



# RELIGIOUS FREEDOM WEEKLY

from  
**Americans for Freedom of Religion**

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## **The Importance of Being Obviously Christian**

Passing on our faith through valued traditions

A bishop explained at a Religious Freedom service that as a young boy in communist Poland he had to hide his intention to enter the priesthood. His family, friends, parish priest and even his parents could not be told. He kept his vocation a secret because if his school administrators or the local government officials found out, the young man knew the harsh political and social reality of communist Poland would result in his being refused an education and prevented from entering the priesthood.

That young man, and millions of other men and women around the world, were and still are denied what most Americans take for granted... the First Amendment religious freedom to choose our faith and our worship and live it openly and freely without fear of persecution.

America's freedom of religion is not perfectly protected, but is strong enough that most Americans can live their faith satisfactorily to their conscience demands. However, when Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito was recently asked if he thought our religious freedom laws would continue to protect Americans his answer was that he believes the religious freedom laws will prevail, but the culture of faith may not.

Thanks to the protection of America's religious freedom and rights of conscience we can create a culture of faith in our homes and our family lives... a culture reflecting that we are obviously and deliberately Christian. Because we are protected in living out this culture, we can pass on the faith traditions which become the fertile soil where our children can develop their own, mature assent to our Christian faith.

There are beautiful and caring traditions which can be embedded in the structure of Christian family life, traditions that become the pulse of our daily lives. There is the Sunday church worship, Sunday school and Bible Study at home and church. The celebration of Christmas because of the coming of the Christ child and rejoicing at Easter because of the death and resurrection of Christ. Evangelization can be a family project as we reach out to family and neighbors to exemplify and share our Christian beliefs. Whole families can show selfless charity and love by helping the hungry and needy and those suffering from disaster.

To raise our children in faith, when it is their own free will that must ultimately make that choice, is to provide them with our Christian example. We can deliberately and lovingly fill our family lives with traditions of faith that allow their own faith to grow into a mature and basic part of their lives.