



# FIRST WITNESSES

## An ICF Initiative

### What will my parish receive?

1. Messaging and publications to inform your parishioners, especially regarding reaching capable individuals, married couples, and families to be Partner Families while enrolling younger families with children who were baptized within the past 5 years.
2. Training and collaboration on how to choose the best Partner Families.
3. Template of letters from the pastor at baptism, 6 mos., 12 mos., 2 years, 2.5 years, and 3 years old.

### What will the families receive?

1. Training for Partner Families on what guiding a younger family looks like, what happens during the half-hour visits, and how to achieve the main objective of connecting and fostering a relationship.
2. A structure and format for developing an ongoing relationship between the enrolled families and their Partner Families as well as the parish, including baptism anniversary gatherings and other means of fellowship and support.
3. Ongoing formation and support for Partner Families.
4. Additional supports in helping the families access Alexa Skills (Face of Prayer, Catequize, Brush with the Bible).
5. Anniversary Cards that celebrate and commemorate the baptism for a set number of years.
6. A subscription to Hallow for all participants.
7. All Partner Families will be invited to come together annually at the diocese for collaboration, fellowship, and prayer.
8. All the parents of families enrolled in *First Witnesses* will be invited to come together at the diocese level (once or twice a year), including having a half-day parent retreat.
9. Gifts are to be delivered to the young families by their Partner Families during seven “touch points” as the child grows from an infant to 5 years of age. Each presentation of a gift will be accompanied by a *First Witnesses* booklet that will include daily prayers and reflection, practical suggestions for creating a Catholic culture at home, QR codes for new resources, a space for journaling, etc.
  - + #1 Blanket with prayer and/or Scripture verse & holy water
  - + #2 Holy Family icon
  - + #3 Parent Travel Mug with Coupons for “Date Night”
  - + #4 *First Witnesses* Crucifix
  - + #5 *Let us Pray* whiteboard
  - + #6 Child-friendly Rosary
  - + #7 *My Mass Book*Additional gifts, such as *The Bible for Little Ones*, can be available upon request and/or made available during baptism anniversary gatherings.
10. Gifts for the Partner Families.

*Parents are the first witnesses of the faith. If, however, those parents lack the language to articulate the faith, if they lack the inspiration to ritualize the faith, and if they lack the support at the parish level, there is often little that gets passed on to the next generation. First Witnesses can partner with the parish to accompany these families over the child's most potentially formative years of early childhood while also forming the faith of the parents and family as a whole.*