

## Family Consultation with Parish Leaders

Sometime during the year you might consider inviting each family to a private, non-threatening “consultation” with their parish leaders. Such “family consultations” could be an opportunity for the catechetical leader and the pastor (or others when appropriate) to meet with the family in person and establish a more personal relationship with them. When you schedule the meeting, they will appreciate knowing who will be at the meeting and what they can expect to happen at that meeting.

You might also consider having this consultation in a less formal environment that provides an area where their other children could play during the meeting and still be within sight of their parents, especially if having a babysitter is an obstacle for them to schedule this time.

During this family consultation, you could gently explore with them:

- Their experience of God and the church both now and in the past
- Issues that may be keeping them from full participation in the church – i.e. divorce, annulment, misunderstandings, “what they were told”, etc.
- Their personal journey of faith – often as a couple with two different religious traditions in the home. If one parent is not Catholic, you may find an opportunity to invite them to explore the faith and assure them that they are welcome and have much to contribute.
- Struggles they face with the process of helping their children grow in the Catholic faith
- Questions they may have about the parish and/or the sacrament preparation

These family consultations could also be done in small group settings with several families coming together, followed by a private meeting at another time. The latter personal approach could be extremely important in making them feel more included and welcomed in the parish.

The family consultation will be especially important for parents or guardians who choose to provide the formation process in their own home rather than the parish setting.