Partners *in* FAITH™

Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith. September 2018

St. Martin de Porres

Christian Formation Department

Thoughtful Moments

St. John Chrysostom



Born in Antioch around 349 A.D., St. John was raised by his widowed mother, Anthusa, who had him educated by the best teachers of the day. He was ordained and eventually elevated to be Bishop of Constantinople – the most powerful city in the world at the time. He curbed the spending of his own courts to provide for the poor, and criticized the opulence of the royal courts. As a result of this, he died in exile.

Always a second chance

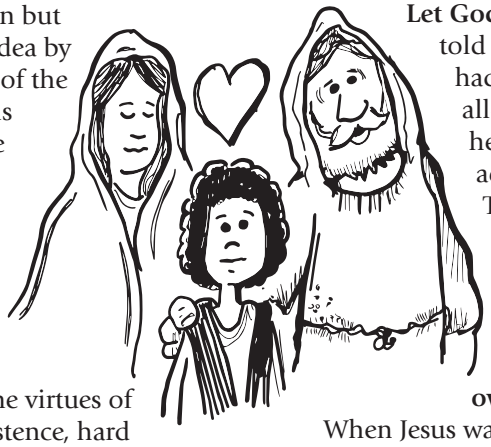
Don't give up if you feel you have failed in parenting – or in life. Remember St. Peter. Although he deserted Jesus when he was most needed, Jesus gave him another chance (John 20:19). He will do the same for all of us.



"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:22-23).

Parenting advice from the Holy Family

A new school year presents an opportunity for a fresh approach. The Bible doesn't say much about how Mary and Joseph prepared Jesus for his unique vocation but we can get an idea by what we know of the adult Jesus. This year, model the Holy Family to raise a holy family, too.



Nurture virtue. During his public ministry, Jesus demonstrated the virtues of patience, persistence, hard work, honesty, devotion, and compassion. Helping children to develop these virtues will prepare them for their own unique vocations.

Give a timely, gentle push. At the wedding feast in Cana, Jesus was reluctant to perform that first public miracle but his mother knew he was ready. At a gentle push from her, he made something wonderful happen.

Let God steer. When the angel told Mary of the plan God had for her life, she allowed God the use of her entire being to accomplish his goals. Teach children, through prayer and sacrifice, to let God control the direction their lives will take.

Strengthen your own faith and practice. When Jesus was young, the way Joseph lived, how he practiced his faith, and how he answered the boy's questions helped to form Jesus' understanding of God. Be sure you are strong in your own faith so you can properly influence that of your children.

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics pray?

As Catholics we know that God created us out of love and he continually reaches out to us to encourage us to love him back. Prayer is our response to God's love.

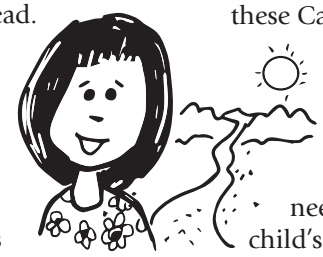


Catholics pray because we believe in God's presence in our lives. We pray because we have hope that our salvation is coming. And we pray because during prayer, the Holy Spirit brings us hope, joy, and peace. Prayer is what connects us to God directly, intimately, and lovingly.

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Lead children in the journey to Christ

God has called each of us to follow him but parents are not only called to follow, we are called to lead. Nurturing a child's spiritual growth is an awesome responsibility but we can teach the importance of our faith in simple ways.



Go to Mass. Bringing our families to Sunday Mass is a powerful way to spend time together and show commitment to the faith.

Celebrate. On the anniversary of your child's baptism each year, give a birthday card to celebrate her "birth" into the life of Christ.

Mark each sacrament. Give attention and support during these Catholic milestones. These are steps on our journey toward Christ.

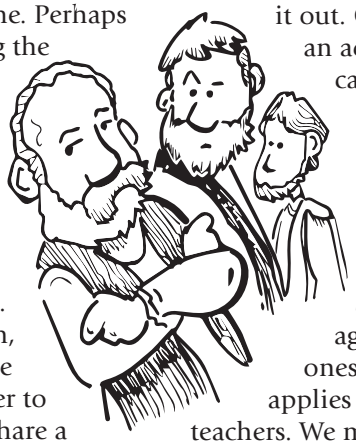
Prayer cards. Expose children to the wealth of prayers the Church offers by creating and gifting prayer cards pertinent to his life situation.

Pack the toolbox. To stay faithful, children need concrete spiritual tools. Start filling your child's toolbox when she is young with prayer, devotions, Sacraments, Scripture, and more, so that it is full when she is an adult.

Scripture LESSON

Mark 9:38-48, Work together for God

In this reading, the disciples were upset because a man they didn't know was healing in Jesus' name. Perhaps they were afraid of losing the spotlight, or they may have been concerned because he was different from them.



In fact, faithful followers of Jesus don't all look alike or talk alike, but we do act alike. Christianity is a kingdom, not a competition. All are welcome to work together to build it up. Those who share a common faith in Christ cooperate, not compete.

Some of Jesus' words sound strange but he is very clear; we treat sin like a cancerous tumor and cut it out. Giving up a friendship, an activity, or a habit that causes us to do wrong may seem as painful as cutting off a hand. But the consequences of our choices last forever.

What can a parent do? The caution against harming little ones in faith is serious, and applies to us as parents and teachers. We must do right by our children. When our thoughts and actions model Christ, we parent with love.

Feasts & Celebrations

Sept. 8 – Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (1st century): Mary's birth brought her parents joy. We rejoice too – because of Mary's "Yes," she became the mother of Jesus.

Sept. 14 - The Exaltation of the Holy Cross (c.326): St. Helena (mother of Emperor Constantine), discovered three crosses while on pilgrimage in Jerusalem. One of them was thought to be the Cross on which Jesus died. On the site, Constantine built the Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher.

Sept. 21 – St. Matthew the Evangelist (1st century): Also known as Levi, he was a notorious tax collector. St. Matthew left everything when Jesus called him to spread the Gospel. He wrote the Gospel According to Matthew.

Sept. 22 – St. Thomas of Villanova (1555): Born in Spain, St. Thomas studied theology at the University of Alcalá, before being ordained a priest and holding several leadership positions. He was appointed Bishop of Valencia by Emperor Charles V. He fostered Catholic spirituality in his diocese and provided for the poor.



Parent TALK

I promise myself each new school year that this is the year I will be a model parent. Lunches will be made the night before. Clothes set out. Homework completed before other activities and dinners will be hot and healthy. By the end of the year, however, I'm just pleased that the children get to school fully clothed and fed.



This year, my husband and I decided to prioritize what is really important. We cut back to just one sport and one club per child and put Mass, family time, religious education, and homework at the top of the list. Friends and family are important, too, and we made room for them in the schedule.

Housekeeping may slip, we may occasionally have omelets for dinner, and Christmas cards may go out at Easter. But our focus is on faith, education, and loved ones, and the rest will fall into place.

Our Mission

To help parents raise faithful Catholic children

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