



## Thoughtful Moments

### Need help?

To add to your parental authority, consider posting St. Paul's advice to children in a prominent spot in your home. St. Paul wrote, "Children, obey your parents in everything, for this is pleasing to the Lord" (Colossians 3:20).

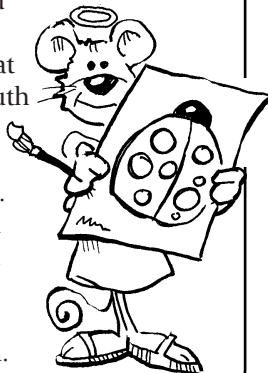


### Choose forgiveness

When we have been hurt, forgiveness is a choice we can make in response. It may not be the choice we want to make but we are called to ask God to do good to those who have hurt us. "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." It's how we want God to treat us.

### Patience NOW

Why is it that whenever we pray for patience, God sends us more opportunities that require it? The truth is that it takes practice to develop patience. As parents, when we are at the end of our ropes, patience is what helps us hang on.



## Making Chores Work

Giving children chores helps them to contribute to the family and become good stewards over what God gives us.

*"The Lord God then took the man and settled him in the Garden of Eden, to cultivate and care for it"* (Genesis 2:15).

But getting them to do the chores can be more work than the job itself.

### Start young.

When children have chores as youngsters, they are more likely to do them without complaining as they get older.

**Make it a family affair.** Assign chores to everyone in the family. Let them see that parents have chores, too.

**Give choices.** Children can help with laundry, meal preparation, caring for

automobiles or pets, yard work, or house cleaning. Identify a number of jobs to be done and occasionally let each person pick which one he or she wants to do.

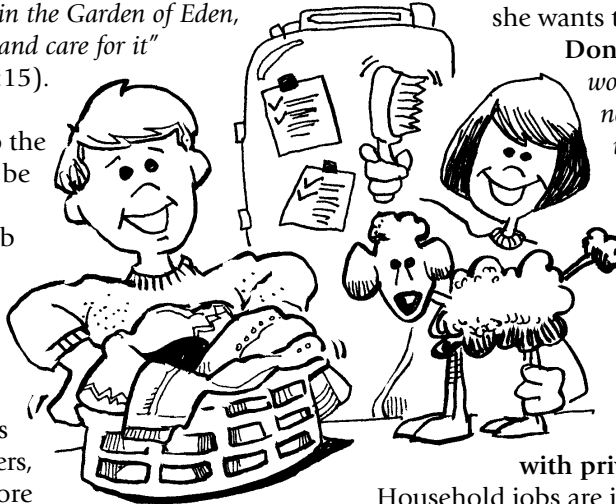
**Don't nag.** "Where words are many, sin is not wanting; but he who restrains his lips does well"

(Proverbs 10:19). Set deadlines and impose consequences if chores aren't done.

**Connect chores with privileges.**

Household jobs are important and need to be done before we can have fun. If a child doesn't do his chore, he doesn't get to watch television or play video games, for example.

**Show appreciation.** Earning compliments for a job well done is a great self-esteem builder.



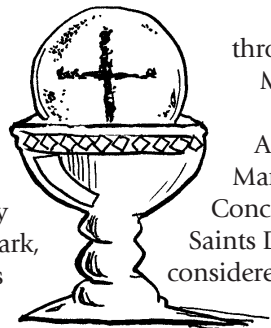
## Why Do Catholics Do That?

Busy lives can distract us from God or cause us to become numb to his presence. Holy days of obligation help us to remember that we belong first and foremost to God. These holy days give us time to meditate, mark, and celebrate special holy events

## Why do Catholics attend Mass on Holy Days of Obligation?

through the celebration of the Mass.

This year Christmas, the Ascension of the Lord, Mary's Immaculate Conception, the Assumption, All Saints Day, and each Sunday are considered holy days of obligation.



## "Let's communicate!"

Experts agree that clear, open and frequent communication is a characteristic of a strong and healthy family. Consider these ideas for improving communication in your family:

**Talk often.** It can be hard to find time for real conversations with our children yet it is critical to a healthy relationship. Talk in the car, talk at bedtime, or talk on the phone if you have to. Even a few minutes a day will keep you connected.

**Listen for what isn't said.** Pay close attention to a child's non-verbal behaviors.



He may say one thing but his body language may tell you something else. What does he really mean?

**Actively listen.** For example, nodding and saying,

"I understand," or "What do you mean?" tells your child that what she is saying is important to you.

**Find five.** Families can fall into negative communication patterns, such as criticism or defensiveness. For every negative thing you say to your child,

find five positive things to say, too. Positive reinforcement can be very powerful.

### Scripture LESSON

#### John 10:27-30, Jesus, the Good Shepherd.

In the story of the sheep and the shepherd, Jesus used an image familiar to his listeners. Many depended upon sheep for their livelihood. Jesus described three characteristics of his own sheep.

**His sheep hear his voice.** Jesus said to his Apostles, "He who hears you hears me" (Luke 10:16). Jesus' voice passed to his apostles and from them to their successors. Catholics recognize Christ's voice in those of their pope and bishops. It will guide them safely to the pastures of eternal life.



**His sheep follow him.** Catholics are called to follow Jesus. We follow out of love and we do what he asked us to do, including caring for the poor and vulnerable.

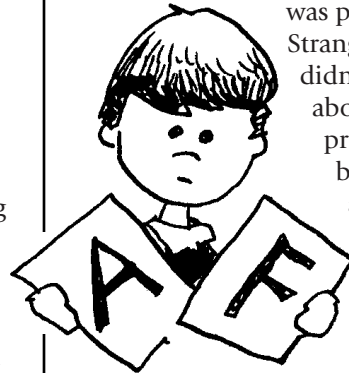
**His sheep will have eternal life.** Listening to his voice and following Jesus' commands will guide us safely to the pastures of eternal life.

*What can a parent do?* Help your children listen for Jesus' voice and follow him in the Church so they can enjoy eternal life with him.

### Parent TALK

Adam really struggled with third grade math. So when he got an "A" on a test, I was pleased.

Strangely, Adam didn't seem happy about it. When I praised him, he burst into tears and confessed that he had copied the answers from his friend, Mark.



Naturally I was upset and took him right to Confession. He felt better after performing his penance but we weren't done. The next morning we went early to school to tell his teacher what he did. Mrs. Jenkins told him that she was disappointed and gave him an "F" on the test and had him make it up. She also praised him for taking responsibility for his actions.

Adam is now in seventh grade and has never repeated the behavior. Better still, Adam knows that Confession truly is a sacrament of healing. That's a lesson I hope he remembers forever.

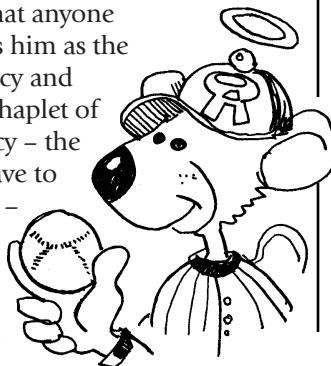
### Feasts & Celebrations

**April 4 – St. Isidore of Seville (636).** St. Isidore was born to a family that included three other saints and succeeded his brother as bishop of Seville. He was a peacemaker and is known as "The Schoolmaster of the Middle Ages" because the encyclopedia he wrote was used for 900 years.

**April 5 – St. Vincent Ferrer (1419).** Against his parents' wishes, St. Vincent Ferrer joined the Order of St. Dominic. He became a famous preacher throughout much of Europe and was known as the Angel of Judgment

because his sermons aimed to prepare his listeners for judgment.

**April 23 – Divine Mercy Sunday.** In 1931, Jesus appeared to St. Faustina and asked that the Sunday after Easter become the "Feast of Mercy." Jesus promised that anyone who honors him as the King of Mercy and prays The Chaplet of Divine Mercy – the prayer he gave to St. Faustina – will receive special graces and great mercy.



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