

Give us the grace, O God, to hear your words and take them to heart. Amen

Your Child's Spiritual Development: LISTENING WELL

If we want our children to learn to listen attentively to the **Word of God** in their lives, they need to have had good experiences of listening to others and being listened to as well. Here are some ways you can foster that at home:

1. **Model listening well to your children. Expect careful listening in return. Stop what you're doing and make eye contact when your child is talking to you. Ask the same from your child.**
2. **Sometimes it's easier to have open conversations in the car while running errands. Turn off the music and have a conversation. Ask an open-ended question such as "If you could be any animal in the world, which one would you choose and why?" It's a great way to get a glimpse of what's going on in your child's mind and heart.**
3. **Pray with your child about real situations in your life. Say "Let's be quiet a moment and see if we can hear what God is telling us right now."**

"To pray means to open your hands before God. It means slowly relaxing the tension which squeezes your hands together, not as a possession to defend but as a gift to receive." Henri J.M. Nouwen

Stop, Drop, and Listen

"Stop, Drop, and roll" has been a popular and effective way of teaching children what to do in a fire emergency. Use the familiarity of that phrase to implement a listening habit in your family. Whenever someone would like to talk, he or she can ask the others to stop (what they're doing), drop (have a seat), and listen. You all might be surprised at how little direct attention you usually offer one another and how much you discover about one another when you listen well.