



VOCATION & PARENTING

Companion Materials for the Audio Resource

Vision

To invite parents, grandparents, Godparents, and all interested adults to embrace the task of raising our youth today to live their lives with a sense of *vocation*--as a unique and ongoing response to Christ's call to love God with heart, soul, mind, and strength, and the neighbor as oneself.

While this resource is geared for parents of Orthodox Christian high school and college-age youth, it has powerful and relevant wisdom for anyone—single or married, young and old—striving to live as a Christian in his or her community.

Focus

- + **The vocation of parents**
 - What is our calling as Orthodox Christian parents?
 - How can we be renewed to live this calling?
- + **Parenting for vocation**
 - How do we help our children—especially as they leave home—discover who they are and make good decisions about what they will do with their lives?

Ideas for Ways to Use Companion Materials

- + Individually, as you listen
 - Taking time to write responses on the reflection sheets will allow you to truly engage and learn from individual study
- + With your spouse, setting aside time together to reflect, listen, and discuss
 - Sharing learning with your spouse allows parents and Godparents to make mutual commitments to growth in parenting and vocation
- + With a group in your Church community, to form a community of learners in the spirit of a retreat
 - The six disks provide a way of structuring a 6-8 session study on parenting & vocation



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Opening Reflection

1. What am I hoping to gain from listening to these sessions?

2. What do I need addressed on the topic of vocation and parenting?



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Biblical Reflections

To Accompany Disc I, Track 3; prepared by Fr. Thomas Hopko

Christ and His Family

For Jesus' childhood and youth, see the Gospel according to Luke, Chapter 2.

* * * * *

And his mothers and brothers came; and standing outside they sent to him and called him. And a crowd was sitting about him, and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you." And he replied, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking around on those who sat about him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother, and sister, and mother." Mark 3:31-35

"[...] For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, and sister, and mother. Matthew 12:46-50

"[...] My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it." Luke 8: 19-21

A woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts that you sucked." But he said, "Yea, rather blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" Luke 11:27-28

Christ's Teachings

"Not everyone who says to me 'Lord, Lord' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day (i.e. the day of judgment) many will say to me 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do mighty works in your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you evildoers.'" Matthew 7:24

"Call no man father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven. Neither be called masters, for you have one Master (Greek: *kathegetes*), even the Christ. But the greatest among you shall be your servant (Greek: *diakonos*); whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted." Matthew 23:9-12

"If you would enter life, keep the commandments.... You shall not kill,



You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother, and You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”
Matthew 19:17-19

“But I say to you that every one who divorces his wife, except on the grounds of unchastity (Grk: porneia), makes her an adulteress; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.” Matthew 5:31; 19:9 See also Mark 10:1-16

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind (and with all your strength, Mark 12:28-33)). This is the great and first commandment. And the second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and prophets.” Matthew 22:37-40,

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:34-35

“He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me; and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him. (...) If a person loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home in him. He who does not love me does not keep my words; and the word which you hear is not mine, but the Father’s who sent me.” John 14:21-24

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.” John 15:9-12

“But I say to you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. To him who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from him who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and of him who takes away your goods do not ask them again. And as you wish that people would do to you, do so to them. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinner lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, and do good, and give expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.” Luke 6:27-36

“You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” Matthew 5:48



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“Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child, he is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me; but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin (or stumble, or be scandalized), it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world for temptations to sin. For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom temptation comes! (...) See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you that in heaven their angels always behold the face of the Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 18:1-10

“Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a person’s foes will be those of his own household. He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he who does not take up his cross, and follow me is not worthy of me. He who finds his life (Grk: psyche) will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it.”
Matthew 10:34-39

“If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, even his own life (Grk: psyche), he cannot be my disciple.”
Luke 14:25-27

So, therefore, whoever of you does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.”
Luke 14:33

Teachings of Christ’s Apostles

“Love is patient and kind; love is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.... So faith, hope and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love. Make love your aim....” 1 Corinthians 13.1-14.1

“For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love be servants of one another, For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ [...] But I say, walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. [...] But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...and those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us have no self-conceit, no provoking of one another, no envy of one another. [...] Bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.” Galatians 5:13-6:2



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“Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”
Ephesians 4:31-5:2

“Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. [...] Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself for her. [...] So husbands should love their wives as their own bodies... ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ This mystery is a profound one....”
Ephesians 5:21-33

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother’ (this is the first commandment with a promise), ‘that it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth.’ Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” Ephesians 6:1-4

“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness and patience, forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. [...] Wives, be subject to your husbands, as in fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.”
Colossians 3:12-21

“Do not rebuke an older man but exhort him as you would a father; treat younger men like brothers, older women like mothers, younger women like sisters, in all purity. [...] If any one does not provide for his own relatives, and especially for his own family, he has disowned the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” 1 Timothy 5:1-8

“The saying is sure:
If we have died with him, we shall also live with him;
if we endure, we shall also reign with him;
if we deny him, he will deny us;
if we are faithless, he remains faithful --
for he cannot deny himself.” 2 Timothy 2:11-13



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“Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God.[...] In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent His Son to be the expiation of our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No person has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. [...] God is love, and he who abides in love, abides in God, and God abides in him. [...] We love because he first loved us. [...] Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is a child of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.” 1 John 4:7-5:3

“Little children, let us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth. 1 John 3.18



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Orthodox Christian Parenting

To be used with Disk 1, Track 3; prepared by Fr. Thomas Hopko

The goal of Orthodox Christian parenting is to assist children in keeping God's commandments, and so to be co-crucified with Christ by the Holy Spirit's power, in order to attain to everlasting life with the Lord in God's coming kingdom.

The parents' struggle to keep God's commandments fulfilled in loving as Christ has loved us.

1. Love for God with all their heart, mind, soul and strength.
2. Love for their parents.
3. Love for their children.
4. Love for their relatives and neighbors.
5. Love for their enemies.

The parents' struggle for grace in order to keep God's commandments in Christ that are fulfilled in love, by the Holy Spirit.

1. Liturgical worship
2. Participation in the Sacraments
3. Confession of sins & Taking Counsel
4. Reading the Bible
5. Reading other good books
6. Fasting
7. Practicing Silence
8. Sharing possessions
9. Serving others
10. Coming to terms with one's parents, and one's "story" generally

The parents' struggle for personal holiness and beatitude, with faith, hope and love:

1. Poverty of spirit
2. Purity of heart
3. Blessed mourning
4. Mercy
5. Meekness
6. Peacemaking
7. Forgiving
8. Joyfulness
9. Hungering and thirsting for righteousness
10. Patiently enduring suffering for righteousness



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The Vocation of Parenting

To Accompany Disc II, Track 4; prepared by Fr. Thomas Hopko

Parents

Orthodox Christian parents are a man and a woman married to each other in Christ, communicants of the Church striving to keep Christ's commandments and learning to love as God loves.

The purpose and goal of a marriage between an Orthodox Christian and a non-Orthodox person is the same: to grow to be ever more perfectly one in Christ in keeping His commandments and learning to love as He loves.

When a couple is divorced, each person is obliged to maintain as positive an image of their former spouse as they possibly can before their children. Single parents are to provide for an adult, or several adults, of the opposite sex to be strongly involved in the lives of their children. Divorced or widowed Christians who remarry do so only with special care and counsel, learning from their previous marriage.

Christians who would be effective parents must consciously strive to come to terms with their own parents and grandparents, and their family members generally. They must come to see and accept the truth of their personal and family "story," forgiving what needs to be forgiven, and becoming freer and more healed of their childhood wounds that consciously and unconsciously determine and control their adult behavior and their relations with their children.

Before children are born

Children are an essential part of marriage. They are to be desired, loved and prayed for before they are conceived. A couple refusing to have children may not, and indeed cannot, be married in church. Controlling conception may never be done by means of aborting a fetus (or possible fetus). Controlling conception by means which do not destroy a fetus may sometimes be done before God responsibly, with spiritual counsel. Maintaining a vigorous (or Viagrous) sex life into the old age is not an Orthodox Christian goal.

Children in the womb

Children in the womb are to be prayed for and protected at all costs. Abortion is forbidden. Those who have had or directly participated in abortions are to be counseled to deal properly with this sin before God, with proper penance and reparation, and proper counsel



to avoid depression and despair (which are always consciously or subconsciously present in believers.)

Infants

A child's spiritual life begins before conception and birth, and continues from the moment of birth by being loved, cared for, protected, carried, held, blessed, prayed over and talked and sung to by parents who see themselves as "stewards" and not "owners" of the children that God gives them, to Whom they belong. Children are not their parents' property, possession or project. Orthodox Christian parents arrange for a Baptism, Chrismation and Holy Communion of their children that is not merely a religious ritual and a family, social or cultural event. Infants are brought regularly to Holy Communion from the day of their Baptism. They have a patron saint and live in a home and room that is clean, orderly, nicely decorated and blessed with a "holy atmosphere" through the presence of a Cross, icons, Christian music and books.

Little Children

Little children are prayed with, read to, sung to and talked with about Christian faith and life. Conversation with children about God, Christ, the Gospel and the Church is essential. Parents are to make this spiritual communion and conversation joyful. They never introduce anything into it that a child can't understand and cannot and need not intellectually and/or emotionally handle. There is never any moralizing. And children are never asked what they think or feel about what they are discussing and doing spiritually -- like, for example, going to church. All conversation and discussion is exclusively about good, true, beautiful and positive things, normally in the forms of stories, pictures and songs. There is never any discussion about evil people and evil acts. Life -- not parents -- teaches children about evil when they are ready to notice it, ask about it and deal with it mentally and emotionally. Church is enjoyable for children when they have some sense of what is happening and is going to happen there, and when they can participate in it to the full measure of their abilities. This happens only when parents who understand, believe, love and live by these things themselves talk about them and rejoice in them with their children, over and again.

Growing children

As children grow they question. Their questions are to be respected and honored and answered. They are not to be feared, discouraged, scorned, ridiculed or suppressed. When parents themselves can't answer their children's questions, or come to the point in the child's lives when they can't talk with them about serious spiritual things because they themselves are necessarily part of the children's "growing pains" (however good-willed they may be), they gladly allow their children to speak with others, and even act to provide helpful people and events for their children when such purposeful action is necessary.



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Growing children who are in the process of coming to terms with themselves and their family, culture, church, world and peers often cannot and do not want to speak with their parents about these things for any number of reasons. Parents are to respect and honor this aspect of their individual and personal growth that is, hopefully, hopefully “to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature humanity, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children....” (Ephesians 4:13-14)

Growing children must be given the opportunity to see, know and experience the freedom, respect and love that their parents are giving them. And they must know, after all, that their parents fully trust them. Trustworthy parents normally produce trustworthy children. Above all, growing children must never consider themselves as their parents’ possession, property or project.

Parents of growing children must be prepared for them to question, rebel, make mistakes, fall and fail, and so to learn, as they only can, what it means to be a human being, a creature of God and a Christian. And they must be prepared to give them their unqualified and unconditional support in this painful process, protecting and guiding them as they can, being always “there” for them in a home with an open door and set table and ready bedroom and bathroom.

Orthodox Christian parents should attempt to keep conversation and communication going through this growing stage, but should also know and honor the fact that “new elements” enter the picture which make this difficult. As long as children live at home, they are to follow the house rules that the parents themselves follow, and to do so according to their age and spiritual growth. The uniqueness of each child is to be respected.

General rules require personal and specific application, with communication, clarity and consistency. Nothing causes conflict and chaos more than lack of communication, lack of clarity about what is expected, and inconsistency in applying the rules. What is all right this morning cannot be wrong tonight. What is punished today cannot be let go or overlooked tomorrow. What is forbidden when visitors are present cannot be permitted when no one is looking. When something is ok for one child, but not for another, the reasons should be explained, even when (most likely!) they will not be easily or readily accepted (at least until the day when they are allowed and the other child is forbidden!)

Adult children

By the time children leave home, and they are to be encouraged to do when they are ready, which normally is after they finish high school, Christian parents remain interested, concerned and available, but not overbearing, intrusive or manipulating. At this point more than ever the child needs to feel loved, respected and trusted in freedom – and to be fervently prayed for. The door of their family home must be always open to them, no matter what. Certain difficulties and failures, sometimes very painful, are to be expected and even welcomed as necessary elements in their spiritual lives. When the time for profession, employment, marriage or a monastic vocation is to be decided, the child must be left free to make the decision as an adult. Parents may assist in the process, as they are asked and included, but they ultimately, at this point, insist on nothing. Their child is now an adult, their brother or sister in Christ.

Thus the process moves from a communal “we” setting where all follow the same “rules” that the parents themselves are keeping (and not simply “enforcing”) until the time when the children are living their own adult lives that are hopefully and ideally fuller, deeper and richer than that of their parents whose sole task has been to assist in making them in every way better than themselves.

Crucial “C’s” in the parenting process:

Co-crucifixion with Christ in the keeping of his Commandments

Faith, hope, love, truth, peace, joy, gladness, kindness, goodness, patience, forbearance, gratitude, self-control, spiritual freedom, poverty of spirit, purity of heart, chastity, meekness, mourning, mercy, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, patient endurance of temptations, trials, afflictions, persecutions and injustices -- all made possible by Godlike humility produced and empowered by God’s grace.

Communion	in truth and love
Commitment	without qualification or condition
Communication	in all matters, that requires listening as well as speaking
Conversation	about all things, great and small
Counsel	by elders with full respect for personal freedom and uniqueness
Clarity	to avoid misunderstanding and confusion
Consistency	to avoid irritation, anger and madness
Compassion	co-suffering in trials, afflictions and failures
Comfort	consolation in pain, without justifying errors and sins
Courage	patient endurance in all things with God, in truth & love



And five “F’s”

- Faith in God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Church’s Scriptures, Sacraments, Services and Saints, and one another.
- Fidelity in response to and imitation of God’s unending, unqualified and unconditional fidelity to His beloved creation and people just to Christ’s kenotic death on the Cross
- Freedom from everything that binds and enslaves a person, with a total absence of coercion, domination and manipulation appropriate to a person’s age and abilities by which alone mature personhood and holiness are possible, with divine boldness born of humility.
- Forgiveness endlessly and always in all things, no matter what; which does not mean that evils were not done and sins not committed, but does mean that evils and sins, however heinous, are admitted but not allowed to break the living communion of love in God.
- Forbearance patient, courageous and consistent endurance in all things born of humility and trust in God.

And ten problematic and potentially pernicious “P’s”:

- Power
- Pleasure
- Praise
- Profession
- Profit
- Possessions
- Property
- Position
- Prestige
- Popularity

And the ultimate opposite of Godlike humility that is the source of all human evil, misery, suffering, pain and unhappiness:

Pride and Possessiveness



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Parenting for Vocation

Prepared by Fr. Nicholas C. Triantafilou; to be used with Disc II, Track 5

I. Genesis

- Familial Environment
- Unmarried Young Adult Life
- Premarital Years: Alone Or With Future Spouse
- Conjugal Living (no children)
- Conception – Life Within The Womb

II. Prayers

- Day of Birth
- Eighth Day
- 40-day Blessing

“The Servant of God _____ is churched in the name of the
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen”

III. Holy Mysteries (Sacraments)

- Baptism
- Chrismation
- Holy Eucharist
- Holy Unction
- Holy Confession (Parents)



IV. Liturgical and Prayer Life

- Existential Participation

Regular Sequence

Special Feasts

KAT OIKON ECCLESIA

(Chapel within the home)

V. Daily Living

- Respect
- Conversations
- Entertainment
- Direct Planned Exchanges
- Parents' and Offspring's Field Education

VI. Creational, Theological Pilgrimage

- Process of Synergy
- Psalm 23



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Two Poems

BALLAD OF THE TEMPEST

We were crowded in the cabin,
Not a soul would dare to sleep,
It was midnight on the waters,
And a storm was on the deep.

'Tis a fearful thing in winter
To be shattered by the blast,
And to hear the rattling trumpet
Thunder, "Cut away the mast!"

So we shuddered there in silence,
For the stoutest held his breath,
While the hungry sea was roaring
And the breakers talked with death.

As thus we sat in darkness,
Each one busy with his prayers,
"We are lost!" the captain shouted,
As he staggered down the stairs.

But his little daughter whispered,
As she took his icy hand,
"Isn't God upon the ocean,
Just the same as on the land?"

Then we kissed the little maiden,
And we spake in better cheer,
And we anchored safe in harbor
When the morn was shining clear.

JAMES THOMAS FIELDS



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COMMUNION

Quietly I enter the closet
Quietly I close the door.
Outside are the futilities,
The doubts and useless struggles;
Forgotten are the little things
That too long have shackled my mind
And held me prisoner.

Now unhurried and free
I contemplate God,
His mercy and His love.
Patiently I wait.

Lo, out of the shadows
Comes His presence.
Silently we visit.
From His wounded hand
I receive His balm
And His comfort.
I rest.

The door to the world is opened!
Eagerly I pass,
No longer futile,
Nor fearful,
Nor yet alone.
No longer I.
But. We!

P.M. SNIDER
In Poems that Touch the Heart



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Closing Reflection

1. Since writing your Midpoint Reflection, what do you need to add to your “top three” lists?

2. What is the most powerful lesson you learned, overall, on vocation & parenting?

(continued on next page)



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-Closing Reflection Continued-

3. **Going forward, how will your understanding and actions be different regarding vocation and parenting?**

4. **What are lessons worth sharing with others? With whom will you share them?**



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Further Reading

CrossRoad Staff Readings

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www.orthodoxytoday.org, (taken from: *Spiritual Instruction and Discourses, vol.I – The Authentic Seal*. Ormylia, Greece: Ormylia Publishing, 1999.)
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- Mills, William, C. "Our Common Calling to Holiness and Sanctity." *Doing More More with Life: Connecting Christian Higher Education to a Call to Service*. Ed. Michael R. Miller. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2007.
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Twenge, Jean. *Generation Me: Why Today's Young Americans are More Confident, Assertive, Entitled – and More Miserable than Ever Before*. New York: Free Press, 2006.

Additional Recommended Readings

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Kirshenbaum, Mira, and Charles Foster. *Parent-Teen Breakthrough: the Relationship Approach*. New York: Plume, 1991.

Levine, Madeline. *The Price of Privilege: how parental pressure and material advantage are creating a generation of disconnected and unhappy kids*. New York: Harper Collins, 2006.

Secular Materials on Parenting College Students

These articles are some of the best articles we found online to address parenting college students:

http://www.smcm.edu/residencelife/forparents_handbook_hy.html

<http://www.newhorizons.org/lifelong/adolescence/kastner.htm>

<http://www.marymount.edu/parents/tips.html>

http://www.aboutourkids.org/articles/transition_college_separation_change_parents_students



CrossRoad Parents' Association

The Parents' Association is a vital standing component of our CrossRoad program. The Parents Association provides an important link between the staff of our CrossRoad program and parents. The Association helps keep parents informed about the Office of Vocation and Ministry and serves as a resource for parents seeking general information about the work of CrossRoad and its outreach into the Orthodox Community.

The purpose of this association is to:

- Establish a close, dynamic relationship between the parents of CrossRoad participants and alumni and the staff of OVM. Our goal is that all may work together harmoniously for the best interests of the children and our Orthodox community;
- Support and enhance the activities of Office of Vocation and Ministry and its CrossRoad program, encouraging participation of and cooperation among all members of the Orthodox community;
- Provide a voice for the parents of the CrossRoad Program;
- Assist the CrossRoad administration and staff in maintaining the fullest possible sensitivity to the needs of our youth and young adults;
- Sponsor major fund-raising events within each year;
- Provide spiritual, educational, and social events for the parents to meet, to share, and to bond as adults with the same basic concern: the spiritual growth and wellbeing of their children.

Eligibility and Membership

The following are the avenues for membership:

1. Any parents or grandparents who believe in the mission of CrossRoad and their own vocation as Orthodox Christian parents may enroll.
2. All parents, stepparents, or guardians of a previous or current CrossRoad student, by virtue of having a child attend CrossRoad, is automatically enrolled as a member (but may opt out if they so desire).
3. All grandparents of a previous or current CrossRoad student may enroll.
4. Finally, any parents or grandparents who have made an annual gift to the OVM or CrossRoad shall be members of the Association if they so desire.

How to Enroll

Contact the Office of Vocation and Ministry and The CrossRoad Program at crossroad@hchc.edu or the address below.



Our Approach to Evaluation

The Office of Vocation and Ministry (OVM) follows an evaluation approach that is not about grades and scores, but is about having good coaches and editors. A succinct summary of this approach is presented by Craig Dykstra, Vice President for Religion of the Lilly Endowment, in his brief essay, “Evaluation as Collaborative Inquiry.”*

How do superior athletes improve their performance? They seek out coaches/teachers/evaluators who help them see and feel what they are doing, people who can help them understand what’s going on and figure out how to do it better. Dykstra says, “The interesting thing about the really good athletes is that they regularly seek such help. They go get it. They ask for it. They even pay for it.” The OVM evaluation question is not, “What grade do we get on the test?” for this kind of work cannot be effectively measured in this manner (in truth, we strive for the ultimate salvation of ourselves and those we serve, which is only truly measured by our Lord). A better question is, “What plans have we made for building in self-reflection on what we have learned and for getting good coaching as we conduct our work?” Evaluation that follows this approach consists in purposeful inquiry into the structure, processes, and substance of the work at hand.

The evaluation plan calls for collecting qualitative research informed by applied anthropology and guided by the vision of planning and evaluation articulated by Kathleen A. Cahalan in *Projects that Matter*. This includes: the ongoing collection of qualitative data in the form of narratives, the ongoing exploratory and in-depth interviews among stakeholders, and the continuous collaborative review of the content of OVM programs. We see parents of our participants as integral to the collaborative process, and greatly value their input.

The work of the OVM will be deemed successful if it enhances the ability of individuals and communities to (1) develop new skills, knowledge, and the disposition to explore their vocations as Orthodox Christians, and (2) commit to working to enrich and strengthen Orthodox Christians and Orthodox churches and institutions in America. An external evaluator tracks these qualities in the programming and in the evaluation research. Specific outcomes include: engagement of the theological exploration of vocation in teaching and mentoring undergraduates; student commitment to education and training in fields that will equip them for lay and ordained ministry; and publications that share the OVM knowledge and experience of the Orthodox Christian theological exploration of vocation. The OVM programs have been deemed extremely successful to date in part because the Office takes ongoing evaluation of its programs extremely seriously.

Please take the time to fill out and return the Evaluation Form on the following page. For more information on this process or help us further evaluate our programs, please contact Ann Bezzerides, OVM Director (abezzerides@hchc.edu), or Dr. Frances Kostarelos, OVM Evaluator (f-kostarelos@govst.edu).

* Article accessible online at: <http://www.christianleaders.org/MS360/evaluation.htm>.



Vocation & Ministry
ANSWER THE CALL TO SERVE

EVALUATION FORM

Please feel free to be as honest as you possibly can—we can take it! And your feedback provides us with important information that will enable us to improve our programs and offerings.

1. What was it that made you **decide to listen to this resource**? (i.e. speaker, recommended, etc.)

2. What were **your expectations** for this resource? Were your expectations met? Why/why not?

3. How did you use this resource? (i.e. individually, in a group, etc.) Please describe.

4. What was the **most meaningful** for you of all the sessions on this audio resource? Why?

5. Has your *perspective* on vocation and parenting **changed** at all? If so, how?

7. What are your **feelings** about **your own vocation** (calling, struggles, career choices)?

8. Optional Demographic Information (please circle or fill in)

a. Male Female b. Orthodox Non-Orthodox c. parent of youth other: _____

d. If relevant, Orthodox Jurisdiction (e.g. Greek, Antiochian, OCA): _____

e. Region/State/Country: _____ (please continue to second page)



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Please RATE the following aspects of this resource by writing in the number that best applies:

Forget it!	Poor	Average	Good	Outstanding
1 2	3 4	5 6	7 8	9 10

6. What was your **overall impression** of this audio resource? _____
Comments:

7. How would you rate the **sound quality** of the resource? _____
Comments:

8. How would you rate the **speaker presentations** on the resource? _____
Comments:

9. How would you rate the **accompanying materials** for the audio resource? _____
Comments:

10. How would you rate the **time for reflection** that the materials provided? _____
Comments:

11. Has your **understanding of CrossRoad and/or Hellenic College changed** through this resource? If so, how?

12. What are **suggestions** you have for the future work of the CrossRoad Parents' Association?

13. Any additional **suggestions** you would offer to the OVM (things that *were good*, things that *need improvement*, etc)? (feel free to use opposite side)

Please mail to Office of Vocation & Ministry at the address below.

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