Superfood has emerged as a trendy buzzword in recent years. It refers to nutrient-rich food that possesses natural “superpowers” to boost well-being.

For example, broccoli is considered a superfood. It’s packed with vitamins and minerals to fight disease, exceptionally high levels of vitamin C, and folate to reduce the risk of heart disease, specific cancers, and even stroke. Pretty super, right? One might even go so far as to say super-duper.

What if I told you there’s a superfood that reduces the chance your child will engage in substance abuse by 80 percent—would you want to know what that superfood is? If you found out, would you scramble to fill your child’s diet with a steady dose of it?

Well, no superfood can do that. But there is one thing you can cultivate in your child that does: Faith in God.

Studies at Columbia University show that when children have a personal relationship with God, it reduces the risk of depression by 40 percent, reduces the chances they engage in risky sexual behavior by 70 percent, and reduces the chance of engaging in substance abuse by 80 percent.
And that’s not all.

The National Study of Youth and Religion at Notre Dame and UNC–Chapel Hill found that adolescents with an active personal religious faith were more likely to:

- have positive attitudes toward themselves,
- feel hopeful about their futures,
- feel like they had something of which to be proud,
- feel happy to be alive, and
- enjoy being in school.

You want what’s best for your child. In fact, you dream of what’s best for your child. And faith—a relationship with God—can help you achieve it. It is the superfood. It is the one thing.

If you want to maximize that potential power, there is no time to waste. Your child’s faith journey starts now.
Your Dream List 7: Spiritual

• What’s your dream for helping your child develop a deep sense of inner peace?

• Who does God want your child to be?

• What will your daily prayer routine with your children look like?
I would like our family to pray together on a daily basis.

I want to build family worship as a part of our routine.

I want to make helping my child become a-better-version-of-himself a regular part of our conversations.
When you get married, you make solemn vows. Even in the most secular weddings, like those on your favorite sitcoms, vows are made. And how do weddings end? The bride and groom always say two little words: I do.

When you have a baby, you are given this little person without making any vows or promises. Isn’t that odd? The hospital doesn’t ask you to make vows. The government and the culture don’t require you to make vows. You don’t have to make a single promise to be a parent. Not one!

Well, your child’s Baptism is that opportunity to make vows. In fact, you have to. It’s part of the rite. And unlike on your wedding day, you don’t say “I do” once. You say it six times.

Do you reject Satan?
I do.

And all his works?
I do.

And all his empty promises?
I do.

Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth?
I do.
Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?
I do.

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?
I do.

God, the all-powerful Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and forgiven all our sins. May he also keep us faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ for ever and ever.
Amen.

The greatest trick the devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn’t exist.

UNKNOWN
DISCUSS
Baptismal Vows

The first questions of the baptismal vows are about Satan. Discuss these questions below with your spouse and write down what they mean to you.

• Do you reject Satan, all his works, and all his empty promises?

• What are some ways you have seen the Evil One at work in your own life?

TIP: There’s often a modern impulse to avoid “Satan talk.” But Jesus spoke regularly about the devil and evil spirits.
A little child has no difficulty in loving, has no obstacles to love. And that is why Jesus said: “Unless you become like little children you cannot enter the kingdom of God.”

MOTHER TERESA
Baptism is not an end but a beginning. It begins a lifelong, joy-filled relationship with God, a relationship marked by his abundance. Your child belongs to him.

The baptismal ritual is not random. Everything about it, including the five major symbols employed, have profound reasons behind them.

Here’s a brief overview of those five symbols you will experience during the Baptism.

1. Light
At Baptism, God floods your child’s soul with light. Jesus is the light of the world. As a child of the light, your child will receive wisdom to discern between right and wrong, goodness to desire what is good and true, and courage to make excellent choices. In the not-so-distant future, your child will face dark moments filled with doubt, confusion, and fear. Through the light of Baptism, she can dive deep into her own conscience and hear the will of God guiding her to the next right thing. When your child’s candle is lit from the Easter candle, rejoice in the gift of the light.

2. Water
Water cleanses. Water gives life. God repeatedly used water to save his people throughout history. However, the water of Baptism is special; it has been made holy and gives new life to your child. The baptismal waters wash away original sin, bringing the gift of the Holy Spirit and making your child a
part of the body of Christ, the Church. At Baptism, your child receives the living water that leads to a life of mission, meaning, and joy.

3. Oil
In the Old Testament, oil was a sign of God’s presence and power on a person. To the early Christians, oil represented how the baptized are sealed with the Holy Spirit of God. When your child is anointed with oil, let it serve as a reminder that the Holy Spirit has come upon your child at Baptism and will be a part of his or her life from now on. This Spirit will give hope to your child in times of despair, encouragement in times of doubt, and confidence in the face of fear.

4. White Garments
Wearing white—a symbol of purity, innocence, and new life—signifies putting on the mantle of Christ. On the day of her Baptism, your child will wear Jesus—talk about “name brand” clothes! As your child grows and receives other sacraments, she will be reminded of this relationship with Jesus by wearing white for First Communion and Confirmation.

5. Sign of the Cross
The world changed at three o’clock on a Friday afternoon when Jesus laid down his life for us on the cross. He took the cross, an instrument of death and torture, and turned it into the means of salvation for us all. At Baptism, the sign of the cross will be traced on your child’s forehead. This act boldly declares that she is now a new person, reborn. This gift is a pure grace. We will never be worthy of it, but out of his great love for us, Jesus nonetheless grants us this incredible gift.
Watch the video, answer the questions to the right, and discuss additional thoughts.

DynamicCatholic.com/SoulBath
Watch

Talk About the Video

What part (or parts) of Baptism excites you most? Why?

What does it mean to you for your child to be adopted by God? Have you ever considered that this is what happens at Baptism?

Think of your godparents. Have they had an active role in your faith formation? How important to you is that your child’s godparents are active in his or her life? What can you do to ensure the godparents are as involved as you would like?