



January 30, 2023

To whom it may concern:

I happily write in support of the **Family Conquest** family catechesis program.

I am the pastor of St. Roch Catholic church in Indianapolis. I heard my calling to the priesthood later in life after starting a career in law enforcement. I have been a chaplain to the Indianapolis Colts and currently am teaching a course at Marian University. I know first hand how difficult it is for people today to stop and take time for God, let alone hear His voice. The louder voices of social media and peer pressure are luring people into believing that fame, pleasure, and power will satisfy their heart's desire. It won't.

When I baptize children, I proclaim the words of the Baptismal rite to parents: *"You have asked to have your child baptized. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training him (her) in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring him (her) up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbor. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?"* The parents respond, "Yes." Even so, by the time I encounter these children in college or professional life, I see that they were often not trained by their parents and have instead become entrenched in secular beliefs that oppose or dismiss the very truths that will bring them the security and satisfaction that they chase after in all the wrong places.

As a pastor, I have wanted to have resources that I could hand to young parents and then exhort them to take up their crucial role as the first heralds of the gospel and the primary educators in the Faith for their children. The Church warns parents that their *"role as primary educators is so decisive that scarcely anything can compensate for their failure in it."* (Familiaris Consortio 36) Family Conquest is a program that I can now hand parents so they can succeed, since it is easy to use regardless of their own level of faith formation. The questions and answers enable parents to lead their children through a faith-learning experience right in the comfort of their own home. Unless the faith is brought into the home, it will not take root in the hearts of children.

Beyond the inadequacy and self-doubt parents feel at the thought of even starting to instill the Catholic Faith at home, they face the monumental difficulty of finding a resource that is simple enough for younger kids, deep enough for older kids, and engaging enough for themselves to be able to enjoy and persevere in a weekly teaching effort. Family Conquest's use of viral YouTube videos as parables allows for all three audiences to be fed at the same time. Younger kids are delighted with the more conspicuous story elements of the videos. Older kids can pick out the deeper metaphors and symbolism in the stories that point to eternal truths. Parents get to savor the entertainment value of the videos and can then easily springboard from the questions and answers into conversations about faith and life that would have felt awkward without such a natural starting point.

As a father to my spiritual children (my parishioners), I am delighted to exhort parents to take up their duty, which they committed to at their Catholic marriage ceremony and their child's Baptism, and begin directly training and teaching their children the Catholic Faith at home, not just by example, but by word as well.

I have a dream that one day, I will walk into a college classroom and be able to launch students into an even deeper relationship with God, instead of having to do damage control by starting with remedial teachings that they should have learned fifteen years before out of the mouth of their own parents. Family Conquest places those teachings in parent's mouths and nourishes children with a deeper relationship with their parents and God while they are most receptive and hungry for the truths that save and satisfy.

If you are considering the Family Conquest program for your home, or considering funding it to make it free for all families, *please do it!* We know that it is God's perfect plan to "*turn the hearts of fathers to their children and children to their fathers, to turn the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make a people fit for the Lord.*" (cf *Luke 1:17*) Family Conquest not only animates children with their parent's love and the truths of God, it transform parents into the image of their loving Father who delights in teaching His children the riches of "*kindness, constancy, goodness, service, disinterestedness and self-sacrifice that are the most precious fruits of love.*" (Familiaris Consortio 36).

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rev. Douglas Hunter". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the left of the typed name below.

Rev. Douglas Hunter
Pastor
St. Roch, Indianapolis, Indiana