

Partners in FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

January 2019

Academy of Our Lady of Grace

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Help your family have a Happy New Year

Making your family better, stronger, more harmonious may not require a overhaul, but rather a few strategic tweaks. Try these tips to ensure that 2019 is a happier and healthier New Year for you and your family.

Eat healthier. Medical journals report that nine million children in the United States are obese or overweight. This year, try to avoid serving junk or overly processed foods and sit down together to family meals with average-sized portions of fresh, healthy foods.

Stay calm. Words can heal or hurt. Promise each other that you will avoid yelling and use only kind words.

Monitor input. Children absorb what they see and hear. Restrict what

your child watches on TV or plays on screens.

Keep moving. Go on family walks, bike rides, or go roller blading together. Find fun ways to get family exercise and spend more time together.

Read together more. Reading together at any age can increase attention span and provide time for closeness. Combine two great activities and read together from the Bible.

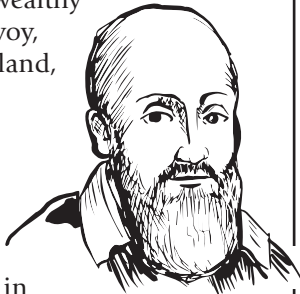
Seek the Sacraments. Our souls need Sacraments the way our bodies need nourishment. Through the Sacraments Jesus instituted, the Holy Spirit dispenses a share of divine life with each encounter. Resolve to receive Confession regularly as a family and let nothing come between you and the Eucharist on Sunday.



Thoughtful Moments

St. Francis de Sales

Born to a wealthy family in Savoy, near Switzerland, St. Francis became the Bishop of Geneva and worked to revive Catholicism in Chablais, Switzerland.



Controversial for his day, he taught that all Christians in whatever station in life could grow in holiness. He was known for his simple but profound sermons, and kindly spiritual wisdom. His famous work, *Introduction to the Devout Life*, is still a popular read today as it was when he wrote it.

The Name

In January we celebrate the Holy Name of Jesus. "...at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth" (Philippians 2:10). So honored is his name that its first three letters in Greek - IHS - were written over Christian homes.

"So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

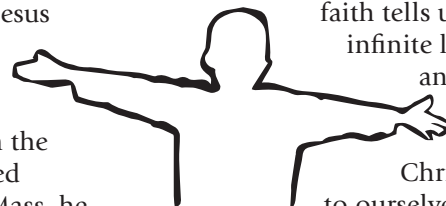


Why Do Catholics Do That ?

Why do Catholics need to share their faith?

Catholicism is about having a relationship with Jesus Christ, who shows God's love to us. God became man, died and rose from the dead, and re-opened Heaven for us. At Mass, he strengthens us with his Body

and Blood in the Eucharist. Our faith tells us that the perfect, infinite love we seek has a face and a name. Like the Woman at the Well, once we encounter Christ, we can't keep him to ourselves. We have to share him.



Celebrate your Catholic family

Strong Catholic families strengthen our neighborhoods, communities and the entire Church. "Christian marriage and family build up the Church" (Pope John Paul II, Familiaris Consortio, #15). Celebrate yours.

Catholic parents are instruments of God's love. Children learn about God's love from their parents and we help to shape their relationship with God. There are few jobs that are as important.

Catholic families breed respect. Our children know they are valued because we care about their behavior and hold them accountable as followers of Christ.



Catholic parents provide structure and boundaries and enforce family rules. We help our youngsters develop good manners and respectful behavior.

Catholic families practice modesty. Catholics are called to control passions and avoid public and private sin.

Christian parents have to make tough choices about how children dress and act, so we encourage children to behave in a manner befitting a temple of the Holy Spirit.

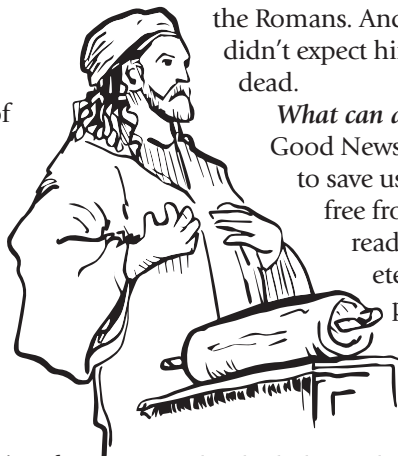
Catholic parents model self-sacrifice. We set aside our personal desires for the good of our family, our parish, and our community.

Scripture LESSON

Luke 1:1-4, 4:14-21; Jesus proclaims the Good News

In this passage, Jesus returned home to Nazareth to teach in the synagogue. Jesus began by reading the prophecy of Isaiah about the coming of the Messiah, who would come to "bring glad tidings to the poor." Then, to the surprise of his listeners, he said, "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing." He announced he was the long-awaited Messiah.

They must have been shocked. They were expecting the Messiah to be a worldly king who would overthrow the Romans. They didn't expect the Messiah to come from



humble Nazareth and be killed by the Romans. And they definitely didn't expect him to rise from the dead.

What can a parent do? The Good News is that God came to save us, heal us, and set us free from sin. He wants us ready for love and eternal life. There are people who need to hear the Good News of God's saving love.

Teach children that by helping those in need, praying for them, and doing what's right even when it's hard, they are sharing the Good News.

Parent TALK

When I was in college, I enjoyed serving at a soup kitchen. I felt that was what Jesus meant when he said, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one

of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me" (Matthew 25:40). So

when we moved to a new town, I was glad to



serve at the parish soup kitchen.

We arrived with our casserole and warm bread and joined in serving. The guests were welcomed and shown to seats, while the rest of us rushed to put hot plates in front of them. Instead of the silence I expected, there was lively conversation and laughter. I found my ten-year old sitting at a table chatting. One man said, "Coming to a soup kitchen can be tough but you folks make us feel like we are in your living room." Guess we got it right.

Feasts & Celebrations

Jan. 4 – St. Elizabeth Ann Seton (1821). Wife, then widow, then Catholic convert, St. Elizabeth was rejected by her wealthy Episcopalian family and friends. To support herself and her children, she opened a Catholic school for girls near Baltimore. Eventually, she founded the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1809, who ran schools and orphanages, marking the beginning the U.S. parochial school system.

Jan. 25 – Conversion of St. Paul. In the Acts of the Apostles, we read about

how Saul persecuted the Christians until Jesus appeared to him on the road to Damascus. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he said (Acts 9:5). After that, Saul became Paul and traveled around the known world, preaching the faith.

Jan. 26 – Sts. Timothy and Titus (1st century). Timothy was a convert of Paul's and later became his trusted friend joining him in apostolic work. Titus was also a friend of Paul's who served the early Church as a peacemaker and as administrator to a community on Crete.



Our Mission

To help parents raise faithful Catholic children
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