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Patriarch Kirill: Do Not Postpone Religious Upbringing of Children



On December 4, the feast day of the Entry of the Holy Theotokos into the Temple, His Holiness, Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, officiated a Divine Liturgy at the Dormition Cathedral of the Moscow Kremlin, reported Patriarchia.ru. After the service, the Patriarch delivered a sermon, in which he spoke about religious upbringing of children.

“Sometimes people, including journalists, ask me, ‘When did you feel like a believer?’ ‘When did you start attending a church?’ I reply that I do not remember. Apparently, it happened at an age, when I was not self-aware yet. And I’m grateful to my parents for beginning my upbringing at an early age. Addressing parents, Orthodox people, today I say: do not postpone religious upbringing of your children under any circumstances, do not allude to their age or health! Some people say that a child is too weak to bring him to a church. People should bring their children to church at any time, if it is physically possible. The sooner the religious upbringing of a personality begins, the stronger one’s religiosity becomes. Thus the stronger one’s beliefs become, including moral principles, which form a personality and make it powerful, so that a person is open to good and able to oppose evil. This personality is the one that society considers an ideal. One cannot form such a social ideal without bringing up a child from an early age. Primary, I’m talking about religious education: bringing children closer to church.

“At a certain age, children reach a crucial point and become teenagers. They experience certain feelings that did not exist in their early childhood. A person becomes sensitive to outside influence. This age is called a transition period and is considered very difficult. But it can be completely harmless if a personality was brought up from an early age: a certain viewpoint was formed, and, most importantly, spiritual experience was gained. If a child knows what a church is, what Holy Communion is, if he happily goes to a church service, his view of life won’t change neither at twelve, thirteen, nor at fifteen years of age, his perception of the outside world will stay the same. It is because the main characteristics of a personality have already been formed by the grace of God, which is laid on a child when he attends a church.

“That is why bringing children to a church is one of the main tasks in children’s education. If we want the next generation to be wholesome, of strong spirit, brave, strong, and loving those who surround them, especially and primary loving their parents and the Motherland, we should remember that religious upbringing, attending a church, and the impact of the grace of God are reliable factors that ensure the formation of such personality.

“At the end of each divine service, we remember Saints Joachim and Anna, calling them Ancestors of God, precisely because they brought up the Most Holy Theotokos in a way that She was able to become the Mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. These holy parents give all of us an example of how to spiritually raise our children, so that no temptations of the world and no worries would ever destroy the wholeness of a personality,” said the Primate of the Russian

Orthodox Church.

— Source: pravmir.com