

Partners in FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

May 2012

St. Helen Catholic School

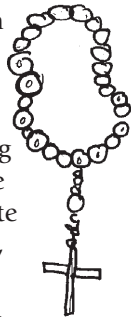
Educating the whole person to see with Christ's eyes.



Thoughtful Moments

A family novena

Introduce your children to the power of the novena. Together choose an intention and spend the next nine days praying about it. You can pray the Rosary for nine days, recite the Divine Mercy chaplet, or even write a novena service of your own. Even better, find out if your parish has a novena service you can attend as a family.



Parenting as mercy

Parenting is a beautiful ministry. Catholics are called to practice the corporal works of mercy. Every day parents have multiple opportunities to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, comfort the sick, and shelter the homeless, and we don't even have to leave home. In this way, parenting becomes both a job and a prayer.

Share God's joy

"Keep the joy of loving God in your heart and share this joy with all you meet especially your family. Be holy – let us pray."
Blessed Teresa of Calcutta



God's love flows through you

Children first learn about God's love through us, their parents. When they understand how much we love them, they are open to God's love, too. Here are 10 ways to let children know they are loved:

Create a secret word, sign, or handshake that only you and your child share.

Proudly wear the "jewels" your children make for you or display their handicrafts where you work.

Consecrate each child to a patron saint. Ask that saint to intercede on your child's behalf for protection and guidance.

Give hugs and kisses and say, "I love you" every day, no matter what. Our children thrive on receiving affection.

Forget about yesterday's mistakes.

Start each day fresh.

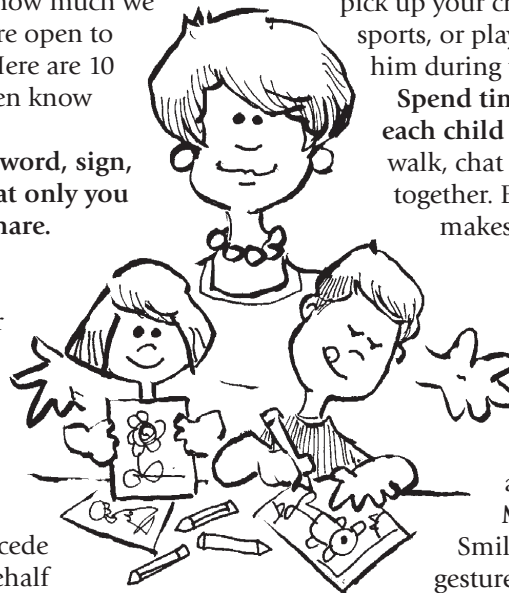
Turn off the cell phone when you pick up your child from school, sports, or play dates. Focus on him during transitions.

Spend time individually with each child each day – take a walk, chat before bed, draw together. Even 10 minutes makes a child feel special.

Slip notes of encouragement or love in her backpack, under her pillow, in her pockets, just so she knows you are thinking of her. **Make eye contact.**

Smile. Those two gestures help children know that they are important.

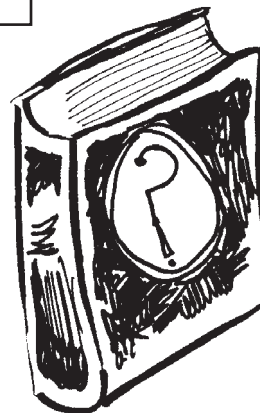
Pray with your children and let them hear you thank God for allowing you to be their parent. Teach them to pray.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics believe things that aren't in the Bible?

As a matter of fact, all of our beliefs are rooted in Scripture and we reject doctrines that aren't. Some truths in Scripture are less obvious than others. So the Church interprets them for us. Catholics are taught



that the Bible communicates faithfully and without error the saving truth that God wants us to know.

Over the years the Church - guided by the Holy Spirit - grows in knowledge of Scripture and uncovers for us truths that were previously obscure.

What do you want for your children?

What is it you hope for most for your children? As Christians, we want them to go to Heaven to be with God, of course. But while they are on Earth, we hope they become happy, independent and contributing adults.

Teach them to learn. Our homes are where children first discover learning. Reading is the key. Read to children at an early age and don't stop even when they are old enough to read on their own. Talk about what you read, see, and



discover. Marvel at God's amazing creation.

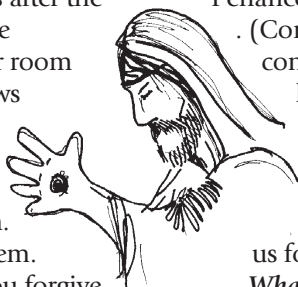
Teach them to care. Every child can do something helpful for the family, and each should do as much as they can. Contributing to the family is the first step in contributing to the larger family of God. No child is too young to start.

Teach them to trust. Let your children witness your trust in God. Love him with all your heart and let him be your Lord. If you do that sincerely, he will bless even your flawed efforts.

Scripture LESSON

John 20:19-23, Jesus Gives Us the Holy Spirit

This Gospel tells of Jesus' first appearance to his apostles after the Resurrection. Although the apostles were in the upper room with the door and windows locked, Jesus appeared in their midst. He showed them his wounds so they would recognize him.



Then he breathed on them. Jesus said, "Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained." In Scripture the breath of God was symbolic of his Spirit. When Jesus conveyed his Spirit to them, the apostles were given the authority to forgive sins. That was the

establishment of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation (Confession). This is why we confess our sins to a priest and he conveys Jesus' forgiveness to us.

Today the Holy Spirit helps us recognize Jesus in our midst as well as bring us forgiveness for our sins.

What can a parent do? Explain to children how the Holy Spirit works in our lives. He brings us the great Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession), giving us healing from sins just as medicine heals us from physical hurts.

Parent TALK

Two younger brothers prepared me for my two noisy, active boys. But I wasn't prepared for bickering, tattling boys. Every ten minutes, I have to settle an argument.



One day, Fr. Dobbins came to dinner. The boys were on their best behavior until they went alone to the next room to play. The screams and tattling made adult conversation impossible.

Father finally said, as the oldest of a large family, it looked to him like our boys didn't know how to settle their own fights because I always do it for them. Once I stop, he predicted things would calm down.

The next day, I told my sons if they fought, they would both get sent to their rooms no matter who started it. If they disagreed, they needed to ask, "What would Jesus do," and find a solution together. Sure enough, in time they learned to solve their own disputes.

Feasts & Celebrations

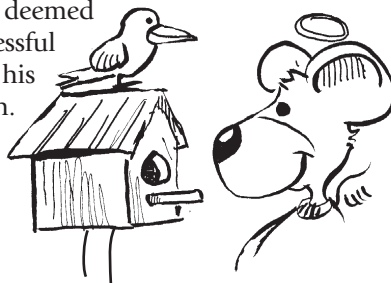
In May we honor the Blessed Virgin Mary. We can grow closer to her by praying to her, honoring her feast days, and obeying her Son.

May 10 – St. Damien de Veuster (1889). Born in Belgium, Joseph de Veuster became Fr. Damien at the age of 19. He ministered to lepers on the Hawaiian island of Molokai for whom he built roads, water systems, and churches. He died of leprosy himself.

May 17 – The Ascension of the Lord (1st century). After Jesus' Resurrection, he appeared to his disciples as proof of his victory over death and then he rose bodily to Heaven. This is a Holy Day of

Obligation when Catholics are required attend Mass.

May 25 – Pope St. Gregory, VII (1085). He battled evils that plagued the Church: simony (buying and selling sacred offices and services), unlawful marriage of the clergy and kings and nobles appointing Church officials. For this he suffered and died in exile. His efforts were deemed successful after his death.



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