

# Partners in FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

September 2024

St. Philomena Parish

www.stphils.com



## Thoughtful Moments

### St. Peter Claver

Born into a farming family in Spain in 1580, St. Peter joined the Jesuit Order at the age of twenty. While serving in Colombia in 1610, St. Peter was horrified by the slave trade. He rushed to each arriving slave ship, bringing water, medicine, food, and clothing to the captives, and teaching them about God. This made him enemies among the slave traders, but he persevered in his mission, ultimately baptizing nearly 300,000 enslaved people.



### Patience is a gift

Patience is a form of almsgiving. It's easy to only see things about people that bother us and assume the worst. Everyone needs to be loved. When we try to be patient, courteous, and friendly, we're giving them a gift: we're showing them the face of Christ.

"Wash the plate, not because you have to, but out of love for the person who will use it next." – St. Teresa of Calcutta



## Heaven is for children

Jesus said, "Unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3).

Children are confident, simple, honest, ready to forgive, and humble — a good description of the heart of a disciple. By nurturing and reinforcing these virtues, we can guide children toward Heaven:

### Confidence in God's goodness:

Children know when they're loved. When we spend time with God in prayer, Mass, and receive the Sacraments frequently, we become more aware of how He loves us.

**Simplicity:** Gratitude for what we have and focusing on the moment are central to this virtue. Celebrate the good moments of each day with your children and thank God for them. This practice

will help them experience joy and peace more often.

**Honesty:** Jesus tells us, "Let what you say simply be 'Yes' or 'No'" (Matthew 5:37). Say what you mean and

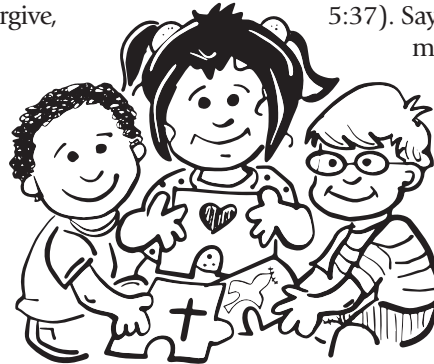
mean what you say. If children say they'll do something, ensure they follow through.

**Readiness to forgive:** As children, friends can fight in the morning and be friends that

afternoon. Scripture

encourages us to forgive quickly: "Do not let the sun go down on your anger" (Ephesians 4:26).

**Humility:** An excellent measure of humility is how we handle mistakes. Children aren't upset when they make mistakes and aren't afraid of looking foolish. They may try to improve but won't waste time feeling bad about themselves.



## Why Do Catholics Do That ?

### Why do Catholics say "Amen" at the end of prayers?

In Hebrew, the word "amen" shares the same root as the word "believe," and expresses trustworthiness and faithfulness. Jesus sometimes said the word "Amen," twice in a row to emphasize the



trustworthiness of His teaching.

For example, "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you" (John 6:53).

When we say "amen," we express our faith that God will hear our prayers.

## Finding time for quality time

As fall schedules get busy, staying connected as a family can be challenging. Still, there can be simple and practical ways to make the most of the time you have together:

**Connect with each child daily:** If time is tight, find moments during car rides, meal preparation, cleaning up after dinner, or at bedtime. Express appreciation for chores done, ask about anything interesting or funny that happened during the day, offer a compliment, or give a gentle pat on the back. Children need to know they're loved beyond expectations.



**Schedule regular family nights:** Aim for fun and low-stress activities like board games, after-dinner walks, or family sing-alongs. Try to set aside work and worries during this time. Don't feel pressured to make everything "perfect." Just enjoy being together.

**Set up an "I need to talk" box:** Create a box in which children can leave notes about subjects they don't feel comfortable sharing at the dinner table. Check the box regularly and take the time to listen and solve problems together.

### Scripture LESSON

### Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48, Discipleship duties

The disciples were jealous of an unfamiliar man who was healing in Jesus' name. They seemed more concerned about losing the spotlight than about the healing itself. Yet, we often do the same when we refuse to participate in good works because the people are unfamiliar, those in charge don't do things the way we'd like, or we fear our efforts won't be recognized. Competitiveness and ego have no place in the Christian community.

Jesus was very clear: we must be ruthless in removing sin from our lives.



Giving up a relationship, job, or habit that keeps us from God may feel as painful as cutting off a hand, but the consequences of our choices last forever. Being lukewarm toward Jesus is impossible.

#### What can a parent do?

Teach children that being a disciple comes with commitments. If we promise to follow Jesus, we must give up whatever tempts us away from Him. Remind children that everyone on Jesus' side shares the same goal: to build up the kingdom of God. The work of the kingdom must come first.

### Parent TALK

#### Sunday Mass is non-negotiable

After Tessa turned ten years old, getting her to attend Mass on Sundays became a challenge. She loves Communion but said the rest of the Mass is boring and resists going. We frequently wrestled to



get there on time. However, weekly Mass is non-negotiable in our household. So, how could I help her love it as much as I do?

I thought we would try different Masses. We usually go to the 9:00 am Sunday Mass because the priest is very kind and delivers inspiring homilies. However, at the 5:30 pm Saturday vigil Mass, children are involved in the readings and act as ushers. Tessa found that appealing.

Now, we take turns choosing the Mass we attend. When it's Tessa's turn, she always picks the children's Mass because she enjoys lecturing, ushering and handing out bulletins afterward. The joy and grace she receives from participating in Mass, rather than resisting it, are invaluable.

### Feasts & Celebrations

**Sept. 5 - St. Teresa of Kolkata (1997).** Gonxha Agnes Bojaxhiu joined the Loreto nuns and taught in India. Shocked by the poverty and suffering she witnessed, she founded the Missionaries of Charity to help her to "serve [Christ] in the poorest of the poor."

**Sept. 14 - Exaltation of the Holy Cross (c.326).** St. Helena (mother of Emperor Constantine) discovered what is believed to be the True Cross while on pilgrimage in Jerusalem. On that site, Constantine built the Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher.

**Sept. 17 - St. Robert Bellarmine (1621).** A Jesuit, St. Robert was a scholar devoted to studying and writing about Church history, Scripture, and the Fathers of the Church, aiming to explain and defend Church doctrine. Although a cardinal and counselor to Pope Clement VIII, he lived a simple life.

**Sept. 21 - St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist (1st Century).** Also called Levi, he was a notorious tax collector. St. Matthew left everything when he was called to discipleship (Luke 5:27).



#### Our Mission

To help parents raise faithful Catholic children  
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<http://www.partnersinfaith.com>  
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