

# Letting Your Children Fail

**Objective:** Have you ever looked at some of the things that are going on in your kids' lives and wondered why they are doing one thing or the other? You ask yourself why they just won't listen to you and gain knowledge you share from your experiences. Perhaps God is allowing these situations in our children's lives in order for them to become what He desires? If we constantly bail our children out when they make poor choices or if we constantly control situations, they will fail to understand that choices and performance have consequences. So, when we as parents sometimes say that our kids must learn the hard way, remember that this is not only true, but it is by design. And yet, in today's world there is a fine line we must constantly monitor to balance life learning and life changing decisions that can have serious ramifications.

**Song Suggestion:** Love Divine, All Loves Excelling (Blue 288; Red 613) or Shepherd Me, O God

## Bible and Catechism Readings:

### Romans 11:30-32

For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy. For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.

### Proverbs 22:6

Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.

### Ephesians 2:12-13

Remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

### Catechism 2206

The relationships within the family bring an affinity of feelings, affections and interests, arising above all from the members' respect for one another. The family is a privileged community called to achieve a "sharing of thought and common deliberation by the spouses as well as their eager cooperation as parents in the children's upbringing."

### Catechism 2207

The family is the original cell of social life. It is the natural society in which husband and wife are called to give themselves in love and in the gift of life. Authority, stability, and a life of relationships within the family constitute the foundations for freedom, security, and fraternity within society. The family is the community in which, from childhood, one can learn moral values, begin to honor God, and make good use of freedom. Family life is an initiation into life in society.

**Saint:** St. Joseph is the Patron saint of Families. His dedication to his family was complete. He served Mary and Jesus through numerous trials without reservation. We celebrate his Feast Day on March 19th.

**Vignette:** – It came like a ton of bricks. The call was from the principal's office at the high school. Joe's son Mike was in a car with sophomore friends who had been stopped by the sheriff for speeding. Mike wasn't driving, but the car and occupants were searched, and Mike was found to have a small bag of marijuana in the

car. Because the school had a zero-tolerance rule in place for students being caught with drugs, Mike was being called before the Director of Discipline and was in all likelihood going to be expelled. Because Mike was holding the marijuana and none of the others did, he was likely going to be the only one of the boys expelled while the others would receive suspensions. This was going to be an excruciating life lesson for Mike....and his family.

### Questions for Large and Small Group Discussion:

Think of a time when you let your child fail. Discuss the outcome with the team.

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Think of a time when you wished you had let your child fail, but you didn't. Discuss the outcome with the team.

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Today, it seems like the stakes are higher than ever. Whether it is getting into schools, getting grades, or keeping your record clean. How do you balance getting too involved vs not standing up for your child?

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How does your faith help you keep failure in your child's life in perspective?

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How has a "failure" formed you as a better man? A better Christian?

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### References:

1. <https://www.integratedcatholiclife.org/2012/09/andy-hain-letting-our-kids-struggle-and-fail/>
2. <http://g12studyjournal.blogspot.com/2008/08/let-your-kids-fail-sometimes.html>
3. [https://www.sinaitemple.org/learning\\_with\\_the\\_rabbis/writings/2007/022207LettingYourChildrenFail.pdf](https://www.sinaitemple.org/learning_with_the_rabbis/writings/2007/022207LettingYourChildrenFail.pdf)

### Action Plan:

Is there an opportunity to let your child fail in the near future? Think about what they would learn from this lesson. Share with your children in a calm fashion, real failures others have experienced and discuss how they (and you) will act if (and when) they experience failure.

**Author:** Reid Rooney