

Partners in FAITH™

Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

October 2008



Thoughtful Moments

Give them words

Many children hit because it's the only way they know to express their anger. Have your child make a chart using words that describe feelings. Post it in a conspicuous area. Next time she gets angry, take her over to the chart and ask her to use the words listed to describe her feelings.



Have a blessed day

Before your children leave home for school, try saying this prayer together, "Direct our steps to yourself, O God, and show us how to walk in charity and peace" (*Catholic Household Blessings & Prayers, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, 800-235-8722*). Begin your day by focusing on God together.

Keep promises

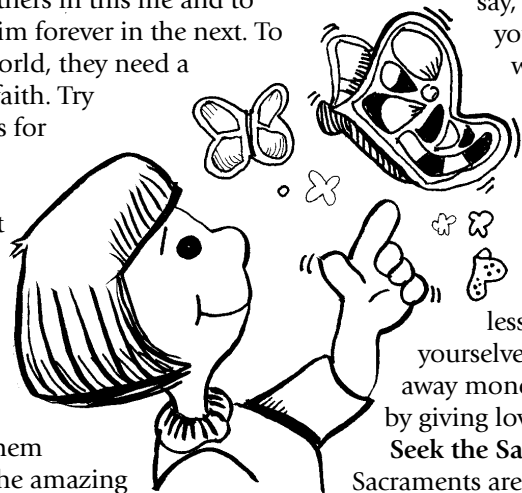
Your children will learn to trust you if you do what you say you will do. If you make a promise, keep it. Jesus said, "Let your 'yes' mean 'yes,' and your 'no' mean 'no'" (Matthew 5:37).



Help faith grow

To borrow from the Baltimore Catechism, our children were created to serve God and others in this life and to be happy with him forever in the next. To do that in this world, they need a healthy dose of faith. Try these suggestions for helping your children's faith grow throughout their lives:

- Encourage wonder.** Children have a natural sense of wonder and curiosity. Help them remember that the amazing things in our world are gifts from God.
- Fill your home with religious works.** Displaying religious artwork, icons, books, and prayers throughout your home will show that faith is an important part of life.
- Encourage empathy.** Thinking of others is the foundation for living a



moral life.

Model forgiveness. Don't hesitate to say, "I'm sorry," when you do something wrong and ask for forgiveness. Insist that your children do the same.

Help others. Make generosity a family trait. Work together for those less fortunate than yourselves either by giving away money, possessions, or by giving loving attention.

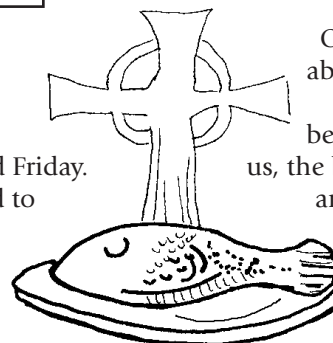
Seek the Sacraments. The Sacraments are encounters with God. Take children to Mass every Sunday and Holy Day. Go to Confession as a family often.

Pray together. People who pray can weather bad times with more peace. Nurture the peace habit early and it will strengthen children for the rest of their lives.

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do we abstain from meat on Fridays?

To Catholics, every Sunday is an Easter celebration and each Friday commemorates Jesus' sacrifice on Good Friday. To honor the Cross and to atone for our sins, the Church asks that we make Friday a day of penance.



One common Friday penance is abstaining from meat. Since trading meat for fish may not be a real sacrifice for many of us, the bishops allow us to substitute another meaningful sacrifice. The self-denial and discomfort helps us share in Jesus' suffering on the Cross.

Have a holy Halloween

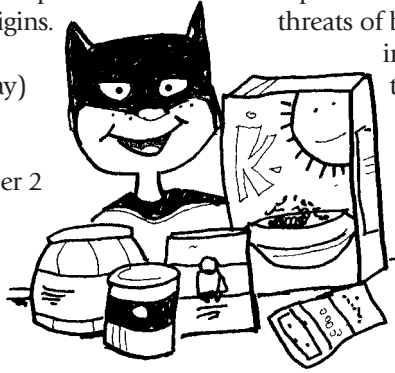
Halloween can be more than a chance to dress up and collect candy. In fact Halloween has Christian origins.

In 835 Pope Gregory IV moved the commemoration of Martyrs (later All Saints Day) from May 13 to November 1. The night before became known as All Hallow's Even or "holy evening," and eventually Halloween. (November 2 became All Souls Day.)

Years ago in Ireland, farmers prepared for the All Saints Day and All Souls Day the night before by going door-to-door collecting food for a village celebration. Those who gave

were promised prosperity; those who didn't received threats of bad luck. In the 1800s, Irish Catholic immigrants brought this practice of "trick-or-treating" here.

Halloween is a chance to focus on the three holidays in celebration of the Communion of Saints. Try learning about a saint you didn't know, visiting the grave of a loved one, or collecting food for the poor. It's a time to remember the believers who have gone to Heaven before us and the hope we have of following.



Scripture LESSON

Matthew 22:34-40. Can't argue with love.

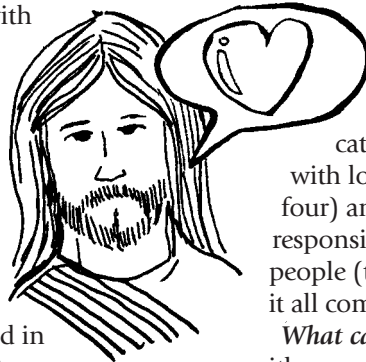
There are more than 613 commands in the Jewish law. The lawyer sent to debate Jesus was toying with him when he asked for Jesus' opinion about which law was the most important. Jews had been debating that question for generations without coming to agreement on the answer. Encouraged by the Pharisees, the lawyer asked in the hope of getting Jesus to say something against Jewish law so he could be discredited and perhaps arrested.

Jesus silenced them all by saying that everything starts and ends with love –love

of God and love of each other. Even the Pharisees couldn't argue with that.

The Ten Commandments can be divided into two categories: those dealing with love for God (the first four) and those dealing with responsibilities toward other people (the last six). In the end, it all comes down to love.

What can a parent do? Talk with your children about how easy it is to love people who are nice to us but loving everyone, even if they're not nice, is what God really wants us to do.



Feasts & Celebrations

Oct. 7 - Our Lady of the Rosary (1571). Pope Pius V created this feast in thanksgiving to Our Lady of Victory who helped the Christians defeat the Ottoman Turks. Since it was believed that they won after praying the Rosary, the feast was renamed Our Lady of the Rosary by Pope Gregory XIII.

October 17 – St. Ignatius of Antioch (1st century). Successor to St. Peter as the second bishop of Antioch, St. Ignatius encouraged obedience to bishops all over the world saying, "Wherever the bishop is, there let the people be, for there is the Catholic

Church." He reminded people that Jesus is present in the Church and in one another.

Oct. 19 – Saint John de Brébeuf and Saint Isaac Jogues and their companions (1652). Six Jesuits and two laymen became missionaries to Native American tribes in North America. Unwelcome and distrusted, they spent more than 20 years in a difficult ministry and were martyred by the people they served.



Parent TALK

For weeks Tessa came home from third grade in tears. Girls in her class were whispering about her on the playground, and telling made-up stories about her.



The teacher said it happened mostly when adults weren't around and promised to take action anyway. But she warned that nothing will change without support from home and some of the girls' mothers are notorious gossips themselves.

So I focused on Tessa. I told her that people whispered about Jesus and told false stories about him, too. He forgave them, and expects us to do the same.

Then, I got her involved with the SPCA where she loves taking care of the homeless animals. She also likes helping at our church's soup kitchen so we signed up to serve there, too.

Helping others made Tessa feel good about herself. I hope next time she'll be strong enough to just walk away from the "mean girls."

Our Mission

To help parents raise faithful Catholic children
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