Teaching Religion to Children using the K.I.S.S. method
(Keep It Simple Sweetie)

If God has blessed you with child(ren) in your care, then you have been given a most wonderful and precious gift! This is a responsibility that should not be taken lightly (no pressure), however, it is important that we realize as caretakers that we are all sinners, saved through the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the grace of God we are to follow Christ’s life example. Easier said than done, right? Well in this crazy, busy world we live in, I think it is especially important to get back to the basics. As we care for our children, teaching them the ways of the Lord, remember to Keep It Simple Sweetie. Here is my TOP 5 list to help you do just that:

1. READ: Bible stories daily. Pick a specific time that works for your family. Make this a special bonding time with your child(ren) and ask them questions relating the passage of scripture to their own lives. This will also check their understanding. “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” –Psalm 119:105

2. PRAY/PRAISE: Pray in the morning, mealtime and bedtime. Pray during hard times, and remember to glorify and praise God during difficult times too, because we know we will persevere and that we have hope in our Lord (Romans 5:3). It is always beneficial to follow Christ’s example, and so teaching your children The Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6:9-15) and praying the Psalms are beneficial teachings for your children. Martin Luther also has a section of “Daily Prayers” included in Luther’s Small Catecism that can be a great guide for a child to follow as well.

3. SING/LISTEN: Sing or listen to music regarding the Catechism (Resource: http://www.cph.org/p-3422-sing-the-faith-cd.aspx Features kids singing Catechism word-for-word; theologically sound). Sing your favorite worship music or hymns. This can be done anywhere (just try not to embarrass your child)! Another way to incorporate music is to listen to Christian radio stations (I recommend Star 88.3) or invest in some praise/worship CDs or download music to listen to at home, in the car, or on a music player (MP3/IPOD). Many children are auditory learners, and so downloading the bible so they can listen to it on-the-go would be a tremendously valuable tool! “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.” -Colossians 3:16

4. REPENT/FORGIVE: God commands us to both repent and forgive one another. Don’t let it be a secret that we too must repent of our sins, and we have been instructed by God to forgive each other (Luke 17:3-4). Teaching your child(ren) to say, “I forgive you” when someone apologizes helps them to mirror the ways of Christ. Likewise, we should verbally offer forgiveness when our children have
Teaching Religion to Children cont.

5. MODEL: Model all of these things in your own life. The best form of teaching is through modeling, just as we are to follow Christ’s example, we are also to model for the little ones in our lives. Remember that children are very impressionable and they are watching you. In your daily life, what type of example are you in your child’s life? “Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.” –Proverbs 22:6

Article Submitted by: Tina Martin

There Are No Perfect Moms!
By Elise Arndt

Lord, I feel so undeserving
Of the children you have placed in my care.
The responsibility of raising them for You
Is both awesome and overwhelming.

I desire to be a “Perfect Mom,”
Only to realize
That my actions and reactions
To the circumstances around me
Are anything but perfect.

Remind me that there are no Perfect Moms
- Only forgiven ones -
And despite my inadequacies and failures,
You can still use me.

Let my arms be Your arms of comfort,
My heart express Your heart of compassion,
And my voice be Your mouthpiece of encourage-
ment
As I speak Your words of love to my children.
Use my faith, as little as it seems,
To point them to You,
The only Perfect Parent.

Taken from Elise Arndt’s Pocket Guide For Moms:
A Mother’s Touch

From the Mouth of Babes

Kids say the darndest things, don’t they? Here are a few stories submitted from our seminary wives:

I was walking with my family through the lingerie section of Kohl’s to get to the elevator. My 2.5 year old son pointed to the bras and said, "Are those for the milky things?” (Submitted by Sarah Barkley)

After watching countless Disney movies in which the ‘bad guy’ was typically an old and wrinkled woman, my 2-year-old son was greeted by a very sweet, and aged elderly woman, to which he replied with a scorn on his face, “I don’t like old ladies!” (Submitted by Tina Martin)

When talking about the resurrection during Sunday school, a little boy exclaims, "Yea when Jesus came back from the dead that was tight!”-Chris, 8 years old (Submitted by Megan McCoy)
Winter Activities in the Fort Wayne Area

1. Baby Fair and Family Expo
   Feb 15th at the Coliseum.
   They claim that there are free giveaways.
   http://www.visitfortwayne.com/event/wmee-baby-fair-family-expo-1

2. Botanical Garden
   Surround yourself with nature at an oasis in the heart of downtown Fort Wayne. Enjoy lush seasonal displays, four outdoor gardens, the Tropical Garden with orchids, palms, and a cascading waterfall, and the Sonoran Desert Garden.

3. Main Library
   Story times listed by location
   Main Library has an indoor play area for children
   http://www.acpl.lib.in.us/

4. Science Central
   www.sciencecentral.org/
   Hours: Wed-Fri 10am-4pm/ Sat 10am-5pm/ Sun 12-5 pm. Closed Monday and Tuesdays during school year.
   Admission: $8.00 Adults/ $8.00 Children (3-12)/ $7.00 Seniors 65+/ Children 2 and under free

5. Glenbrook Mall
   Indoor Play area- Normal Business hours
   Walking Hour 9-10am
   http://m.glenbrooksquare.com/programs/mall-walker-program

6. Headwaters Park Ice Skating Rink
   http://www.visitfortwayne.com/event/headwaters-park-ice-skating-rink-winter-20132014

7. Roller Skating - North
   http://www.rollerdomenorth.com/plan-your-visit/schedule/

8. Roller Skating - South
   http://www.rollerdomesouth.com/plan-your-visit/schedule/
At this point, most of you are halfway through your vicarage year. This news will probably be received by each of you in a slightly different way. Maybe your heart will sink as you think about saying goodbye to a wonderful congregation and many new friends. Perhaps you will breathe a sigh of relief since you are closer and closer to leaving a trying time in your life. Possibly you feel worried as you think about loading up your life into the back of a moving truck and transitioning your family into a new home again. Do you look forward with a sense of excitement as your husband’s call night steadily approaches? Do you feel apprehensive about returning for fourth year? Perhaps you feel many of these things; perhaps you feel something entirely different.

The truth is that no two vicar’s wives will feel exactly the same about vicarage because no two vicarages are exactly alike. There are simply too many variables—location, congregation members, supervisors, life events, and even personality. This can make vicarage seem very isolated at times. And when it feels like no one else is having the same experience as you, this loneliness can lead to times of self-doubt and jealousy.

This problem will not disappear after vicarage. Just as it can be easy to wonder why you don’t have an amazing congregation like so-and-so or why you cannot interact with others like such-and-such on vicarage, it will be easy to try to compare yourselves to other pastor’s wives. But like how no two vicarages are alike, neither are any two calls alike. So when you feel isolated and that you do not meet the supposed standard of vicar’s wife or pastor’s wife, just remember that your command as a Christian is this: “To love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind . . . [and] you shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Matt. 22:37, 39b). This love of neighbor is shown in different ways depending on what gifts God has given you (Romans 12:6-8, 1 Cor. 12:4-6). And when you fail to love God and your neighbor, trust in God’s promise through Christ’s sacrifice that “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). Peace is found not in your own worth as a vicar’s wife or pastor’s wife, but in the knowledge that you are a forgiven child of God!

Article Provided By: Katy Peperkorn
Coping With Depression During the Seminary Years

According to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), 6.7% of American adults will suffer from major depressive disorder this year. Many more will struggle with other forms of depression, including minor depression, postpartum depression, and seasonal affective disorder. While the specific cause of this disease is still unknown, research has shown that depression is mostly likely caused by a combination of genetic, biological, and environmental factors. Likewise, stressful situations can trigger an episode of depression.

While the seminary years may not influence students and their family members’ genetic or biological tendencies towards depression, it creates many stressors that may trigger episodes. Moving once is a stressful ordeal in itself; most seminary families do a major move four times in four years. Because of this, it can be difficult to maintain a strong support system from extended family and friends. These major moves also mean that seminary families have to cope with other stressful changes like new jobs, different wages and salaries, and new schools. Likewise, an unspoken academic competition can arise among seminary students. This can create stress in seminarians, stress that can infiltrate their home.

Another issue is spiritual care. While seminary families will attend their field work and vicarage church consistently, often these congregations are not the same as a church home. It can be difficult for seminary families to know who to go to for pastoral care. Pastors from their home churches are often too far away to provide consistent care. Going to a supervising pastor—a pastor that helps decide whether a seminarian is able to meet the qualifications for becoming ordained—can feel like a conflict of interest. Add on the additional life stressors like births and deaths that can come during the seminary years and it is not surprising that many will struggle emotionally at some point.

The difficulties of knowing where to go for help during the seminary years can make coping with depression a daunting task. The good news is that there are many options for assistance available for seminary families. First, know that you are not alone. While it may seem like other people are managing the seminary years with minimal difficulty, a surprising number of the population have dealt with or are currently dealing with some sort of depression. Do not feel like you have to keep you or your loved one’s depression a shameful secret.

Secondly, despite seminary families’ complicated church home situation, there are several options for spiritual care while at the seminary. These options are stated in the student handbook under the Pastoral Care section and can be utilized by students and their families. Students and family members may talk to the student’s advisor. Likewise, seminary families may talk to the Dean of Students about spiritual care.

While Dean Tom Zimmerman can personally provide this care, he has also referred students to other pastors in the community for Confession and Absolution. Dean Zimmerman assures us that going to him for help with personal issues will not affect a student’s placement status because he views such meetings as a circumstance that
Coping with Depression...cont.

falls under the seal of the confessional.

Sometimes support from family and friends and spiritual care can be enough for a person to heal from a bout with depression. Other times professional treatment is needed as well. One of the first steps in getting professional care for depression is seeing your family doctor. A doctor can help you decide what sort of treatment may be necessary and can assist in prescribing an antidepressant if needed. There is a list of unofficially recommended doctors in the Fort Wayne area under the “Recommendations” file on the SWA Facebook page. Another option for getting professional help is seeing a counselor. Dean Zimmerman can assist students and their families in finding a good counselor in Fort Wayne. The seminary is even affiliated with Cross Connections (http://www.crossconnections counseling.com/), a Lutheran counseling service.

Despite seeking help, it can still take many months to recover from a bout of severe depression. This time of healing can be a trying time in a Christian’s life that is filled with uncertainty and despair. However, know that you are not alone in this feeling. The Psalms are filled with laments, including Psalm 6 which has been printed in this issue. More importantly, know that God has not left you. He has claimed us through our baptism. Consequently, we can remember St. Paul’s words in Romans 8:36-39, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, ‘For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.’ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Thanks be to God that nothing, not even depression, can separate us from God’s love!

Thank you to Dr. John Reynolds and Dean Tom Zimmerman for their insights about depression in the seminary community. Due to the complexity of this topic, it is impossible to cover all aspects of depression/mental illness in one article. Consequently, if you have any questions or comments about this article, please contact Katy Peperkorn at kmartha35@gmail.com.
Hello Sisters In Christ,

I am excited to tell you about a wonderful ministry called "Grace Place"! Some of you have probably heard of this and some maybe not. Brad and I, along with several other couples, were blessed to attend the special seminarian conference last February and are looking forward to going again this year. Not only were ALL the costs covered through special donations, the food was fabulous and the time "away" was definitely needed (which neither of us thought that time away beforehand).

When Brad and I contemplated going last year, Brad was not really excited about it. He was sure it was going to be lots of "psychology stuff" that HE DID NOT NEED! I happen to love psychology, so I convinced him to go. If you ask Brad now, he would tell you all that Grace Place weekend retreat was VERY informative and educational. The topics discussed and the information shared was very helpful not only for us now but for our future in the Parish.

You will hear about Spiritual Well-Being as a whole, with its parts being Social/Interpersonal, Emotional, Physical, Financial, Vocational, and Intellectual Well-Being. Grace Place does a wonderful job giving us plenty of "tools" in a short amount of time.

Most of us see ourselves as fairly healthy, however, our congregations that we are called to may not be. Grace Place can help us to see the whole picture and introduce us to some great information about being healthy leaders and healthy congregations.

The weekend this year falls perfectly at the very end of the winter quarter and will be held at Don Hall's Guest House. There are rooms available and paid for if you wish to stay but you do not have to. All students, faculty, ordained staff, deaconesses and their spouses are invited to go. You do not have to be married to attend!

Please visit [www.graceplacewellness.org](http://www.graceplacewellness.org) and click on Programs and follow the drop-downs to FTW CTS Retreat to register.

If you have any questions Brad or me, feel free to call or e-mail us

Blessings,

Carole
Editor’s Note

As I am sure a lot of you are aware, winter is in full swing. The fresh fluffy snow and icicles hanging from our homes, along with the crisp cold air are constant reminders of this season. For some this weather is something they cannot get enough of, others are ready for those spring showers and pops of green to appear. Sadly the groundhog has seen its shadow and according to lore, we are in for 6 more weeks of winter.

I grew up in Sioux City, IA. I remember these cold days fondly. I grew up in a family of five siblings, myself included. We would go out on these snowy days and sled. Some years we had sleds, other times it was the cardboard flattened with the trash bag around it. We would run and play until we couldn’t feel our toes then we would rush home, and huddle under our comforters on the couch together to warm up watching a movie.

This winter is bringing on a whole new set of memories for my husband and me. We are in our second year of seminary. We are eagerly anticipating the vicarage placement, which brings a whole set of emotions: fear, excitement, hope and uncertainty. These emotions are also some that I think first time parents would feel too. As Ryan and I are expecting our first child at the end of March, we are anticipating some big changes. One of my favorite Bible verses for when I am afraid of the unknown is, “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you.” - Jeremiah 29: 11-12.

It is hard to remember in these times that the Lord has everything in his hands. I hope that during this winter season you stay warm and remember that each day is a new set of memories. I also hope that you find the “peace which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” - Philippians 4:7

God’s Blessings to you and your family,

Dani Janke