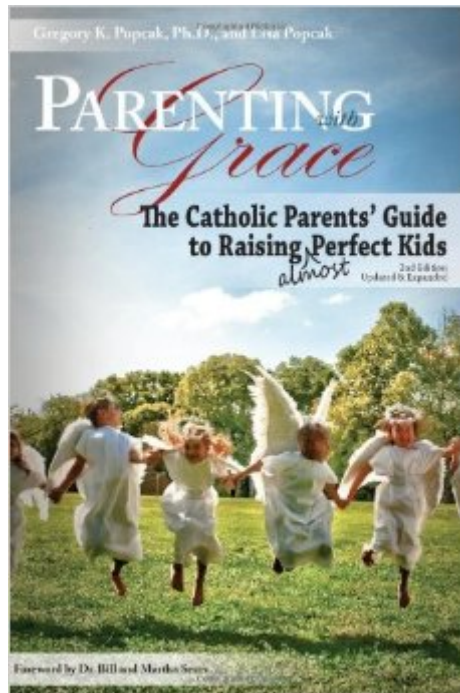


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# Parenting With Grace: The Catholic Parents' Guide To Raising Almost Perfect Kids



## Synopsis

Family therapist and parent Gregory Popcak and his wife, Lisa, are back with their second edition of *Parenting with Grace: The Catholic Parents' Guide to Raising almost Perfect Kids*. This latest updated version continues to guide parents through each stage of child development, from infancy through adolescence, offering additional age-specific advice on "parenting with grace." Practical, faithful, and humorous, *Parenting with Grace* will help you discover: Seven factors that make Catholic parents unique. How to C.A.R.E. enough to parent your very best. Practical, faith-filled solutions to common problems of every childhood stage -- sleep problems, tantrums, faith issues, childhood fears, dating, dealing with technology and media, and much, much more! "This book's uniquely Catholic approach to parenting combines vigorous relational advice with careful theology and plenty of good humor." -- Publishers Weekly

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

If you want to do more than: raise an "okay" kid, in a grow-up, get-a-job, basically-decent-person sort of sense, then this book is for you! This book is about raising your children to be all God wants them to be (i.e. SAINTS!) and gives parents very practical suggestions on how to accomplish this. The author also cites numerous writings by our Holy Father and other esteemed Catholics that promote a parenting style in line with the values and ideals of the Catholic Church. This book specifically encourages the idea of attachment parenting, (in a society that seems to practice de-tachment parenting), which I found very gratifying since my husband and I try to do that anyway -and again the author cites specific Catholic sources to reinforce this viewpoint. I also think the

author's appendix in the back about why he can't spank, and his critical examination of corporal punishment is one of the best Christian arguments against spanking that I have read. I can't say enough about how much I love this book! While the bookstores are stocked with many books on how not to let your children manipulate you (i.e. Babywise and others), and how to make your children fit into your lifestyle (instead of re-arranging yours to put your children first), this book is a refreshing and timely reminder that children are a gift from God and as such, deserve to be parented in a way fitting of their dignity as a human being! I intend to give it as a gift to the Catholic parents that I know. Do yourself a favor and buy one for yourself and one for a friend- they (and their children) will thank you for it!

This book is my parenting BIBLE!! I can't say enough good things about it--each and every chapter is INVALUABLE. I am so glad I found something that can help me figure out how to handle my kids at every bend in the road, in virtually every situation. It advocates attachment parenting and loving-guidance discipline, and also gives you a plethora of techniques and tells exactly when and how to use them (i.e. "everyday discipline" vs. bigger, more stubborn issues). He clarified the reality that family life is not just a mundane distraction--a family should have goals, a vision of where they are going in life, etc. He talks extensively about how all family members must have a solid rapport between them for discipline to be effective, for love to be felt, etc. He clarifies the question of spanking from both a spiritual and a scientific perspective. He goes into detail about how to handle the various stages of childhood, from loving the infant to "taming" the toddler to handling the teenager--gracefully. He outlines how to foster virtues, morals, a love for religion and a love for Jesus in your children; he tells how to make your family into the "domestic church" Pope John Paul calls it to be. I wouldn't even waste time with any other parenting or discipline book--this one more than covers all your questions and worries. I refer to it at least once a week, and it gives me the guidance I need to be an effective yet loving parent to my kids. It will literally change your outlook on family life; it will give you new hope and make parenting a truly gratifying experience. The title couldn't be more appropriate--now I really have the information I need to raise "perfect" kids! If you REALLY unconditionally love your children and want them to be the best they can be, you will be thrilled to have this book!

First the positive.....there were elements presented that I really enjoyed and found helpful being that I already practice a more positive discipline approach. The chapter on "Everyday Discipline That Makes a Difference" based on educating the child in virtue and building relationships was very

good. I appreciate the concrete examples in illustrating a particular point; in parenting books, this is most helpful. And as a practicing Catholic, it was nice to read a parenting book that included words from the Holy Father. I also liked the Family Mission Statement idea in order to help foster the virtues (which don't get a lot of space in any parenting book) in our children. However, as I was reading the book, there were several sections that were particularly unsettling and I found that unless one is already naturally bent toward attachment parenting (or possibly latently), this book may prove a bit disconcerting. Understandably, most parenting books claim to be the "preferred" way to parenting but this book, to me, goes beyond that because of the theological claims it seems to make. I found the following paragraph troubling.... "Lisa and I are not so foolish as to think that the methods we present are the only ways to parent. But it is our opinion that the methods we describe represent an invitation to enjoy "the next level" of parenting..... Just as other Christian denominations possess some truth, but the Catholic Church has "the fullness of truth" other parents are capable of having good relationships with their children, but we believe the parents who avail themselves of the parenting style we present here are capable of entering into the 'fullness of family life'." (pg. 137) It is obvious to anyone that there is not only one way to parent but I found it interesting that the authors left out any words from that sentence which would imply other parenting methods as also being **\*\*good and effective\*\*** in imparting Christian virtues and raising holy children. On the contrary, from the remaining sentences they instead strongly imply that anyone who chooses not to follow their method of parenting are falling short on "the fullness of family life" and are parenting on a "lower level". There is no Church authority or teaching that backs up such a claim and I find it unsettling that they took it upon themselves to assume it. I must admit, my impressions of the book were a bit marred from then on. Further on, the authors then strongly imply that unless one is practicing attachment parenting and the style chosen by the authors, one is failing to love their children with as much generosity as they. Quoting from the book: "As the parable of the ungrateful servant teaches, God calls us to model the same generosity He shows to us. Yes, it would be enough to be a good, loving conventional parent. But by God's own example, Catholic Christians are called to be more than "enough". We are called to be "perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect". That is, perfect in love." (pg. 162) Isn't this similar to saying that if we don't all give up everything we own and go to India to serve the poor as Mother Teresa did we aren't being generous enough. Personal holiness or "perfection" is not confined to any method of parenting any more than it is to a particular vocation, career, spirituality, or devotion. To a Catholic, being perfected in love consists in lovingly and generously doing the will of God, and God's will varies for each individual. Perfection in generosity does not consist in how long one nurses a child, whether or not one has a family bed or wears a

sling. Although the book has some good practical tips for any parent, especially for those who already espouse attachment parenting, I respectfully disagree with their extraneous theological assertions. I also was turned off completely by the arrogant (for lack of a better word) undertones. I would also recommend the authors to read "Story of a Family" to see how the parents, who themselves are up for canonization, raised the greatest saint of modern times. It's interesting to note that they were a dual-income family, complete with servants, who sent their children to boarding school. (St. Therese was sent away to live with a wet nurse for several months b/c of health problems). Recently canonized St. Gianna Beretta Molla was a physician so it seems highly unlikely that she practiced attachment parenting either

This book gives a great overview of parenting but unlike other parenting books I have read, it goes a step farther and gives very detailed examples for all stages of childhood and teen years. Popcak's ideas on Catholic parenting are supported by many quotes from John Paul II. This is a book worth reading and re-reading

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