

**Domestic Church** is the family branch of the Light-Life Movement, founded in Poland by Servant of God, Fr. Franciszek Blachnicki with the guidance, support, and influence of his bishop, Karol Wojtyła, St. John Paul the Great.

In 1973, Fr. Blachnicki combined the formation of his Light-Life Movement, originally for the youth of Poland with the structure of Teams of Our Lady, a movement for married couples founded in France. He used the Church document on the Catechesis of Adults to provide the timeline and the elements necessary for married couples to truly come to grow in their knowledge and experience of Christ and His Church.

In December of 2011, the leaders of Domestic Church in Poland began translating the formation materials into English and sent a couple and a priest from Poland to Lake Charles, Louisiana for an Evangelization Retreat to start the first English-speaking community in the world. There were 13 couples who began formation from that retreat, and the community in the United States has since grown to more than 300 couples. There are now couples in 12 different diocese who have attended a retreat and begun formation, and there are many other couples and dioceses who plan to take advantage of this simple, beautiful gift of formation, accountability, and true, organic growth in love and faith within their Sacrament!

In 2013, its members celebrated the 40 year anniversary of Domestic Church, which now has 13,000 couples in Poland, and thousands more throughout the world taking advantage of the great gift of “conjugal spirituality.”

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For next retreat dates, more information  
and Registration, go to:

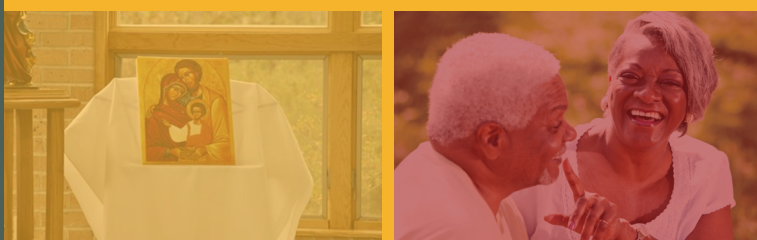
[www.dioc.org/marriage-enrichment](http://www.dioc.org/marriage-enrichment)

(608)791-2673

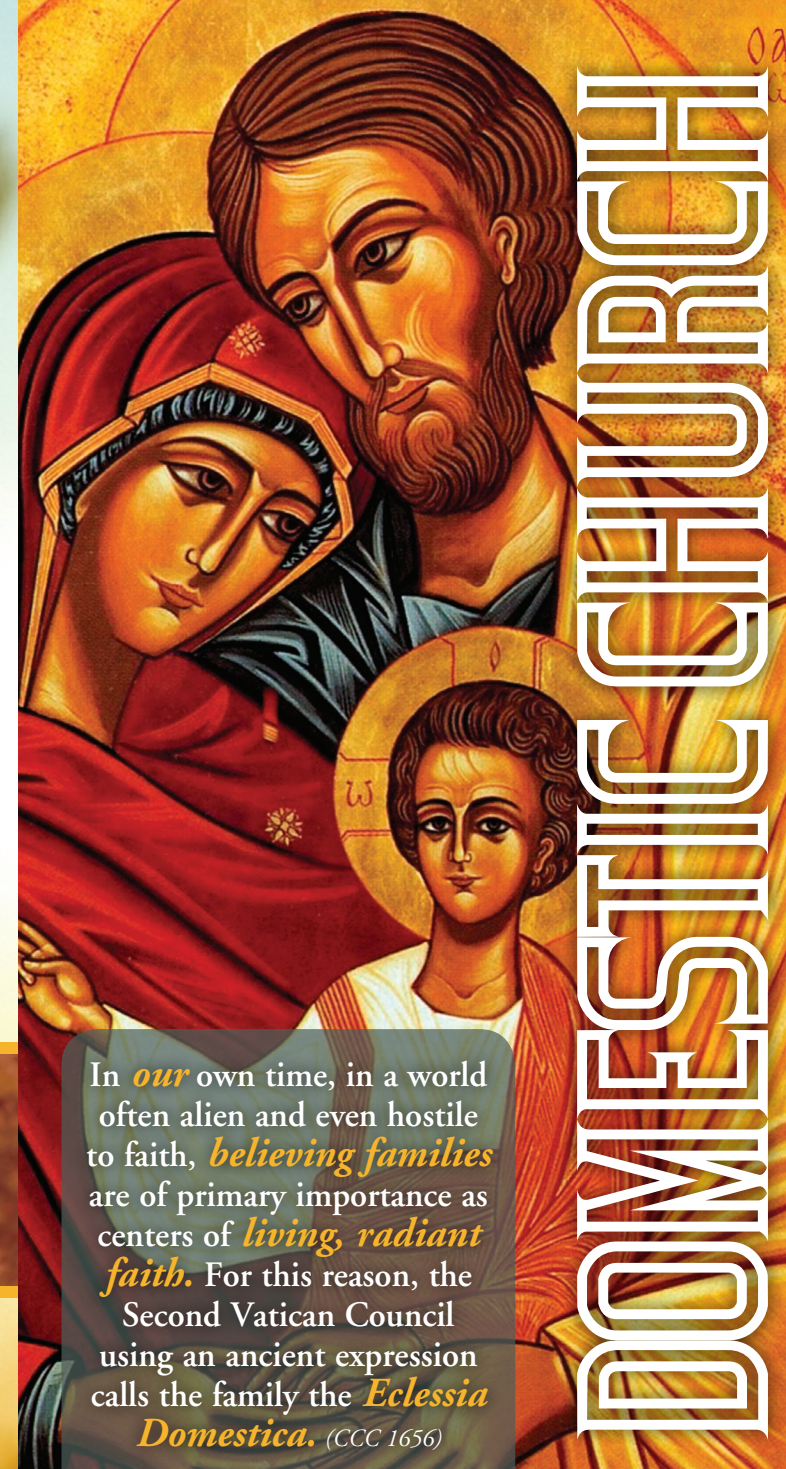
Email: [familylife@dioc.org](mailto:familylife@dioc.org)

Retreat will be held at St. Anthony Spirituality Center |  
Marathon, WI

DOMESTIC CHURCH



Learn more about  
Domestic Church at  
[www.domesticchurchfamilies.com](http://www.domesticchurchfamilies.com)



In *our* own time, in a world often alien and even hostile to faith, *believing families* are of primary importance as centers of *living, radiant faith*. For this reason, the Second Vatican Council using an ancient expression calls the family the *Eclessia Domestica*. (CCC 1656)





# “So, it’s just being Catholic!”

## 1) *Daily Individual Prayer:*

Also called the “Tent of Meeting,” referring to the tent that Moses would enter into, outside the camp, to meet face to face with God. This commitment is to step outside of the activities of the day everyday to a separate, quiet space to do nothing but enter into the presence of God. Though this is quite difficult at first, it is absolutely necessary, and a relationship with God begins to grow quickly and more easily as this “gift” is taken advantage of.

## 2) *Daily Study of Scripture:*

Again, in a quiet, separate space, the individual takes advantage of the gift of the living Word of God to commune with Him and come to internalize what He reveals through the Holy Spirit during that time each day. The Church’s teaching on Scripture, especially its use in prayer, is utilized here, especially the principles of Lectio Divina. There is no particular Scripture given to read and reflect on, just the challenge to dive into the Bible each day and grow in our ability to discover what God has for us there.

## 3) *Daily Couple Prayer:*

The couple takes time each day to share intimate and open prayer, out loud, in their own words. Reciting prayers together (like the Rosary or Liturgy of the Hours) is extremely valuable, but it is not as intimate or unitive as allowing your spouse to witness your conversation with God. There is no length of time or other regulation set on this prayer, but formation focuses on overcoming the obstacles to making real, intimate couple prayer a daily habit.



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## 4) *Daily Family Prayer:*

Like the others, though simple, this is an activity that is often overlooked. The formation regarding family prayer time focuses on setting aside time each day, making sure each member is able to participate and benefit. The focus, again, is on spontaneous prayer, though structure, including some recited prayers, tends to help create a tradition or expectations for the overall flow and its role in the daily routine. Each family will discover and grow in their own way of praying together, but suggestions are given for how to make it fruitful for the different stages in a family’s life.

## 5) *Monthly Couple Dialogue:*

Though a couple may communicate often, rarely do they take the time necessary to really dig into the deeper, underlying issues that are most important in their marriage, and if they do, it’s usually unprepared, stressed, and without relying on the presence of God. Monthly couple dialogue is a three-way conversation—both spouses and God. It is a few hours of scheduled, uninterrupted time that a couple spends time praying and preparing for ahead of time so they may deepen their understanding of one another and of God’s will for their lives.

## 6) *Rule of Life:*

Particularly in connection with monthly dialogues, each couple decides upon specific changes or policies they will put in place in their individual lives, their marriage, and their household that reflect God’s will for them and their efforts to grow in holiness according to His promptings.

## 7) *Yearly Retreat:*

Each family commits to attending a Domestic Church retreat at least once a year. Every retreat (excluding the initial Evangelization Retreat) is a family retreat, so the kids come, too. The theme of the retreats each year are based on the varying degrees of spiritual growth and build upon one another like rungs on a ladder.

**Q:** Is the Domestic Church movement officially recognized by the Catholic Church?

**A:** Yes, it is recognized by the Pontifical Council for the Laity.

**Q:** This sounds wonderful, but what are the time commitments? My family is already involved in so many different things.

**A:** One of the attractive aspects of Domestic Church is that couples only meet with their circles once a month. The rest of the work is done in your home with your spouse and family. Meetings don’t get us closer to God and one another; prayer, intentional use of our time, and the grace and mercy of God are what make the difference! We make progress in the spiritual life and in living the graces of the Sacrament of Marriage by practicing the commitments. The meetings give us accountability and support for this.

**Q:** How does a couple take advantage of Domestic Church formation? How do you start?

**A:** The normal way a couple starts is by attending an Evangelization Retreat. That’s the first step. It’s a four day retreat (from Thursday evening to Sunday at noon), and presently, they are mostly held in or near south Louisiana. But, if you have a good sized group of couples who wants to get started, a retreat can be planned in your area. Contact us to get more information about putting on a retreat in your area!

**Q:** At what age are we too old, or too young, to join Domestic Church?

**A:** There are no age restrictions, and we have found that couples of all ages are deeply affected and grateful for the gifts received through Domestic Church formation. We have newlyweds in their early 20’s on up to couples in their 70’s and everything in between; there are couples with young children, those with children out of the home, and those with no children. The circles are usually a mixture of all of these, and that mixture has been an awesome gift for all involved.

**Q:** Getting a priest to commit to joining a circle seems like it would be difficult. Is it really possible to have a priest in every circle?

**A:** We have found that once priests see what Domestic Church is about, and that their role is one of presence and fatherly guidance rather than full-on leadership, it becomes much more attractive. Their testimonies have given indication they enjoy the circle meetings because they don’t have to prepare anything, they get deep insight into marriage and the spiritual growth of families, and they quickly experience a deep closeness with the couples in their circle.

