

Religious Education PREP Newsletter

Issue: March 2021 St. Mary Magdalen Church

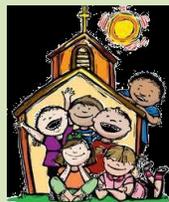


Dear Parents,

Ordinarily this month we would be taking our 7th grade out on a field trip to visit the Poor Clares, a community of contemplative nuns who live in Wilmington. They would hear the nun's stories of how they discerned their vocations, and would be able to ask questions about their lives in the monastery. Our 6th grade would be preparing to go with their families to the Interfaith Seder at Congregation Beth Shalom, a synagogue down the street from Sallies. We would enjoy traditional seder dishes like gefilte fish and matzoh ball soup while hearing the Exodus story and why it means so much to our faith. I am so sad that those classes are missing events that give them another "layer" of understanding to their faith! I look forward to a day when we can celebrate these events together again!

I just read an article this morning about a dad who wrote notes for his daughter's lunch box every day. I had that sort of relationship with my dad; not one where he wrote notes (although he did write me weekly while I was in college) but where we knew each other so well we could look at each other and know what the other person was thinking. This dad felt badly that he hadn't been there for his daughter when she was younger, but he and his wife sensed as she hit middle school that something was going on. She was being bullied. He didn't storm the castle, cause an embarrassing scene at school, or any of the things we want to do when we want to "help." Instead, he started writing notes for her every day. Little things about life, like "You're only as pretty as you treat people" and "The grass is only greener if you water it." By 2018 he had over 600!

My dad has been gone a long time – 30 years this October – and today I still have and cherish all the notes he wrote to me. Even more, I cherish all the life lessons he taught me by the way he lived his life. I met (virtually) with all of our Confirmation parents the other day, and I reminded them of what I tell our First Communion parents every year – you are your child's first and best catechists. Far more important than missing the Seder or the Poor Clares field trip is the time YOU spend with them, the lessons YOU impart about the way to live. Use this Lent, this time when you have it. You never know when it will be gone. - Karen Yasik



IN THIS ISSUE:

~ Calendar – read carefully!



DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS!

Clocks "spring" ahead and we lose an hour on March 14th! Don't be late!

CONFIRMATION CLASS INFO

If you haven't gone online to register per the email I sent, please don't wait! The June 15th retreat is already full! Go to [Confirmation](#) and sign up!

Calendar

February 28th – in-building class

March 7th – in-building class for PREP – First Communion retreat materials will come home

March 13th – 10:30AM virtual host practice for First Communion students – link will be sent

March 14th – virtual class for PREP; this week is the For the Sake of God's Children lesson for grades K-1 and 6-7

March 21st - in-building class for PREP
March 28th – NO CLASSES, PALM SUNDAY

April 4th – NO CLASSES, EASTER SUNDAY

April 11th - in-building class for PREP

In case you missed it last year, Father Kirk made a video presentation for children about Easter symbols like the Easter Bunny! It's still on our parish youtube channel and can be found at <https://youtu.be/dXMmgFxsZo>

14 ways to do bedtime prayer with your kids -Jerry Windley-Daoust

This article is adapted from the book 77 Ways to Pray with Your Kids.

Right before bed is often a good time to have a short family prayer service!

Praying with kids can be more messy than holy, especially when you are just beginning to pray together, and especially when young children are involved. Know that you are not alone: hundreds of generations of Christian parents have had the same experience. Is your toddler using the rosary as a slingshot? Been there and done that. Does your teen pray through gritted teeth? Check. Is your second grader kicking your ten-year-old as you pray the Our Father? At least they're not actually killing one another, which is more than could be said about Cain and Abel during *their* family prayer time (Genesis 4:1-9).

Here are some tips for dealing with the prayer-time crazies:

- ▶ Pray now, discipline later. Unless kids are in danger of getting hurt or destroying property, ignore their behavior and focus on your own prayer (you'll need the extra grace anyway). If you constantly stop praying to deal with their behavior, then they are running the show—and you're no longer praying. You can discuss expectations and hand out consequences after prayer is done.
- ▶ Start out small. Begin by making family prayer time just as long as you can tolerate your kids' behavior. You may even need to begin by simply sprinkling some five-second Invocations throughout your day.
- ▶ Stick with it to establish new expectations. Kids are often resistant to new routines or changes in expectations. Stick with it through the initial resistance. As prayer becomes a habit and regular expectation, and as you find the prayer practices that best fit your family, you will begin seeing the fruits of your efforts.
- ▶ Explain why you're praying. If your kids ask questions about why you're praying (or praying in a new way), offer them a brief explanation.
- ▶ Be patient. Sometimes you will think, "We didn't actually pray; we just went through the motions." Although it may not *feel* rewarding, sometimes going through the motions is prayer nonetheless, because it is its own kind of striving toward God. And one day, you and your kids will be "just going through the motions" and discover yourselves surrounded by the presence of God.

If you prefer, you can have your children pray a short prayer in (or kneeling next to) their beds. Check out [Six Evening Prayer Options for Catholic Families](#) for some basic children's bedtime prayers; older kids and teens may prefer to pray some of the evening prayers from the Liturgy of Hours.

- Bless your child
- Do a kid-friendly Examen
- Talk about your day and use events to guide prayer
- Have a religious picture by the bed
- Read a Bible story to guide prayer
- Use a religious children's book to guide prayer
- Sing a kid-friendly religious song (maybe from VBS!)
- Make a prayer pillowcase to encourage sweet dreams
- Choose a different family member each night to pray for
- Pray one decade of the Rosary – or one Hail Mary
- Keep a prayer or gratitude journal by the bed
- Read the story of a saint and ask them to intercede
- Recite traditional prayers slowly and invite them to join in
- Light a candle and turn out the lights for prayer focus