

# Stages of Family Growth Life Cycle

<i>Stage</i>	<i>Reward</i>	<i>Challenge</i>	<i>Spiritual Task</i>	<i>Ministry Resource</i>
<b><i>Single Adult Family</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Autonomy</li> <li>➤ Intimacy with peers</li> <li>➤ Career plans</li> <li>➤ New relationship with family of origin</li> <li>➤ New experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differentiate self-family</li> <li>• Developing community of support</li> <li>• Tasks of intimacy/skills</li> <li>• Establishing start of career</li> <li>• Loneliness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Vocation discernment</li> <li>† Dealing with moral values as an adult</li> <li>† Establishing an adult faith relationship with God and community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young adult groups</li> <li>• Adult faith enrichment</li> <li>• Faith in action opportunities</li> <li>• Vocation education</li> <li>• Young adult affirmation</li> <li>• Mentoring resources</li> </ul>
<b><i>Establishing Family - Courtship – Forming New Family Unit</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Couple time</li> <li>➤ Romance</li> <li>➤ Freedom</li> <li>➤ Intimacy/belonging</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Realign relationships with families of origin</li> <li>• Adjust to living together: sex, marital chastity, money, lifestyle, friends, work, religion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Developing couple spirituality – entering the covenant relationship; domestic church</li> <li>† Finding or forming a church</li> <li>† Accepting/negotiating differences in faith expression</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marriage preparation programs</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> marriage/blended family preparation</li> <li>• Interfaith marriage ministry</li> <li>• Natural Family Planning</li> <li>• Young marrieds support groups</li> <li>• Marriage enrichment programs</li> <li>• Married couple's retreat, annual renewal of vows</li> </ul>
<b><i>First Child in Family</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Generativity</li> <li>➤ Joy in watching child develop</li> <li>➤ Enriched identity as a family</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less couple time – making room for another in the family system</li> <li>• Less personal freedom</li> <li>• New role as parents</li> <li>• Develop new relationship to extended family, to one's own parents and to spouse's parents/family</li> <li>• Childcare</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Expand to family spirituality</li> <li>† Develop religious traditions/rituals</li> <li>† Awareness of vocation of parenting</li> <li>† Expand generosity of service</li> <li>† Nurturing couple relationship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marriage enrichment programs</li> <li>• Baptismal preparation programs</li> <li>• Young marrieds support group</li> <li>• Family prayer materials</li> <li>• Values education/media awareness</li> <li>• Faith-based sexuality education</li> <li>• Parish parenting programs/network</li> <li>• Christian sexuality materials/media</li> </ul>
<b><i>School-Age Family</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Joy of seeing children develop, excel and form peer relationships</li> <li>➤ Shared tasks in home</li> <li>➤ Family bonding, shared memories</li> <li>➤ Family's world expands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pressure/pull of school and outside activities on family</li> <li>• Challenge of being primary religious and sex educators</li> <li>• Less time for couple</li> <li>• Dual career/childcare issues</li> <li>• Individual issues of each child</li> <li>• Adjustment when last child enters school</li> <li>• Adults dealing with family issues of addiction, mid-life, family of origin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Accepts each child's strengths and limitations with grace</li> <li>† Nurture couple relationship</li> <li>† Teach/model values and morals</li> <li>† Maintain healthy boundaries</li> <li>† Incorporate faith practices</li> <li>† Pass on faith to children through traditions, rituals, prayers, stories</li> <li>† Family as "servant" community</li> <li>† Marking peace with family of origin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School-age parenting programs</li> <li>• School-age religious education</li> <li>• Family-centered enrichment</li> <li>• Marriage enrichment programs</li> <li>• Ministry to marriages in crisis</li> <li>• Divorce ministry</li> <li>• Single parent support/network</li> <li>• Ministry for children with loss</li> <li>• Family counseling services</li> </ul>

# Stages of Family Growth Life Cycle

<i>Stage</i>	<i>Reward</i>	<i>Challenge</i>	<i>Spiritual Task</i>	<i>Ministry Resource</i>
<b><i>Adolescence and Family</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Joy in watching child develop</li> <li>➤ Beginning of a new kind of relationship in family</li> <li>➤ Increasing independence and competence in children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenge to parental authority (negotiating)</li> <li>• Middlecence meets adolescence less time with extended family</li> <li>• Continued mid-life challenges in marriage relationship with extended family</li> <li>• Needs of aging parents add more pressure</li> <li>• Teen rebellion, sexual issues, addictions, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Letting go of children while maintaining family unity, values</li> <li>† Cooperate with larger church adolescent faith development program</li> <li>† New forms of family prayer and recreation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth ministry programs</li> <li>• Marriage enrichment</li> <li>• Ministry to marriages in crisis</li> <li>• Ministry to teens with losses</li> <li>• Parenting teens materials</li> <li>• Drugs, alcohol, sex education</li> <li>• Media awareness training</li> <li>• Parish parent support systems</li> </ul>
<b><i>Letting Go Family</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Friends with children</li> <li>➤ Parents entry into new arenas (career, volunteer)</li> <li>➤ More time with spouse, friends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-negotiating couple relationship</li> <li>• Caring for own parents</li> <li>• Extra financial burdens</li> <li>• Breaking continuity of family</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Letting go-healing the dream</li> <li>† Redefining spirituality of couple</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bereavement ministry</li> <li>• Marriage enrichment</li> <li>• Ministry to struggling marriages</li> <li>• Support for people caring for aging parents</li> <li>• Support for dealing with mid-life issues</li> <li>• Support for widowed, separated and divorced</li> </ul>
<b><i>Empty Nest Family</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Freedom: finances and time</li> <li>➤ Children settling in</li> <li>➤ Grandchildren</li> <li>➤ Back to couple-ness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loneliness</li> <li>• Children returning home</li> <li>• Letting go – pain of loss (evaluating self as parent)</li> <li>• Entry of in-laws, grandchildren</li> <li>• Unexpected parenting of grandchildren</li> <li>• Preparing for retirement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Emphasize personal spirituality</li> <li>† Exploring new opportunities</li> <li>† Wisdom, acceptance, trust</li> <li>† Dealing with aging parents of self and spouse</li> <li>† Realizing relationships include children's spouses, in-laws and grandchildren</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marriage enrichment</li> <li>• Support for struggling marriages</li> <li>• Support for widowed, separated and divorced</li> <li>• Celebrations of aging church members</li> <li>• Retirement groups</li> </ul>
<b><i>Aging Family</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Fulfillment in life</li> <li>➤ Decrease in tasks—more free time</li> <li>➤ New relationships with widows and friends</li> <li>➤ Grandchildren</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of energy, work, identity, health, spouse, family members and friends</li> <li>• Shifting generational roles</li> <li>• Staying connected with younger generation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Acceptance</li> <li>† Preparing for eternity, life review</li> <li>† Integrates</li> <li>† Emphasizing personal spirituality</li> <li>† Wisdom, acceptance, trust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bereavement ministry</li> <li>• Outreach to homebound and elderly</li> <li>• Social groups for elderly</li> <li>• Hospice</li> <li>• Parish nurses</li> <li>• Reminiscence opportunities for older church members</li> </ul>