

Partners in FAITH™

Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

March 2016

Church of the Annunciation

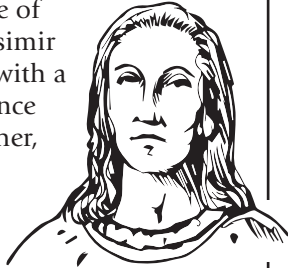
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Thoughtful Moments

St. Casimir of Poland

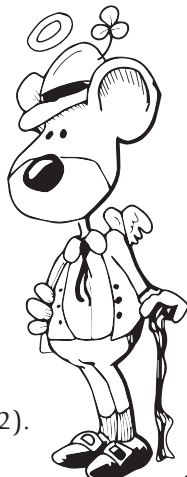
Born a prince of Poland, St. Casimir was endowed with a strong conscience by a great teacher, John Dlugosz. He was recognized for his holiness, virtue, and kindness. When his father sent him to take over Hungary, Prince Casimir, seeing he was outnumbered, turned back out of concern for his troops. He resolved never to go to war again, and devoted his life to prayer and study. He died of tuberculosis at the age of twenty-three.



A saintly start

It can be hard to speak kindly of others when they get on our nerves. Yet Pope Francis says, "If you find a person who never, never, never spoke ill of another, you could canonize him or her immediately." Start today by looking for and pointing out the good qualities in others.

"Forgive your neighbor's injustice; then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven" (Sirach 28:2).



A Holy Week leads to a Happy Easter

Mark each day of Holy Week with significance to help prepare for Easter.

Palm Sunday: People threw their cloaks on the ground before Jesus in respect as he entered Jerusalem. Collect gently used coats and donate them.

Holy Monday: When Jesus purged the money changers from the temple, he removed what separated and distracted people from their worship of God. Today, abstain from television and video games, avoid excessive texting or phone calls, and spend time in prayer instead.

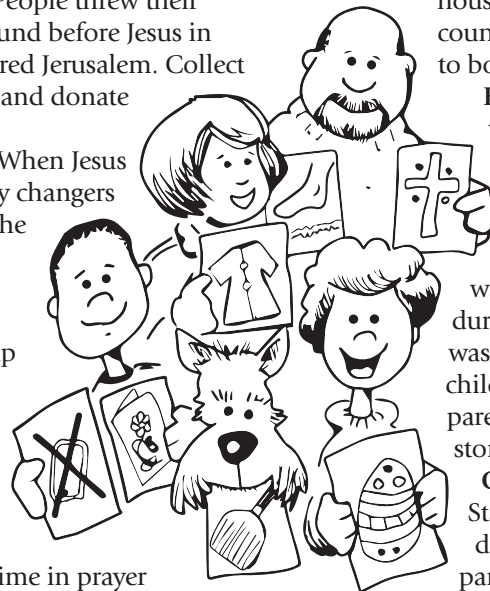
Holy Tuesday: Jesus' friends let him down when he needed them. Talk about loyalty and true friendship. Make a list of friends important to your family and send them Easter cards.

Holy Wednesday: Wednesday of Holy Week has been a traditional housecleaning day in many countries. Clean from top to bottom.

Holy Thursday: Jesus washed the Apostles' feet to encourage his followers to humbly serve others. Host an at-home foot washing ceremony during which parents wash children's feet and children do the same for parents. Read the Gospel story in John 13:1-11.

Good Friday: Attend Stations of the Cross devotions at your parish, if offered. Or, draw pictures illustrating each of the stations and go through them together at home.

Holy Saturday: A day of anticipation before Easter, color eggs to symbolize the new life we receive on Easter morning.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics have their feet washed on Holy Thursday?

The Church began the practice of washing feet on Holy Thursday to imitate our Lord, who washed the feet of the Twelve Apostles at the Last Supper. He did this as a sign of his commandment to love one

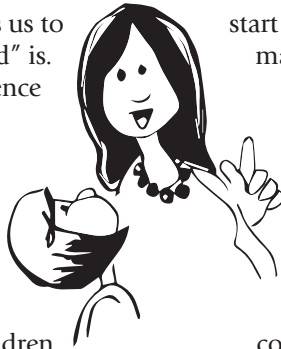


another, saying, "I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do" (John 13:15). Jesus showed his disciples that the greatest of all would be the servant of all.

Parent power can form a strong conscience

The Holy Spirit in each of God's children calls us to do good, but we have to understand what "good" is. That's where our consciences come in. "Conscience is a judgment of reason by which the human person recognizes the moral quality of a concrete act" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1796*). Forming a Catholic conscience is a lifelong task, beginning at birth.

Do as I do. Parents have the biggest impact on our children's development, and how their consciences form. The process begins when children



start developing attachments. Children start to imitate the mannerisms, speech, and habits of trusted adults. It is important that they see our faith in our actions.

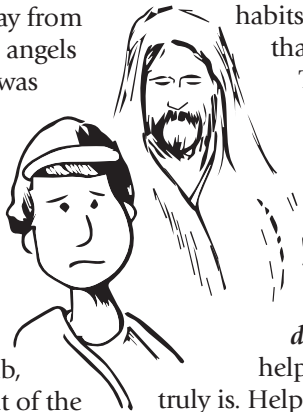
Experience is a powerful teacher. If parents are attentive, respectful, and nurturing to a child, she learns to internalize these characteristics as the way to relate to others. For example, attending to a child's emotion pain will teach her remorse when she causes others pain. Invest active time in children, foster a sense of belonging, and communicate love.

Scripture LESSON

John 20:1-9, The Resurrection of Jesus

In John's account of the first Easter morning, Mary Magdalene discovered the stone had been rolled away from the tomb. She spoke with the angels who informed her that Jesus was risen, and raced back to the apostles and told them what she knew. Electrified by the news, John and Peter ran to the tomb. John was younger and arrived first but waited for Peter, the Head of the apostles.

When they entered the tomb, John noticed the arrangement of the cloths in which Jesus was buried. Instantly, John "saw and believed." Perhaps something in the way the



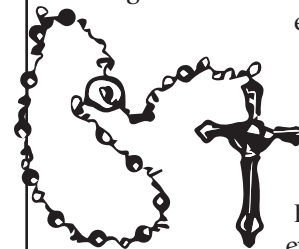
cloths were folded and arranged seemed familiar, spoke of Jesus' habits, and convinced John that Jesus was alive again.

The Resurrection proved that Jesus was really who he said he was. Jesus rose from the dead so we would know that our faith in him is justified.

What can a parent do? John's love for Jesus helped him to see who Jesus truly is. Help children to know and love Jesus. A close relationship with our Lord will reveal Jesus to youngsters.

Parent TALK

We had such a fruitful Lent this year, we wanted to keep up our good habits as "Easter resolutions." At the beginning of Lent, we committed to doing one good family deed weekly. We discussed the good deeds over dinner, which gave the children a chance to pat each other on the back.



We also committed to praying a decade of the Rosary as a family every night to help us have a good

Lent. At first, it was difficult to make the time, but the family decade became a favorite part of our bedtime routine.

We still do good deeds every week, but instead of discussing them, we talk about ways others have been kind and discuss how to imitate them.

Continuing our Lenten practices of doing good deeds and praying nightly helps us to be more patient and caring, and has brought us closer together as a family.

Feasts & Celebrations

March 3 – St. Katharine Drexel (1955). A Philadelphia heiress, St. Katharine Drexel gave up her fortune to become a nun. She founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Black and Native American peoples. She established fifty missions for Native Americans in several states and founded Xavier University in New Orleans, the first university for African-Americans in the United States.

March 17 – St. Patrick of Ireland (493). Born in Scotland, St. Patrick was kidnapped by Irish pirates and brought to Ireland as a slave when he

was about sixteen. He escaped several years later and became a priest. He was ordained the bishop of Ireland and is credited for having established the Church there.

March 20 – Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion. The Sunday before Easter is called Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion. It recalls Jesus' entry into Jerusalem when he was greeted by crowds waving palms and cheering. It marks the beginning of Holy Week. We receive palms to celebrate this special day.



Our Mission

To help parents raise faithful Catholic children
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