today?"* This simple question opens the door for meaningful conversations about how Jesus is still working in our lives today.

4. Praying in Different Forms Together

Prayer is a child's first language of faith. When parents pray with their children daily, and in various ways, it shapes a personal relationship with God that builds lasting hope. Encourage children to engage in **spontaneous prayer**, speaking to God in their own words about their day, their joys, or their worries. Teach them to pray **intercessory prayers** for their friends, family, teachers, and those in need, which fosters compassion and connection.

Let prayer be a natural part of family life; before meals, during travel, or while getting ready for school. Encourage your child to say short prayers such as "Jesus, help me" or "Jesus, be with me." Teach them also to pray to the Holy Spirit, asking for wisdom, courage, and understanding. Silent prayer moments, where they are encouraged just to "be with God," help children develop interior peace and a listening heart.

5. Teaching Children to Be Grateful and Positive

A thankful heart naturally fosters a hopeful spirit. Grateful children tend to be more joyful, resilient, and open to seeing God's goodness even in small things. Before bed, parents can invite children to name three things they are thankful for—their health, friends, a kind word, or even a challenge they overcame. This regular habit of gratitude helps children focus on the positive and recognize God's hand in their everyday lives. Encourage expressions of thanks to God, and also to people around them; teachers, priests, religious sisters, catechists, and even creation itself. Gratitude for nature, for instance, nurtures a sense of wonder and stewardship as part of God's creation. If a child expresses defeat or negativity, such as saying *"I can't do this,"* remind them instead: *"With God's help, you can."* This perspective plants seeds of faith-based confidence and optimism.

When a home is filled with prayer, Scripture, gratitude, and the loving example of faith-filled parents, it becomes fertile soil for the growth of hope in children. Parents don't need to be perfect—they just need to be present and intentional. A child who knows that God is with them, who finds strength in His Word, who learns to pray with trust, and who lives with a grateful heart will grow into a person whose hope is anchored in Christ. In every season of life, let us strive to make our homes places where faith is formed and hearts are filled with hope—because, indeed, Jesus is the anchor of our hope (Hebrews 6:19).

Dear parents, your consistent cooperation and wholehearted participation in your child's catechetical journey are exciting. By working hand-in-hand with the parish and catechism teachers, we can guide our children to grow into faithful, compassionate, and Christ-centered individuals. Let us embrace this sacred responsibility together and build strong roots of faith for the next generation.

Thank you dear parents for your invaluable support and dedication in nurturing the Faith and Hope of you children to your exemplary life and encouragement.

We pray Gods Blessings on your Mission.

**Director
Mangala Jyothi**