

## EXAMPLE

Perhaps the most important characteristic of a domestic church is the example of parents. Although I never knew my dad since he was killed in the coal mines when my mother was carrying me in her womb, my brothers John and Amil told me how they recall walking two miles with our dad and mom down the railroad tracks every Saturday to pray Vespers. My sister Olga in her memoirs writes that dad was a church-centered person who was involved in church societies, a trustee, and a helped cantor church services. In fact, he was killed in mines the day before he was to take a new job as cantor in our parish church.

Having not known my father, I could only speak personally of my mother. In the 45 years knowing my mother I could honestly say that she was a very religious and spiritual person. The church and the Holy Eucharist was the center of her life. The Holy Eucharist was so important to her that whenever she was asked how did you ever raise all those children without your husband? From where did you get your strength? Her answer was always the Holy Eucharist. For 45 years my mother went to Divine Liturgy every day, Vespers every Saturday evening and every Sunday evening Moleben.

When my mother was bed-ridden at the age of 91, I would call her up and ask, "Mom, how are you feeling?" She would always respond by saying, "Walter, my biggest pain is not lying in bed, or the pain in my body. My biggest pain is not receiving Holy Eucharist."

When I was nine years old, I was hit by a car and spent six weeks in the hospital. I did not want my mother to leave me at night in the hospital. However, at that time she was not permitted to stay. I was crying terribly but when she left, she gave me a Eucharistic chaplet which was a Jesus prayer. "Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, have mercy on us." Till this day, I still pray, at times, this Eucharistic chaplet. The Holy Eucharistic was the center of my mother's life.

My mother had a very strong devotion to the rosary. She prayed it often. In fact, the rosary never left my mother's hands. Whether she was cooking in the kitchen or hoeing in the garden, whether she was walking to church or through town the rosary was in her hands. In fact, we prayed the family rosary once a week in her bedroom before the icon-corner.

Being blessed with parents to whom their church, their faith, and their prayer-life was most important had an impact on my siblings and myself. Their example certainly gave us a strong sense of the sacred and also made our home a domestic church.