*Excerpt from the apostolic exhortation of pope Saint John Paul II, Catechesi Tradendae (On Catechesis in Our Time):*

The family’s catechetical activity has a special character which is, in a sense, irreplaceable. Education in the faith by parents is already being given when the members of a family help each other to grow in faith through the witness of their Christian lives, a witness that is often without words but which perseveres through day-to-day life lived in accordance with the Gospel. This catechesis is more incisive when, in the course of family events, care is taken to explain in the home the Christian or religious content of these events.

But that is not enough: Christian parents must strive to follow and repeat, within the setting of family life, the more methodical teaching received elsewhere. The fact that these truths about the main questions of faith and Christian living are thus repeated within a family setting impregnated with love and respect will often make it possible to influence the children in a decisive way for life. The parents themselves profit from the effort that this demands of them, for in a catechetical dialogue of this sort each individual both gives and receives.

Family catechesis therefore precedes, accompanies and enriches all other forms of catechesis. Thus there cannot be too great an effort on the part of Christian parents to prepare for this ministry of being their own children’s catechists and to carry it out with tireless zeal.