



**CONNECT** with like-minded parents in a welcoming environment!

**BELONG** to a community that supports you!

**LEARN** the best in child development and teaching the Faith!

A child's first and most important teachers are his or her parents. The mission of ECFL is to connect parents with their peers and empower them to raise their children in the Faith.

ECFL welcomes families with children 0-6 years old. Its sessions facilitate family interaction, parent peer-connection and education. We are excited to spread this program to more and more parishes in the Archdiocese to benefit young families.

## Pilot Project



*Photo Courtesy of St. Isaac Jogues Parish*

Since 2018, 16 parish leadership teams were provided with training and support to offer this program. All of this has been possible thanks to the generosity of donors to the *Family of Faith* campaign.

***We are seeking more parishes to partner with us!***

The next training will take place in January 2023 (no cost to parishes for training and program guides)

For more information, please visit [www.archtoronto.org/ecfl](http://www.archtoronto.org/ecfl)

To express interest in training, contact [formation@archtoronto.org](mailto:formation@archtoronto.org)



Archdiocese  
of Toronto

Office of Formation for Discipleship  
[www.archtoronto.org/discipleship](http://www.archtoronto.org/discipleship)



Early Catholic Family Life

in the Archdiocese of Toronto



## Early Catholic Family Life

The Office of Formation for Discipleship is piloting a new program called Early Catholic Family Life (ECFL) in parishes in the Archdiocese of Toronto.

### How it began

In our office's consultations with parishes, one common gap that was identified was support for families with young children (ages of 0–6 years), the time typically between Baptism and First Communion. In particular, they identified a need to help parents lay the foundations for raising their children in the faith. We did our research and found an established program from the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis that meets this need called Early Catholic Family Life.



Photo Courtesy of Cristo Rei Parish



Photo Courtesy of St. Thomas More Parish

## What is the ECFL Program?

- ECFL is a parent-child program aimed at an underserved but essential part of all parishes – parents with children 0-6 years old.
- ECFL is an 8-session 2-hour class. Classes can be offered weekly, monthly, on week days, weekends or during evening hours. Each class includes early childhood, faith-based and fun activities for families.
- ECFL consists of a parent-child interaction component, a parent discussion time and a children's time.
- ECFL gives parents an opportunity to learn more about their Catholic faith, discuss faith with other adults, and build supportive relationships within the parish.

## Benefits to parishes:

- Training and support of parish leaders to provide a new program that helps young parents:
- Receive hands-on guidance in bringing the Catholic faith to their children
- Learn about their vocation, develop a vision for their family, are inspired to continue to grow in their own faith
- Build relationships with other parents, forming a Catholic community of parents for ongoing support and encouragement
- Deepen their relationship with the parish
- Consider Catholic education for their children .

***“The program has helped in deepening our faith; it has brought about a new interest/eagerness. The discussions we had with other parents oftentimes resulted in us continuing the discussion (at home).”***

*• Participant from  
Paroisse de la Sainte-Famille*