

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND EXAMPLE

It is the sacred duty and responsibility of all Christian parents to see that their children receive proper religious training and instruction, so that they might know and live their Faith to the fullest, knowing and living according to the commandments and teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ. Neglect of this responsibility on the part of parents can have serious consequences for the spiritual and moral growth and development of their children. All the efforts of the Church for a more complete and integrated religious education program will be incomplete and frustrating without the full and sincere cooperation of all Orthodox parents.

Orthodox Christian parents should teach their children primarily by their own example. They should go to Church together as a family. They should participate regularly with their children in the Sacraments of Holy Confession and Holy Communion. They should attend church meetings and religious educational lectures and discussions, and not just demand that their children go to Sunday Church School and participate in religious education programs provided by the local parish. They should work for the Church unselfishly and with true Christian regard and understanding, their only purpose being the spiritual growth and betterment of the parish, themselves, and their families. They should give unselfishly and sacrificially for the material support of the Church, contributing without judging others who contribute either little or nothing. They should set the proper example and provide the proper environment for the spiritual growth of their children, by manifesting Christ's teachings in their home. They should know that in their family, where Christ reigns, understanding and Christian love are to be practiced.

Criticism of others and gossip about others is out of place, and contrary to the spirit of Christ, and the peace of the parish community and family. When in the company or presence of children, people dare to criticize others who are absent or speak against religion, the Clergy, the Church in general. Christian parents and all pious Orthodox people should protest and remind the people who gossip to practice self-examination and understanding. Before condemning religion and the Church, one must try to gain acquaintance with Christ and to live the ideals and teachings of his religion, then speak. Usually ignorance and half-knowledge and intolerance are responsible for the condemnation of religion and the Church.