



## Thoughtful Moments

### Religious education

During the new school year, many religious education programs are meeting online or suspended altogether. Don't let that mean faith formation gets suspended, too. At home, give children's religious education the same importance as their academic education in whatever form it comes. If you need curriculum, ask your parish for recommendations. Reading, writing, and religion are important life skills children will always need.



### Language of love

Those of us who know and love God must be His voice in our world, especially in times of trouble. We can share His love when we speak with gentle voices using kind and loving language. Showing kindness by making time to listen to those who are worried or concerned is a loving act. Spreading God's love is what He wants us to do.

*"The Lord's acts of mercy are not exhausted, his compassion is not spent; They are renewed each morning — great is your faithfulness"* (Lamentations 3:22-23).



## Make family time a priority

Quarantine, lock-down, working from home, our local pandemic response may force us into being at home with our families for longer periods of time. That doesn't necessarily mean that we are actually spending time together. Experts agree, however, that children's comfort and security come from loving parents who spend time with them. The best way to make family time a priority is to be deliberate about it.

**Once a week:** Dedicate one night each week to your family. Do something fun like playing board games, running races outside, making popcorn and watching a movie from the library. Protect it on the calendar

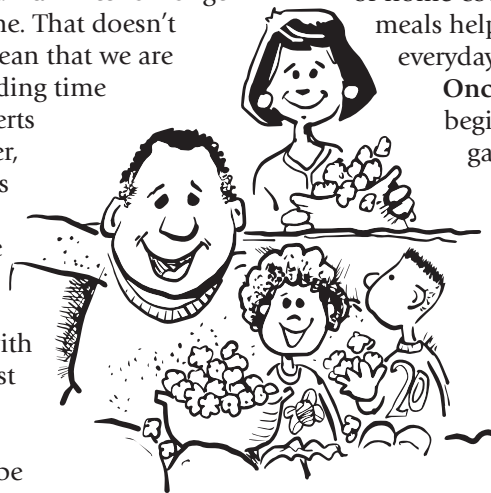
and let nothing interfere.

**Several times a week:** Come together at mealtimes whether for microwaved or home-cooked dinners. Sharing meals helps families to bond over everyday activities.

**Once a month:** At the beginning of each month, gather to check in and discuss concerns.

Children absorb adults' stress and tensions. A regular check-in of their states of mind enables parents to respond to concerns. Let each person have a chance to bring up topics or suggest solutions.

**Once in a while:** Introduce a learning opportunity. Discover a new saint, share a devotion, or introduce a life skill you want your children to learn. Mastering a new experience can help us forget our troubles and adopt a new perspective.



## Why Do Catholics Do That?

Our everyday awareness of God comes to us through our senses: sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste. They are the pathways to the deepest parts of our imagination and understanding.

Some rituals of the Church go

## How do Catholics use our senses in worship?

back to the times when few people could read or write – but they could be drawn to Jesus by using their senses.

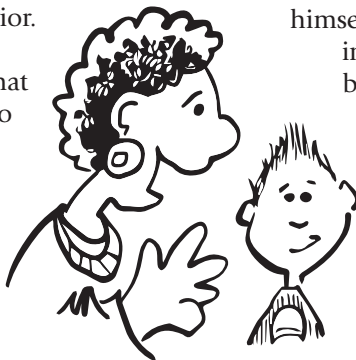
Now we use sacred music, bells, incense, poetic prayers – they all plant our faith deep in our body and bones as Catholics.



## Positive products of praise

Scolding doesn't always produce good behavior. Add earned praise to your parenting toolbox during the pandemic and you may even find that it has led to better behavior when life returns to normal.

**Notice small improvements.** Pick two or three behaviors you would like your child to improve, set goals, and praise even slight progress. "I only had to call you once to set the table today. Thanks for taking responsibility for your chore." Your child will look at



himself in a new way – as someone who is responsible instead of forgetful – and may repeat this behavior hoping for more praise.

**Focus on the positive.** Instead of "You call this a clean room? What about all stuff on the floor?" try to focus on what was done well. "You made your bed and hung up all your clothes. Now all you have to do is put your books on the shelves and your room will look great." She will feel good about the job already done and be motivated to finish.

### Scripture LESSON

## Matthew 16:21-27, Real obedience

Jesus told of a man who asked his two sons to work in his vineyard. The first said, "No," but went anyway. The second said, "Yes," but didn't go. Jesus asked which son did as the father asked. Obviously the first son did.

If we only say, "Yes, God, I believe in you," but don't back up our words with actions, we aren't living as children of God. Simply professing belief is not enough. True faith and obedience are shown through actions. When we realize we are in a state of sin, we have two options. We can say we're sorry, or we can



show we're sorry. How can we show

God we are sorry? We can go to Confession and return to living as Jesus taught us by following the Commandments and the Beatitudes.

What can a parent do?

Use this Gospel to show children what obedience means, both obedience to God and obedience to parents. We can teach our children that doing what Jesus asked us to do is the most important way to live our lives.

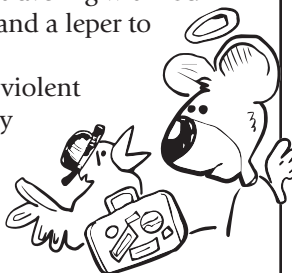
### Feasts & Celebrations

**September 16 – St. Cyprian (258).** Born in Carthage to pagan parents, St. Cyprian converted to Christianity. A renowned theologian and speaker, he became a priest and then bishop of Carthage. He helped Pope St. Cornelius defend the Church against heretics and set guidelines for readmitting lapsed Christians. St. Cyprian was arrested for refusing to worship idols. He was exiled and executed.

**September 28 – St. Wenceslaus (929).** As the king of Bohemia, St. Wenceslaus worked to end the persecution of Christians in his country. He encouraged German

missionaries, built churches, and cared for the sick and poor. Political conflict led to his assassination by his brother. The "Good King" was immediately recognized as a martyr.

**September 28 – St. Lawrence Ruiz and companions (1630).** St. Lawrence was born in the Philippines to Christian parents—a Chinese father and a Filipino mother. Accused of murder, he fled, traveling with four Catholic priests and a leper to Nagasaki, Japan where there was violent persecution. They were arrested, brutally tortured and martyred on Okinawa.



### Parent TALK

When my brother and his fiancé said they were coming for a weekend visit, I was thrilled. It would be a wonderful opportunity for my children to spend time with their uncle



and the woman who would soon be their aunt.

My excitement faded when I learned that my brother expected different sleeping arrangements than I had in mind. He anticipated that they would share a room.

With two children approaching their teenage years, I felt it was important that the rules in our home apply to visitors. Marriage is a blessed sacrament and I wanted the children to understand that it comes with joys and privileges worth waiting for. Sharing a room is one of them.

Although displeased, my brother respected my concern and the two enjoyed their stay without incident. When they later returned as a married couple, we were happy to host them in our guest room together.

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