

## Thoughtful Moments

### A stranger in your home?

Would you let a stranger into your home, give him your child's undivided attention for hours, and let him tell her what to wear and how to behave? Yet, that's what happens when children have too much unsupervised access to screens. To break the cycle, consider fasting from screens one day a week and substitute a family activity, such as reading aloud or playing board games instead.



### Positive penance

Penance isn't punishment. When we do something that hurts our friendship with God, penance helps us to take responsibility for our actions and make amends. Our sin affects others, and our penance and reparation can, too.

### The Baptized are never alone

Remind children that even when we aren't with them, God is. Baptism means we have been chosen by God and set apart for Him. Those who are baptized become part of God's family and He never forgets His own.



## Take action to quiet worry

As we enter another school year in a time of pandemic, children may feel anxious about what's ahead. Taking spiritual action can help them feel less stress and worry. Consider these ideas:

**Give God your troubles.** Encourage youngsters to write down concerns on slips of paper. Place them in a basket or bowl before a crucifix or an image of Jesus. Then ask Him to handle your worries, and avoid thinking about them again. *"Cast all your worries upon Him because He cares for you"* (1 Peter 5:7).

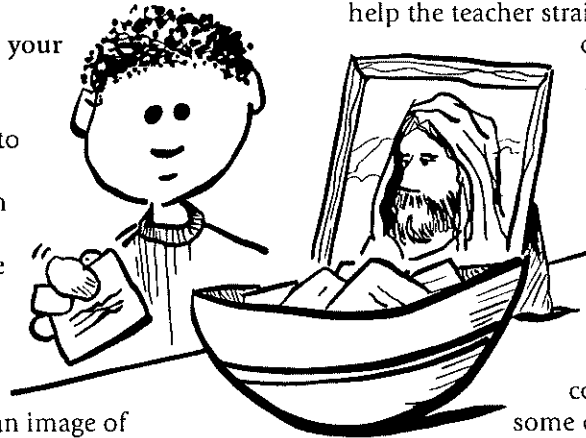
**Perform a daily act of kindness.** The best antidote to worrying about

ourselves can be to think of others. Ask youngsters to perform an act of kindness for someone else each day. Do an extra chore unasked, sit next to a student who may not have a friend, help the teacher straighten up the

classroom. *"A friend owes kindness to one in despair ..."* (Job 6:14),

**Pick a saint.** When a situation causes anxiety but is out of our control, call in some celestial backup.

Pick one saint each month to read about, learn about, and to ask for intercession. The saints are God's best friends, and He listens to them. *"... (I)f the word of the Lord were with them, then they would intercede with the LORD of hosts"* (Jeremiah 27:18).



## Why Do Catholics Do That?

The word "catholic" comes from the Greek, "katholikos." It means "throughout the whole" or "universal."

The first record of the Church being called "Catholic" quotes a first-century letter St. Ignatius wrote to the Smyrnaeans, "Where

## Why is our Church called "Catholic"?



the bishop appears, there let the people be, just as where Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church." St. Cyril of Jerusalem (347) wrote, "Now it [the Church] is called Catholic because it is throughout the world, from one end of the earth to the other."

# Lean on Christ

Catholic parents want children to be strong enough to live virtuously as adults. It is critical for children to grow up leaning on Christ, not just meeting him as an infrequent visitor. Taking steps to keep youngsters connected when they are young will ensure they stay close to Jesus when they are grown.

**Keep holy the Lord's Day** by taking your family to Mass every Sunday and every Holy Day of Obligation. Avoid activities that would hinder worship or relaxation.

**Lead a sacramental life.** Encourage your family to receive Holy Communion frequently and the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly.



**Study and share Catholic teaching.** See that children are properly Confirmed and remain active in their faith.

**Educate children in the Catholic faith.** Use parish schools or catechetical programs.

**Strengthen the Church.** Contribute to your parish, support your priests, the universal Church, and the pope.

**Perform and teach penance** for forgiveness of sins – our own and those of others.

**Help spread the good news** of God's love and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

## Scripture LESSON

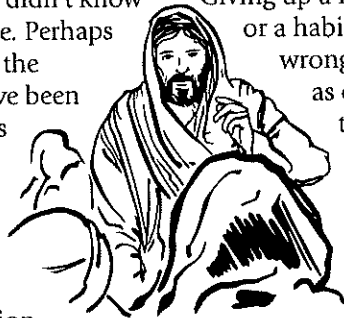
### Mark 9:38-48, Work together for God

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.

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 applies to us as parents and teachers. Our thoughts

and actions must be motivated by love so that we can model Christian behavior for our children.

## Parent TALK

Throughout the months of the pandemic, Kara has been stressed and anxious. A worrier by nature, she said that she is afraid something will



happen to her (or us) and she doesn't feel safe. I realized that she needed to meet her guardian angel.

I told Kara that, according to tradition, each of us has a guardian angel who is with us from the moment of our birth until our death. Our angel stays by our side, tries to advise us for good, to steer us to the right path, and above all to help us be good people and good children of God.

Together we started praying the Guardian Angel prayer every night. We ask our guardians to look after us and protect us from harm. Now, whenever Kara feels concerned throughout the day, she whispers the same prayer and has confidence that she is safe in celestial hands.

## Feasts & Celebrations

**Sept. 16 – St. Cyprian (258).** Born in Carthage to pagan parents, Cyprian converted to Christianity and became bishop of Carthage. A noted orator and theologian, Cyprian helped Pope St. Cornelius defend the Church against Novatian heretics. He set guidelines for readmitting lapsed Christians. Cyprian was arrested for refusing to worship idols. He was exiled and subsequently beheaded.

**Sept. 28 – St. Wenceslaus (929).** As the king of Bohemia, Wenceslaus worked closely with the Church to end the persecution of the Christians in his

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

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



### Our Mission

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