

Partners in FAITH™

Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

November 2015

Church of the Annunciation

www.annunciation.cc ~ 716.683.5515



Thoughtful Moments

St. Martin de Porres

Martin was born in 1579 in Peru to a Spanish knight and a freed Negro slave. He worked as a barber before joining the Dominicans in 1594, in a time when people of African and Indian descent were barred from joining religious orders. Despite this, he founded an orphanage and cared for the poor and sick, regardless of color, race, or social class. He was also a mystic, gifted with miraculous knowledge, instantaneous cures, and flight.



Always say "Thank you!"

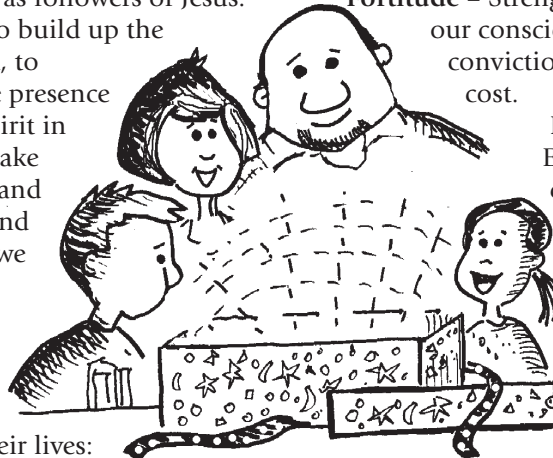
Are you stressed and anxious about something? Take a moment and thank God for the blessings in your life—big and small. Making a list of these blessings is a powerful, visual way to remind ourselves of God's love. Whatever you face, you won't do it alone!

"Peace is not just the absence of war. Like a cathedral, peace must be constructed patiently and with unshakable faith."
Pope John Paul II



Unwrap the gifts of the Holy Spirit

At Baptism, we receive seven special gifts from the Holy Spirit. They are strengthened at Confirmation. These gifts are given to us and our children to help us live as followers of Jesus. They help us to build up the Body of Christ, to respond to the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives, to make good choices, and to serve God and others. When we make children aware of these gifts, they can fully unwrap and use them throughout their lives:



Wisdom – Allows us to grow in understanding and to better judge all with which we are challenged because of our relationship with God.

Understanding – Gives us a deeper insight into our faith and into Sacred Scripture.

Right Judgment or Counsel – Opens our hearts to God's voice and make choices to live as a follower of Jesus.

Fortitude – Strengthens us to follow our conscience and convictions no matter the cost.

Knowledge – Enables us to correctly judge truths of faith and choose the right path to lead to God.

Piety – Leads to a genuine love and devotion for

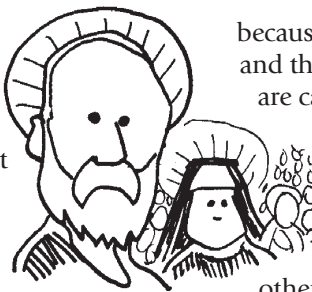
God and religious observance.

Fear of the Lord – Inspires us to be constantly in awe of God and respectfully aware of our dependence upon him. *"Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in his commandments"* (Psalm 112:1).

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics honor the saints?

A saint is someone who the Church recognizes as having lived a life of heroic virtue. We honor the saints because we want to follow their example. The saints weren't extraordinary because they were "special," but



because they let God work in them and through them. Like them, we are called to live in friendship with God, to practice virtue, and become holy. Finally, by honoring the saints we also honor God, who created them and inspired others through them.

"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

In a time when it was a challenge to follow God's way, Joshua made a deliberate declaration that he and his family would serve the Lord (Joshua 24:15). Here are some ways you and your house can know and serve the Lord:

Family prayer time. At least once a day, pray as a family. Consider the format P-R-A-Y: Praise God for his goodness, Repent of the times you failed to love God or each other, Ask for the things you need, Yield and listen for God's voice.

Experience Mass each week. Help your



children meet Christ "up close and personal" at Mass every week. Let nothing come in the way of your weekly appointment with the Lord.

Keep a family gratitude journal. At mealtime, take turns writing a line or two about how God blessed you each that day.

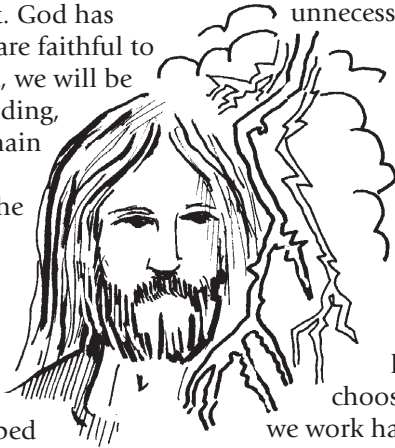
Participate in your parish. Make a point of taking your children to First Friday observances, feast days, and May crownings. These are wonderful expressions of our Catholic spirituality.

Scripture LESSON

Luke 21:25-28, 34-36, the hope of Advent

Advent is the time when we wait for the coming of Christ. God has promised that if we are faithful to him during this wait, we will be rewarded. In this reading, Jesus urges us to remain alert while still on Earth. He said that the pleasures and comforts of this world can tempt us to sin and he wants us to avoid sin at all costs.

When Jesus described the end times, what he said was scary. People will die of fright because "the power of the heavens" will be shaken.



It's not that Jesus wanted to scare us unnecessarily but he wanted us to understand that sin is serious business. Its effects last forever.

What can a parent do? It's not always easy to do the right thing but it is always worth it. Remind your children that God sees all that we do and knows each time we choose right over sin. When we work hard to obey Jesus, we can be calm and without fear when we finally meet him knowing that we will be rewarded.

Feasts & Celebrations

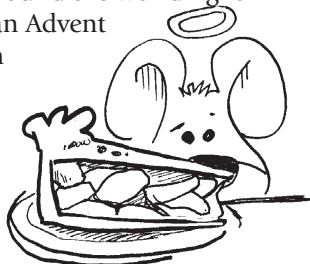
November 1 – All Saints Day. Because of the persecution of the early Church, there were more saints than available feast days to celebrate them. Pope Gregory IV designated Nov. 1 as All Saints Day, to honor the saints.

November 2 – All Souls Day. On this day we pray for the dead, especially our loved ones and souls in Purgatory. Our prayers and sacrifices can help them get to Heaven faster.

November 13 – St. Frances Xavier Cabrini (1917). Mother Cabrini started the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart in Italy and founded 67

institutions to care for the sick and forgotten in Europe and the Americas. She died in Chicago, and was the first U.S. citizen to be canonized a saint.

November 29 - 1st Sunday of Advent. During this four-week season, we anticipate Christ's birth and his coming on the last day. Catholics around the world light candles in an Advent wreath each night of Advent to signal the coming of the light of Christ.



Parent TALK

I wanted to make prayer a priority at home, but it seemed like there was always some event or errand that would get in the way.

One afternoon, Kara went over to a friend's house for a play date. At seven o'clock, everyone stopped what they were doing to spend an hour in prayer: thirty minutes for spiritual reading and thirty minutes for the family Rosary. Everyone took turns praying a decade of the Rosary, which Kara liked, because then she didn't have to "pray all those beads" by herself.

When Kara came home, she told me about the Holy Hour and asked if we could do that too. I told her we were too busy to make a whole Holy Hour, but it gave me the idea to put a "Rosary reminder" in my phone, for three o'clock. Thanks to Kara's friends, daily prayer has become a family tradition.



Our Mission

To help parents raise faithful Catholic children
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(540)662-7844 (540)662-7847 fax
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