

**CWG III: The Challenge to Welcome, Nurture, and Form Children
Our Lady of Light Parish, No Listening Session, September 5, 2016 + 3 Participants
Report by: Lillian Rodriguez, Synod Delegate**

Question 1: How can the church in the Diocese of San Diego more effectively communicate to our people the balanced sense of parenting expressed in the book “The Joy of Love” while also helping parents to turn the balance into reality?

*Add positive parenting messages in the weekly church bulletin. Quote information from the book “The Joys of Love” or from the Bible on topics addressing, “Where are our children?”, “The ethical formation of children”; as part of the church service (mass).

*Offering parenting classes at the church or include examples of Catholic Christian parenting during church mass once a week, monthly or quarterly. Include examples of positive Christian parenting and encourage parents to reinforce the practice in their homes.

*Encourage parents to set good examples to their children (volunteer participation in church events, community or church charitable outreach programs).

Question 2: What are the principal cultural distortions which limit healthy parenting in Imperial and San Diego Counties?

*The world acceptance of behavior that is contrary to God’s law. The consequences of sin have become distorted. Sin is considered acceptable and pleasurable. Ultimately, the world has lost its awareness of sin which encourages sin to become habitual. This is demonstrated by the acceptance of behavior that is contrary to Christian valued as God’s law.

*Certain laws, rules and behavior that our society adopts and accepts, can be contrary to biblical teaching. The tolerance of questionable television programs, movies and music is common. The indifference of societies’ attitude towards child adoptions by same sex couples, sam sex marriage and relationships, and abortion are example of society’s permissiveness.

*Parents who feel they do not spend enough time with their children may feel justified to overindulge them. Parents may not take the time to discipline or educate their children to behave responsibly. The lack of discipline and education does not prepare a child to handle challenges or to take responsibly for their behavior and become positive contributors of society.

*Healthy parenting is limited when parents believe and practice restrictive gender role ideology. The choices a child is given may be limited because of their gender. Parents may not accept the concept of involving and encouraging their children to engage in or be contributors in all aspects of daily life.

Question 3: Specifically, how can we as a Church more effectively empower our parents as first teachers, in the ways of faith, hope and love?

*Teach and encourage parents to pray with their children and families.

*Teach and provide parents with information on how to teach their children faith, hope and love.

*Remind and encourage parents to be positive role models and set a good example in the areas of faith, hope and love during church service by giving examples from scripture.

*Encourage parents to have discussions with their children regarding sex education that fosters a healthy sense of modesty and not the theory of safe sex.

*The church can encourage and provide parents with opportunities to be examples to their children. Living a humble life, participating in church events or outreach programs, such as feeding the homeless are examples of what the church can provide.

Question 4: How can the Church better support families in the absence of extended family?

Organize a church youth group. Children can be taught and encouraged to be evangelists, to encourage the practice of prayer and to set a good example for other children. Children need to have confidence in their faith and not accept ideas or behaviors that are contrary to Christian values.

*Church members can organize “fun” events at the church.

*Big brother/sister or sponsorship programs can provide children who do not have extended family support. Church members can provide the opportunity for a child or children to engage in activities with other families or individuals. Inviting a child to a family gathering, picking up a child and their parent to attend church service or watching a movie with other children are examples of the opportunity for the church community to provide emotional, physical and spiritual support to a child and their families.