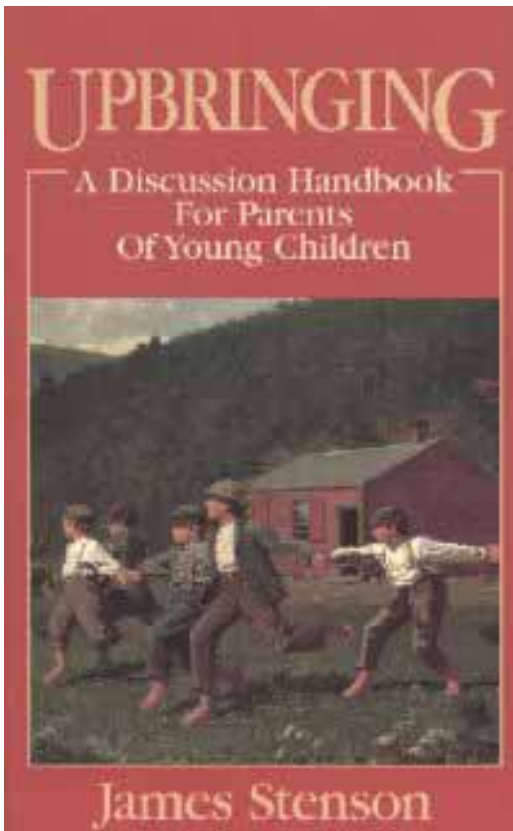


Upbringing



New series of discussions on raising children at the MI Family Meetings starting in May.

We meet every 2nd Sunday after the 9:00am Mass in John Paul II Center, room 2. All ages are welcome, including adults who do not have children living at home.

Parents and children enjoy refreshments and food, pray together then the children go to age appropriate child care or to the children's program.

Please e-mail ddurando@stjmod.com with your questions. You do not need to register to join the conversation. Just show up!

Synopsis of Upbringing: A Discussion Handbook for Parents of Young Children

Educator James Stenson says that there's no magic formula that will turn you into a good parent, but that you can learn from other parents — and avoid many pitfalls by planning ahead for parental challenges that are sure to come. Here he gives you a framework for discussing important issues about childrearing with other parents, plus a thought-provoking set of questions and observations for individual reading. Using this book, you'll be able to develop effective strategies to help your children become the kind of adults you would like them to be.

The following review is originally from Love2Learn.net, a resource for Catholic homeschooling parents.

Most parenting books seem to like to preach that their way is either God's way or the natural way or the positive way, leaving the reader to believe that if they do not raise their child in this manner they are either un-Christian, unnatural or negative. So it was very refreshing to come across *Upbringing* by James Stenson. Mr. Stenson has started two boys' high schools and been an observer of Catholic families for many years. His observations are based on his experiences with successful families. The proof is in the pudding, so to speak. In *Upbringing*, he puts together a list of characteristics that are common to families that have raised their children to become successful adults.

The book is a quick and easy read. It is designed for discussion with other families, but your spouse will do if this is not your cup of tea. Mr. Stenson begins with a discussion of character and the virtues/qualities that we would want to see in our children. (including the theological virtues - Faith, Hope and Charity and the cardinal virtues - prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance). He explains them in easy to understand language and then argues that a lack of these virtues in an adult boils down to immaturity or childishness. The opposites of these 7 virtues, faithlessness, despair, egoism, immature judgement, irresponsibility, softness and self-indulgence are all (with the exception of despair) vestiges of childhood. He links a lack of temperance in childhood with an inability to practice a religion that requires any sort of sacrifice in adulthood. He then goes on to list 7 reasons why there is such a lack of character formation in children today.

The second chapter profiles successful parents. He notes that the diversity among successful parents is striking. Some are energetic extroverts, some are quiet and mild-mannered, and all have personal faults and doubts. Nevertheless, they all have several traits in common.

In the 3rd chapter of the book, Mr. Stenson lists 18 Life Lessons in Reality. These are fun. They were quite a shock to me when I finally got out on my own. Things like: School is not Life, TV is not Life, Comfort and Convenience are a By-Product of a Successful Life, not its Purpose, etc.