

New & Expectant Parents Evening of Reflection

Suggested schedule for the evening:

4:00 PM	Arrival & Set Up
5:30-6PM	Participants arrive
6:15 PM	Opening Prayer
6:30 PM	Dinner with introductions
7:30 PM	Talk-Spirituality of Parenting (20 minute talk, 10 minute Q&A)
8:00 PM	Break
8:15 PM	Talk-Changing Relationships/Sense of Self (20 minute talk, 10 minute Q&A)
8:45 PM	Stretch
8:50 PM	Group Discussion
9:30 PM	Closing Prayer

For helpful resources for any of the segments, check out the Family pages on the Diocese of Rochester Website: <http://www.dor.org/e&c/family/>

Also check out <http://www.homefaith.com/> for parenting resources, seasonal reflections, and more...

For Opening Prayer and Closing Prayer:

You can use one of the prayers or stories from Ina Hughes' book, [A Prayer for Children](#), 1995, William Morrow and Co. or go to a site like <http://www.cptryon.org/prayer/child/> and use one of the prayers there.

During dinner have people introduce themselves, give their children's ages or when they are expecting, etc. You could also do a more structured "icebreaker" if you think your group would respond to one.

Spirituality of Parenting segment:

Use the section in the bishops' pastoral [Follow the Way of Love](#) (for a copy go to the USCCB web site <http://www.usccb.org/laity/follow.shtml>) called "**You Are the Church in Your Home**" to reflect on the holiness of the family.

Changing Relationships/Sense of Self segment:

This segment can be much more focused on the practical changes involved in being a new parent and differences in parenting styles between men and women. Some possibilities:

- * explore traditional roles in families and how expectations can influence parenting
- * discuss styles of parenting and how each spouse sees themselves (check out <http://www.aboutourkids.org/articles/parentingstyles.html> for some insights into parenting styles)
- * discuss how women and men parent differently and what gifts each bring to the family

Group Discussion Segment:

Use this time to let people share what they have found most interesting/provocative/challenging in the evening. Try having the women meet in one group and the men meet in another. Then bring everyone back together at the end to share any insights with the whole group.