

## Family-Based Parish Catechetical Program

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**Judges 13:** And the children of Israel again did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah; and Jehovah delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years. 2 And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren, and bare not. 3 And the angel of Jehovah appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not; but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son. 4 Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink no wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing: 5 for, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come upon his head; for the child shall be a Nazirite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to save Israel out of the hand of the Philistines. 6 Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of the angel of God, very terrible; and I asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his name: 7 but he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing; for the child shall be a Nazirite unto God from the womb to the day of his death.

8 ¶ Then Manoah entreated Jehovah, and said, Oh, Lord, I pray thee, let the man of God whom thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born. 9 And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again unto the woman as she sat in the field: but Manoah her husband was not with her. 10 And the woman made haste, and ran, and told her husband, and said unto him, Behold, the man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the *other* day. 11 And Manoah arose, and went after his wife, and came to the man, and said unto him, Art thou the man that spakest unto the woman? And he said, I am. 12 And Manoah said, Now let thy words come to pass: what shall be the ordering of the child, and *how* shall we do unto him? 13 And the angel of Jehovah said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the woman let her beware. 14 She may not eat of anything that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing; all that I commanded her let her observe.

15 ¶ And Manoah said unto the angel of Jehovah, I pray thee, let us detain thee, that we may make ready a kid for thee. 16 And the angel of Jehovah said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread; and if thou wilt make ready a burnt-offering, thou must offer it unto Jehovah. For Manoah knew not that he was the angel of Jehovah. 17 And Manoah said unto the angel of Jehovah, What is thy name, that, when thy words come to pass, we may do thee honor? 18 And the angel of Jehovah said unto him, Wherefore askest thou after my name, seeing it is wonderful? 19 So Manoah took the kid with the meal-offering, and offered it upon the rock unto Jehovah: and *the angel* did wondrously, and Manoah and his wife looked on.

20 For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of Jehovah ascended in the flame of the altar: and Manoah and his wife looked on; and they fell on their faces to the ground. 21 But the angel of Jehovah did no more appear to Manoah or to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of Jehovah. 22 And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God. 23 But his wife said unto him, If Jehovah were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering and a meal-offering at our hand, neither would he have showed us all these things, nor would at this time have told such things as these. 24 And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson: and the child grew, and Jehovah blessed him. 25 And the Spirit of Jehovah began to move him in Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

### Four Lessons

Successful parents recognize their privilege. (vs. 2-3)

Successful parents recognize their responsibility. (vs. 4-5)

Successful parents recognize their dependence. (vs. 6-14)

Successful parents recognize their limits. (vs. 24-25)

## Program Implementation Plan

**Phase One:** Child-centered programs with some parental involvement.

- One or more parent meeting during the year
- Written communications to parents

### **Bridges to Next Phase**

- Professional speakers to facilitate parent meetings
- Parent workshops/information nights
- Parent newsletter

**Phase Two:** Child-centered programs with some structured, committed parent involvement.

- Parent meetings combining information and some adult catechesis
- Workshops or retreats for youth with participation of parents
- Parents newsletter

### **Bridges to Phase Three**

- Parent meetings whose primary focus is catechesis
- Family-focused liturgical gathering
- Parent newsletter

**Phase Three:** Child-centered catechetical program with regularly scheduled parent involvement.

- Regularly held family gatherings
- Gatherings related to Liturgical calendar
- Resources for enriching the faith development of the home

### **Bridges to Phase Four**

- Take-home activities
- More frequent parent meetings
- Parent/Family Advisory Group

**Phase Four:** Family-centered program with on-going involvement/catechesis of child & parent.

- Monthly catechetical/faith formational meetings for parents
- Parent/Family Advisory board actively offers input to RE program
- Collaboration with other parish ministries to integrate family perspectives

### **Bridges to Phase Five**

- Family resource Center established
- Coordinated scheduling of family-centered parish activities
- Parish staff member whose primary focus is integration and advocacy of family perspective in parish life

**Phase Five:** Ongoing/fully integrated (involving all parish ministries) catechetical family faith formation.

- The Re-imagining of all parish programs into a systematic family-centered faith formation process.

### **Ideas from Parishes**

1. The Family Ministry Advocate (Staff)
2. Family Nights
3. Weekly Scripture Reflection (home)
4. Catechetical Open House (commission)
5. Family Weekly Activities (home)
6. Regular DRE Discussion with parents
7. Catechist Home Visitations
8. Godparenting Preparation
9. Marriage/Family Enrichment Programs
10. Monthly Newsletter