

## SURVIVING IN A PAGAN CULTURE

**How did the early Christians not only survive, but also grow in the faith during the early pagan centuries? That is a good question to have answered for us as modern society becomes more and more secularized, even anti-Christian. In one of his last talks before his death in 2000, Fr. John A Hardon, S.J., said:**

**“This is not speculation. It is not theological rhetoric. It is a cold fact of the Church’s history. Two facts stand out with luminous clarity:**


- 1. The early Church, until the fourth century, was the Church of martyrs.**
- 2. The practice of this early Church was to assist at Mass in the catacombs mainly, and there receive our Lord *daily* in Holy Communion.**

**In many respects, it is more difficult to be a witness to Jesus and His Church today than during some former centuries. The attacks against true Christianity, against true Christian family values, are more subtle today with the secular media at every level being anti-Christian and especially anti-Catholic.**

**“Only those willing to suffer martyrdom will survive as Catholic Christians in the present day.”**

**Here are Christian Guidelines for Parents:**

- 1. Love your children. Love them in Christ Jesus**
- 2. Be there for them as Jesus and Mary are there for you.**

3. Set rules, boundaries, so your children don't become rulers of your home.
4. Teach your children by example.
5. Be not angry; be kind so that children see that strong corrections are motivated by love for them. 
6. Keep your ears open and listen to what your children are saying to you.
7. Spend time together as a family.
8. Let Jesus Christ be the head of your home.
9. Spend quiet time in adoration before the Most Blessed Sacrament and the answers to decisions will be given to you.
10. Go to God for direction, for all the decisions you must make regarding your family.  
Keep Holy Water in your homes; if your home is not blessed when a priest comes, ask him to bless your home.
12. Don't allow children to bring evil into your homes.
13. Do spiritual reading daily, at least some short Scripture verse each day. (Can be incorporated into the Rosary.)
14. Encourage your children to be involved in good activities in your parish. Be attentive to what they are studying in religion classes.
15. Go to Mass together, even on weekdays when possible.
16. Be modest. Don't allow your children to dress inappropriately.
17. Say the St Michael prayer often.
18. Call upon, and thank, your Guardian Angel, and teach your children to do the same.
19. Protect your children by having curfews and sticking to them. Make sure you know with whom they spend their free time.
20. Instruct your children that there will be consequences for any misbehaviour.
21. Instruct children early in life that they must strive for heaven because this world is only temporary, but heaven is forever. And so is hell.
22. Teach your children the Ten Commandments.
23. Have Holy objects in your house to remind your children to pray. The Crucifix should be central in your home. An image of Mary should be prominent.
24. Stay focused on Christ and not the world. Rethink if TV is the main focus in your home.
25. Talk in a loving way about your Catholic faith to your children
26. Be thankful for your children and never forget, GOD IS IN CHARGE.

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