

Chapter Five

Other Opportunities for Instruction

The last chapter dealt with formal instruction - school-based, parish-based, home-based. But side by side with this, there are many opportunities in daily family life for Grandparents to spell out the Christian story to their Grandchildren. Some of these are obvious but, for the sake of completeness, they deserve a mention. A simple example is grace before (and after) meals. Unfortunately, this simple and beautiful prayer habit is becoming less common, even in practising Catholic families (perhaps because we have fewer family meals nowadays).



Grandparents who have abandoned the habit should revive it as part of their new responsibility and be careful to observe it diligently when their Grandchildren are present. It is bound to arouse their curiosity, especially if not practised at home, and could prompt a useful chat about God, providence and fatherhood - even, indeed, about prayer in general, especially night and morning prayer. (After all, children need to be taught how to pray and it is disturbing to think that many

children must be growing-up nowadays without knowing what prayer is.

A sincere and well-executed Sign of the Cross will greatly add to the effectiveness of grace before/after meals (and perhaps on other appropriate occasions). Children often see this magnificent Christian gesture used, for example, on television by athletes from Catholic countries. They will be all the more ready to listen to a short explanation of its origin and meaning. Reference has already been made to the various

