

Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

March 2023

Saint Dominic School

## Thoughtful Moments

### Better parenting in Lent

Is there a parenting habit you want to get rid of? Jesus came to free prisoners. With his help, work during Lent to let go of a habit you want to shed. Do you nag? Fail to listen? Spent too much time on your screen? If you would like to be a better parent, pick one habit and, one day at a time, work to let it go.

### Unconditional forgiveness

Children learn about God's love from us, their parents. Lent is the perfect time to teach forgiveness. Attend a penance service as a family. Invite children to make an examination of conscience. Make it clear that unconditional forgiveness is part of any Catholic home. Seek God's help and the help of the larger community.



*"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).



### Five ways to prepare for Easter joy

Lent is an opportunity to strengthen our family's spiritual life. We start by examining where we are and who we want to become as a family.

**Recommitment:** Resolve to live as a gospel-centered family and recommit to the Ten Commandments. Encourage reverence for God, modesty and respect for others, integrity in work, gratitude, and respect for others' possessions.

**Reconciliation:** Jesus said we should reconcile with our brother before coming to worship (Matthew 5:23:24). Commit to frequent Confession and make it a family practice to make amends and to repair relationships with anyone wronged.

**Worship:** Give your family the powerful grace of the Eucharist. Attend Mass together and encourage prayer and



participation from children. Teach them the prayers and the most common hymns sung at your parish.

Cue them when to sit, stand, and kneel. Whisper together, "I love you, Jesus," at the elevation of the Body and Blood.

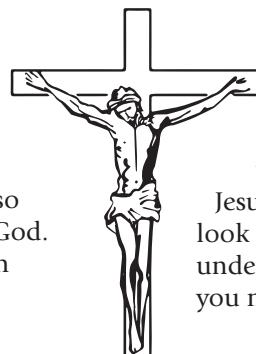
**Togetherness:** Shared time is an opportunity to share values and faith. When parents invest time – like family meals – to share their faith, children understand that faith is important.

**Service:** Catholic Charities is active in most dioceses and offers many opportunities for faith-based service. You can also check with your parish, or refer to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops listing here: <https://tinyurl.com/2hmk97hk> to find a charity that speaks to your hearts.

### Why Do Catholics Do That?

A crucifix – a cross with Christ's body on it – represents the ultimate act of love. It's a symbol of the price of our salvation, done so we could be in heaven with God. This sacrifice is renewed in an unbloody manner at Mass

### Why do Catholics have Crucifixes in Church?



*(Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1367).* "When you look at the crucifix, you understand how much

Jesus loved you then. When you look at the Sacred Host you understand how much Jesus loves you now" (Mother Teresa).

## Correction, fraternally

Fraternal correction – or alerting someone to sin and encouraging them to virtue – is part of family life and is essential to forming children in virtue. It must be done carefully, however, to be effective:

**Be discrete.** If wrong has been done, Jesus said, “*Go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone*” (Matthew 18:15). Try to resolve conflicts at the lowest level. For example, if you have trouble with a relative, solve it with him or her directly and in private, instead of involving others.



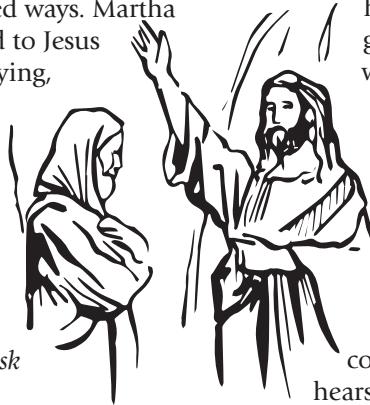
**Speak the loving truth.** People close to us who offend don't always do so with ill intent. Always give the benefit of the doubt, but say what's on your mind. Give your loved one a chance to explain.

**Pick your battles.** Correcting the sinner is an act of charity. Children may try to push limits, and these are great opportunities to clarify what you value as a family. Choose the battles that must be fought, rather than the battles that can be fought.

### Scripture LESSON

#### John 11:1-45, Generous faith, generous reward

God always answers prayers, sometimes in unexpected ways. Martha and Mary had sent word to Jesus that their brother was dying, believing he could help. They may have been disappointed when he took his time coming to them and Lazarus died. Still, Martha demonstrated great faith: “*Even now I know that whatever you ask of God he will give you.*”



response was a marvelous one: for her faith, he worked a great miracle. Martha was right: Jesus cared, he could help, and all things are possible with God.

**What can a parent do?** Tell children that they can talk to God about anything and that they can trust him completely. He always hears our prayers.

Sometimes God doesn't give us what we want but he always gives us what we need, right when we need it. We can trust that his answer to us will be marvelous, too.

### Feasts & Celebrations

**March 6 – St. Colette (1447).** St. Colette was born in Corbie, France. She was orphaned at seventeen and gave her inheritance to the poor. She became a Franciscan Tertiary and lived in solitude. God later sent St. Colette to reform the Poor Clares. She founded seventeen convents under the reformed rule.

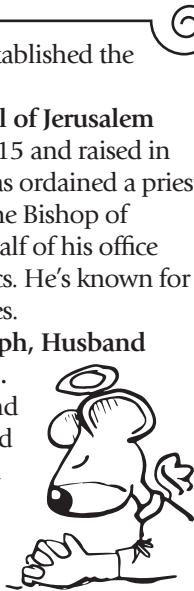
**March 17 – St. Patrick of Ireland (461).** Born in Scotland, St. Patrick was kidnapped and brought to Ireland as a slave. He escaped but later returned to become the bishop of Ireland and is

credited for having established the Church there.

**March 18 – St. Cyril of Jerusalem (386).** Born around 315 and raised in Jerusalem, St. Cyril was ordained a priest and later appointed the Bishop of Jerusalem. He spent half of his office exiled by Arian heretics. He's known for his catechetical lectures.

**March 20 – St. Joseph, Husband of Mary (1st century).**

Jesus' earthly father and husband to the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph is a model of fatherhood and a protector of families.



### Parent TALK

Our children were so disruptive during Mass that my husband and I attended separate Masses to avoid bringing them. After a while, I really missed attending Mass as a family. So I asked our pastor for suggestions.

The first thing Fr. Stan said was to sit up front. He said children pay closer attention when they can see what is going on. Then he suggested arriving 15 minutes early to pray a decade of the Rosary together. When children pray in a quiet church, they get the idea that church is for prayer – not play.

Finally, he said to take the family out for a treat after Mass. Not only is it a reward for good behavior, it helps make Sunday feel special.

His advice worked well. I still have to issue the occasional “shush,” but now we get to attend Mass together. And that's important for all of us.

### Our Mission

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