

Partners in FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

January 2016

Church of the Annunciation

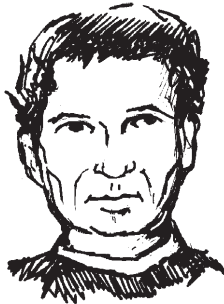
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Thoughtful Moments



St. John Bosco

St. John Bosco was moved by the plight of the young abandoned boys in Rome. One night, he dreamed he was in a field surrounded by badly behaved boys, whom he felt called to teach and inspire for good. To do this, St. John opened the Oratory of St. Francis de Sales and provided workshops for boys in shoemaking and tailoring. Using reason, religion, and kindness, he taught them how to unite faith with work and play.



Kindness

In today's busy world, showing kindness to others can go a long way to sharing love. Remember how good it felt the last time someone showed you an unexpected kindness? Look for ways to show kindness, even when it's unexpected. It can be something simple, like holding the door for the person behind you or offering up prayers for people who need them.

"Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels" (Hebrews 13:2).



Make mercy your child's way of life

In December, we began a Jubilee Year of Mercy, "which has at its center the mercy of God. It will be a Holy Year of Mercy" (Pope Francis). When taught early, mercy becomes a way of life. Fill your family's year with the compassion and kindness of this virtue with these ideas:

Foster kindness. Grab chances to be kind. Teach youngsters to pitch in without being asked. Allow someone to cut in line. Walk away from an argument. Give a sad friend a hug.

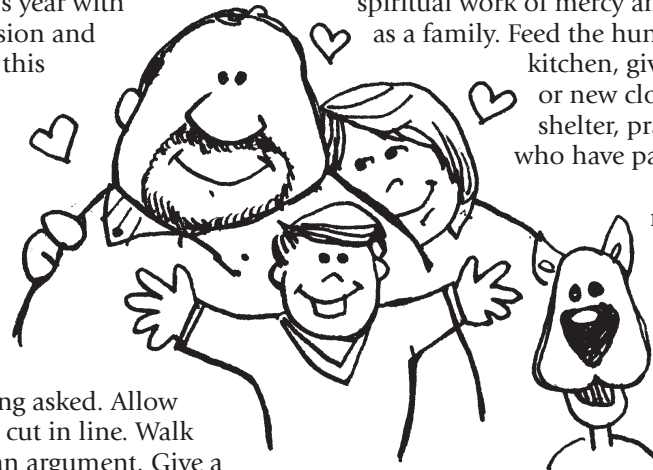
Forgive quickly. Jesus said, "If you forgive others their [sins], your heavenly Father will forgive you" (Matthew 6:14). Followers of Jesus forgive even before

we are asked. Better still, forgive as God forgives: fully and quickly. That can be uncomfortable, but it's for our own peace, as well.

Practice mercy. Choose a corporal or spiritual work of mercy and perform it as a family. Feed the hungry at a soup kitchen, give gently used or new clothing to a shelter, pray for people who have passed away.

Pray for mercy. Prayer is powerful. "Lord I am a sinner; come with your mercy." Pope Francis recommends this simple prayer for

the Holy Year of Mercy. Another prayer is the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, which is a short, easy prayer that can be said on regular Rosary beads.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

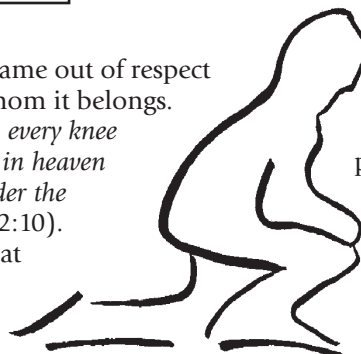
Why do Catholics honor Jesus' name?

We honor Jesus' name out of respect for the Person to whom it belongs.

"At the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth" (Philippians 2:10).

Another reason that we honor Jesus' name is because

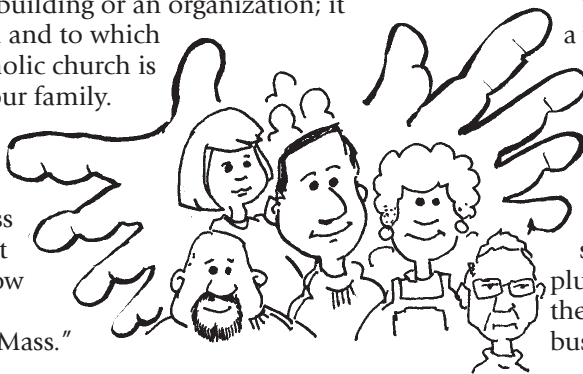
it reminds us of all the blessings we can receive through him. And Jesus promised, "Whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give you" (John 16:23). By honoring his name, we honor him.



The Church is family

The Church is more than a building or an organization; it is a family we join at Baptism and to which we belong forever. Every Catholic church is our home, and the parish is our family.

"Whenever someone in my family is sick, I call the parish office and ask to have him or her placed on the Mass intentions list," said Laura. "It gives me great comfort to know my friends and neighbors are praying for my loved ones at Mass."



"Last year my Tessa was in the hospital for a week," said Lisa. "We didn't have family close by to help out. It was difficult but the women of the parish cooked for my family while I stayed in the hospital with her to ease the burden. I'll never forget their kindness."

Gene said, "My house is old and something is always breaking. When I need a plumber or electrician, I go right to the back of the bulletin and choose a parishioner-owned business – someone from the family."

Scripture LESSON

Luke 4:21-30
Hear it, live it.

From the time God promised a Messiah, people imagined a marvelous king who would defeat Israel's enemies. They certainly didn't expect someone ordinary or a man they already knew.

Still, when Jesus' friends and neighbors heard what was said about his amazing deeds, they wanted to believe in him. They became excited when he read Isaiah's prophecy about the Messiah and announced that it was actually about him.

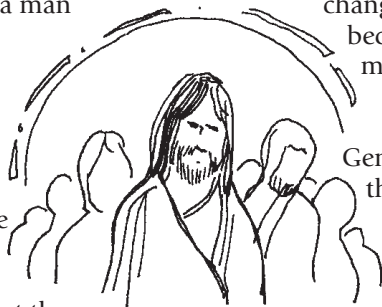
Then everything changed because Jesus had some hard messages for them. He warned that their expected

blessings wouldn't automatically come to them. God's people had lost their chosen place in the past because they didn't listen to his prophets and change their ways. His friends

became furious when Jesus mentioned God's grace to the Gentiles because the Israelites thought Gentiles were inferior to themselves. They became angry and threw Jesus out.

What can a parent do? Help children

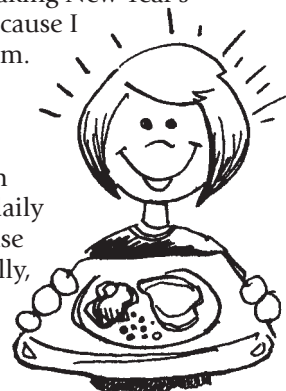
understand that although the truth isn't always easy to hear, there is no substitute for it. If we ignore the truth Jesus brought, the doors of Heaven may close to us forever.



Parent TALK

I stopped making New Year's resolutions because I never kept them.

I had trouble keeping up with my usual promises, such as exercising daily or weekly house cleaning. Finally, frustrated and dissatisfied, I decided to do something different; I resolved to find one small way to serve.



My husband is a member of the Knights of Columbus and serves at their soup kitchen. While the team is never short on food they could always use more volunteers. Why not make it a family affair?

Now, once a month on a Wednesday afternoon, my daughters and I spend a few hours cooking for and serving hungry people. My youngest daughter loves playing "hostess" and welcoming people. Her older sister enjoys helping her dad serve the plates. It is a small contribution, but for the hungry people we serve it is a vital act of love. Finally, a resolution I can keep!

Feasts & Celebrations

January 3 – Epiphany of Our Lord (1st century). Epiphany comes from the Greek word for "manifestation," or appearance. We celebrate when the three wise men visited the Infant Jesus, bearing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. When the wise men honored the Infant, they bore witness to the fulfillment of God's promise of a savior.

January 10 – The Baptism of the Lord (1st century). Jesus began his public ministry by getting baptized by St. John the Baptist. Jesus was

free of sin, but he allowed himself to be baptized in order to "fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15). It is also at this time when God reveals Jesus as his "beloved Son" (Matthew 3:17).

January 28 – St. Thomas Aquinas (1274). Kept prisoner for a year by his mother and brothers to prevent him from becoming a priest, St. Thomas Aquinas became one of the greatest theologians of the Church, honored with the titles, "Doctor of the Church," and the "Angelic Doctor." His writings are still fundamental to Christian education today.



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