

## **How important is it that fathers attend Sunday Mass with their children?**

(I have to admit that this question was not really submitted in the question box, but I thought it was good follow-up information to last week's question about attending Mass on Sunday.)

Part of a Catholic parent's responsibility is to teach their children about their obligation to attend Sunday Mass. And there is no better teacher than a good example. A survey that I recently came upon, however, surprised me with how important the father's role is in setting that example. The survey took place in Switzerland and the results were published in 2000. Here are some interesting points to consider:

- 1 If both mother and father attend church regularly, then 33% of their children will attend regularly when they are adults.
- 2 If the mother attends regularly, but the father attends irregularly, then only 3% of their children will attend regularly.
- 3 If the mother is non-practicing, but the father attends regularly, then 44% of their children will attend regularly. This is greater than if both parents attend regularly! Maybe this is because more of these fathers are strong in their faith and not just going because their wives are dragging them along.

A strong father who attends Mass regularly clearly has a significant effect on his children's future. Dads, you are very important spiritual role models. Remember this next time you feel like relaxing at home on Sunday morning. And, of course, come to church with a positive attitude so that your children know that you think it is important. Do not act like another child who your wife needs to struggle with to get you to attend with her. Your children can tell the difference, and it will affect their future. (More information on this study can be found at <http://www.fisheaters.com/menandchurch.html>)

**Deacon Joe**