

Partners *in* FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

September 2014



Thoughtful Moments

Pope St. Gregory the Great

A rich man's son, St. Gregory renounced the world and became one of seven deacons of Rome. At 34 years old, he was appointed Rome's Chief Magistrate but resigned to become a monk and turned the family estate into the Abbey of St. Andrew.



At age 50, he became Pope. As Pope, he used his political skill to make peace with the invading Lombards, save Rome from famine, and restore order within the Church itself.

2-way forgiveness

Children often struggle as much with offering forgiveness as with asking for it. Forgiving requires setting aside pride and lowering defenses. Our example, however, is Jesus who forgave those who hurt him so deeply. We, as parents, are the other examples. Teaching and modeling forgiveness to children at young ages helps them live lives full of healthy relationships.

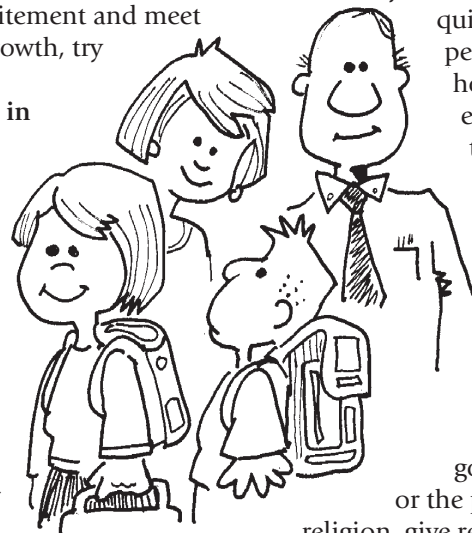
"The first setting in which faith enlightens the human city is the family."
Pope Francis



Take charge of the new school year

A new school year is exciting and challenging for students and parents. To focus on the excitement and meet the challenges of growth, try these tips:

Put your student in charge. No matter what age or grade, your student is able to handle tasks related to school. For example, let her pack up her own backpack or book bag at night with her homework, books, and planner so she has all she needs for the next day. If she needs support, consider posting a checklist near the spot where the backpack or book bag is kept to remind her what to pack. This empowers her and gives her a feeling of responsibility and control.



Provide a homework spot. Help your student decide on a quiet spot in your home perfect for completing homework each evening. Check to see that it has been completed. Send the message that it's important to give schoolwork and homework his best effort.

Treat religion class like a class. Whether your child goes to Catholic school or the parish school of religion, give religion class the same weight as reading and math. It's a life skill, too.

Pray together. Lead your child in prayer and help him hand his concerns over to God. Assure him that God is with him always and he is never alone.

Why Do Catholics Do That ?

Why do we need the Sacraments?

If we were to rely only on ourselves to be good, we wouldn't get far. Humans have a natural tendency to make selfish choices and choose what is easy rather than to choose God and what is right. That is



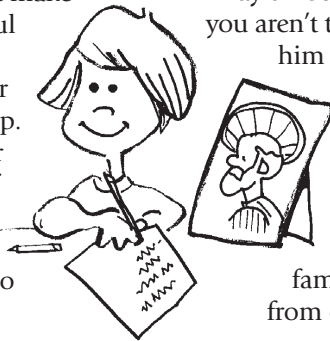
called "concupiscence" – an inclination to sin.

Through faith, we discover that we are God's children and that he gives us strength by sharing his divine life with us. We call this strength, "grace." Grace comes to us through the Sacraments.

Enlist powerful help in the coming months

The new school year has begun. How can you make it the best school year yet? Try enlisting powerful help:

Choose a patron. Place the school year under a patron saint's protection and ask for daily help. Perhaps you can look to St. Thomas Aquinas or St. Catherine of Alexandria, the patron saints of students. Both used knowledge to grow closer to God. Or, choose St. Aloysius Gonzaga and St. Maria Goretti, the patrons of Catholic youths, to guide children through the school year.



Pray through the day. Remind your child that even though you aren't together during the day, you think and pray for him often. Ask, "How would you like me to pray for you today?"

Gather around the table. Studies show that sharing family meals at least five times a week is critical for creating family identity, security and self-confidence in children of all ages.

Sunday Mass. Make attending weekly Mass as a family a top priority. The most powerful grace comes from encountering Jesus, himself, at Mass.

Scripture LESSON

Matthew 16:21-27, Real obedience

Jesus told of a man who asked his two sons to work in his vineyard. The first said, "No," but went anyway. The second said, "Yes," but didn't go. Jesus asked which son did as the father asked. Obviously the first son did.

If we only say, "Yes, God, I believe in you," but don't back up our words with actions, we aren't living as children of God. Simply professing belief is not enough. True faith and obedience are shown through actions. When we realize we are in a state of sin, we



have two options. We can say we're sorry, or we can show we're sorry. How can we show God we are sorry? We can go to Confession and return to living as Jesus taught us by following the Commandments and the Beatitudes.

What can a parent do? Use this Gospel to show children what obedience means, both obedience to God and obedience to parents. We can teach our children that doing what Jesus asked us to do is the most important way to live our lives.

Parent TALK

Separation on school mornings was traumatic for Austin. Tears and pleas were a daily occurrence in second grade. It helped if I walked him to class, giving a pep talk the whole time. So when third grade started, I walked



him in as usual while the teacher watched sympathetically. After the first week, the teacher pulled me aside and explained that, despite my

good intentions, I might be prolonging the separation problem. Austin might feel more comfortable if we eliminate the suspense of saying "Goodbye." She suggested that I drop him off at the front of the school like everyone else and she would arrange for two friendly classmates to meet him. I was skeptical but willing to trust her. We explained the plan to Austin and tried it the next day.

It worked great! Austin saw his classmates and happily bounced out of the car. That's one smart teacher.

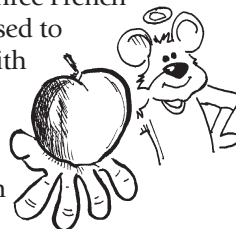
Feasts & Celebrations

Sept. 14 – Feast: Exaltation of the Holy Cross (300s). St. Helena (mother of Emperor Constantine), travelled to Jerusalem to retrace places in Jesus' life. When she tore down the Temple of Aphrodite, workers found three crosses, one of which was thought to be the Cross on which Jesus died. On the site, Constantine built the Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher.

Sept. 17 – St. Robert Bellarmine (1621). A Jesuit, St. Robert was dedicated to accurately recording Church doctrine to protect it from attack by Protestants. Among many

activities, he became theologian to Pope Clement VIII, preparing two catechisms which have had great influence in the Church.

Sept. 20 – St. Andrew Kim Taegon, St. Paul Chong Hasang and companions (1839 to 1867). At this time in Korea, almost all contact with the outside world was forbidden, making it difficult and dangerous to spread the Gospel. Andrew and Paul, 98 Koreans and three French missionaries refused to renounce their faith or stop evangelizing and were martyred between 1839 and 1867.



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