

Partners in FAITH™

Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

September 2007



Thoughtful Moments

A forgiving family

Be the first one to say, "I am sorry," when you are wrong. Be the first one to say, "I forgive you," when someone else does wrong. Be the first to say, "I love you," and say it the most.

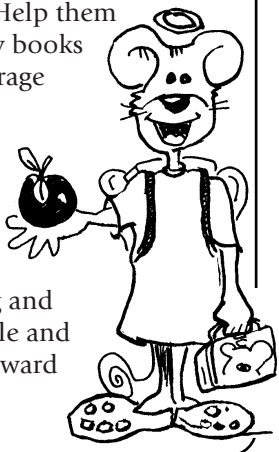


Celebrate Church

Find ways to make Sunday Mass a joyful experience for your family. Invite family friends and relatives to join you and meet up afterwards for a special meal. Turn church attendance into a family outing and stay behind to notice something new in the church. Offer to take up the gifts during the offertory. Teach your children that it is important to go every Sunday.

Teach responsibility

Small tasks can teach children responsibility. Help them to return library books on time. Encourage children to remember their folders and lunch money for school. Assign special jobs like setting and clearing the table and feeding pets. Reward responsibility.



Building a rock-solid faith foundation

A new school year is an opportune time to recommit to your child's faith education. Knowing how to draw on his or her faith in times of trouble is as important a life-long skill as reading or writing.

Try these tips:

Support religious education.

Your support of your child's religious education classes communicates their importance. Treat religious education as seriously as any of the core subjects she studies in school. Check over her homework and help her find ways to put into action what she learns in the classroom.

Surround yourself with other Catholic families. Building a social network of other Catholic or Christian

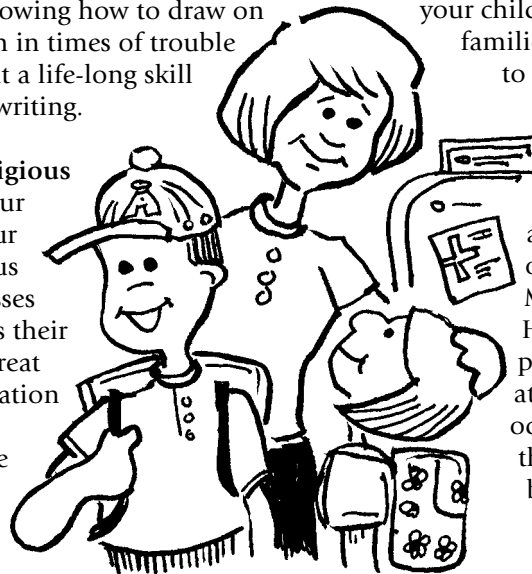
families will give you allies in the fight to raise faithful Catholics, and your children will see other families with similar values to yours.

Live faithfully.

For example, it can be confusing for a child to learn that all Catholics have an obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days and yet be part of a family that attends only occasionally. Don't let there be a disconnect between what he learns in class and how you live your life.

Don't let a day pass without love.

Children learn about God's love first through their families. Tell and show your children every day that you are grateful to God for the gift of your family.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics have so many rituals?

Our everyday awareness of God comes to us through our senses. Sight, sound, smell, touch and even taste are the pathways to the deepest parts of our imagination and understanding. Some rituals of the Church go back to the times



when few people could read or write – but they could be drawn to Jesus by the beauty of sacred music, for example. Religious art, bells, music, incense, poetic prayers – they all plant our faith deep in our body and bones as Catholics.

It's okay to be different

No one really wants to be thought of as different or strange. Yet Catholic families are not like other families and it can be uncomfortable to be different from friends or neighbors. The truth is: we're supposed to be different.

We teach modesty. Catholics are called to control passions and avoid public and private sin. How we dress and act conveys our commitment to following Jesus.

We model self-sacrifice. Children watch their parents' behavior even more than that of



their friends. We make great models when we set aside our own desires for the good of our families, parish, and community.

We are joyfully Catholic. Our families' identities are shaped around Catholic traditions. Celebrate favorite saints' feast days. Change eating patterns during Lent. Work for the poor. Attend Sunday Mass faithfully.

We put family first. When we get overwhelmed, we know we can give our burdens over to God. He is the real head of our families and that is truly what makes us different.

Scripture LESSON

Luke 16:19-31, Put faith into works, or else...

This is the story of a rich man who enjoys his life on earth, and a beggar who suffers, ignored, outside his door. In the afterlife, it is the rich man who suffers torment and begs for relief.

The rich man was condemned not because he had wealth, but because he had become blind to the suffering of others. He knew that Scripture and the prophets said about what God expected of him, but he did not live his faith. When we live our faith, we

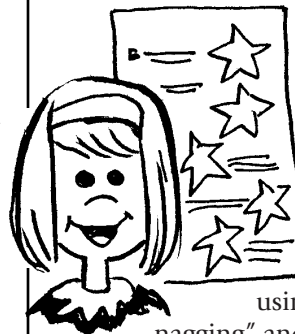


transform our prayers into deeds of love.

What can a parent do? Help your children learn what God expects of them. Put your family Bible in a conspicuous spot in your home, one that will remind you to read it together each day. Then talk about putting what you learn into action. Teach your children that the key to learning God's language of love can be found in the Bible.

Parent TALK

My husband and I were tired of nagging. We nagged to get homework done, nagged to get chores done, nagged



to get bedrooms cleaned. Even to us, our nagging was annoying. When I complained to my daughter's teacher, she suggested I try using "positive nagging" and star charts instead.

On Monday we post a chart that lists six or seven tasks expected of each child that week. When a task is done after only the first request, a star goes on the chart. At the end of the week, we add up the stars and give "prizes" for high totals. Prizes include going to bed an hour later than usual, having a friend spend the night, eating favorite foods for dinner – even if it's ice cream and popcorn.

Sure enough, positive "nagging" and praise is much more effective. And, tasks are done so much faster, we have more time for fun.

Feasts & Celebrations

Sept. 3 – Pope St. Gregory the Great (604). St. Gregory resigned as chief prefect of Rome to become a monk and turned the family estate into the Abbey of St. Andrew. As Pope, he used his political skill to make peace with the invading Lombards, save Rome from famine, and restore order within the Church itself.

Sept. 20 – St. Andrew Kim Taegon, St. Paul Chong Hasang and companions (1839 to 1867). That Catholicism exists in Korea is due to the courage of these saints. Andrew and Paul, 98 Koreans and three French

missionaries refused to renounce their faith or cease evangelizing and were martyred between 1839 and 1867.

Sept. 23 – St. Padre Pio (1968). Born to farmers in southern Italy, eight years after he became a Capuchin Friar the five wounds of Our Lord's Passion (stigmata) appeared on his body. Despite intense personal and physical suffering, he remained dedicated to prayer.



Our Mission

To help parents raise faithful Catholic children
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