Partners *in* FAITH™

Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

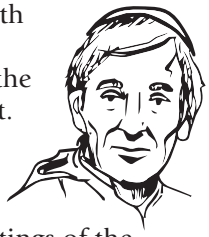
October 2026

St. Philomena Parish

www.stphils.com

Thoughtful Moments

St. John Henry Newman



For some, the path to the Catholic Church begins in the pages of a book. St. John Henry Newman, an Anglican minister, discovered the writings of the Church fathers while at Oxford University. Convinced that the Catholic Church preserved the fullness of Christ's teaching, he entered the Church in 1845 and was ordained a priest two years later. He founded the Oratory of St. Philip Neri in Birmingham and, after becoming a cardinal in 1879, continued writing and offering spiritual guidance.

Rely on God

No matter how holy, no saint ever outgrew his or her need for God's grace. Instead, their openness to God allowed their efforts to bear greater fruit. Today, ask for the grace to rely more fully on God rather than on your own strength.

"I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me…and I lay down my life for the sheep" (John 10:14-15).

Follow the Shepherd who leads us home

In Jesus' day, a shepherd kept sheep close, leading, protecting, and caring for them. The sheep learned to know and trust his voice. As parents, we can help our children develop that same trusting relationship with Jesus, the Good Shepherd, who remains with us, guides us through difficulties, and leads us safely home.

Learn to listen for His voice. The sheep listen for the voice of the shepherd. Help children encounter Jesus' voice in Scripture, the teachings of the Church, prayer, and the Sacraments. Regular encounters with Christ help them recognize His voice and follow Him throughout their lives.

Walk with Him always. Jesus does not simply show us the way to heaven. He is the Way (John 14:6). Encourage youngsters to trust Him, obey His commandments, and learn to love as He loves. That's how we follow Him.

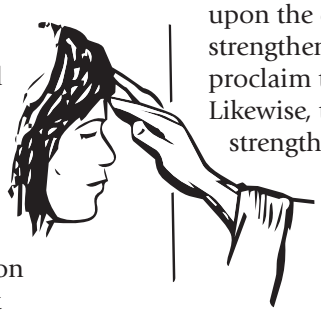
Trust Him with all of our needs. Remind children that Jesus cares for each of us, personally. Encourage them to bring to Jesus their joys, sorrows, hurts and sins, confident in His mercy, healing, and strength. The Good Shepherd promises to always tend to His sheep in their need.

Keep children close to Him. The sheep are safest when they stay close to the Shepherd. Help children come to Jesus through prayer, Sunday Mass, the Sacraments, Scripture, and everyday acts of love.

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why are Catholics Confirmed?

The Sacrament of Confirmation completes our Baptisms. As the final Sacrament of Initiation, the Confirmandi receive a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit and an increase in His gifts. The Sacrament of Confirmation recalls the Spirit's descent upon the disciples at Pentecost, strengthening them to boldly proclaim the Gospel (Acts 2:1–4). Likewise, the Confirmandi are strengthened to witness publicly to Christ in word and deed and "never to be ashamed of the Cross" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1303).



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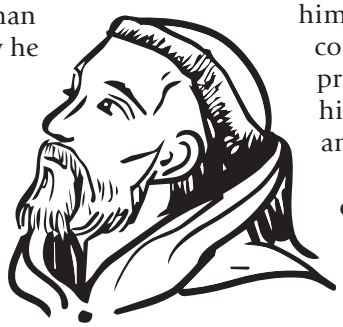
Live like Francis: Three simple ways to grow closer to God

St. Francis of Assisi was more than the friar known for poverty, peace, and a love of nature. He was a man deeply in love with God. That love shaped how he saw the world. His example offers three simple practices for falling in love with God.



Delight in creation. St. Francis marveled in creation and praised it as God's handiwork. Admiring a sunset, flower, or landscape can become an occasion for prayer when we allow its beauty to lift our hearts in gratitude to its Creator.

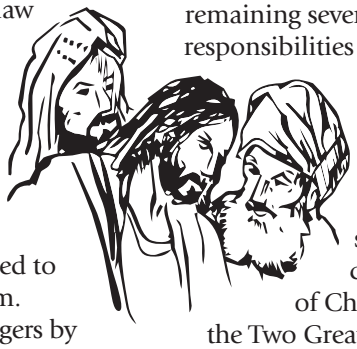
Practice humility. For St. Francis, humility wasn't simply thinking less of himself. It freed him to focus on others. Instead of communicating, "Look at me," his life proclaimed, "God loves you." We can imitate him by helping others feel welcomed, valued, and heard.

Choose simplicity. We may not be called to embrace St. Francis' radical poverty, but we can simplify. Decluttering our homes, using possessions wisely, and reducing digital and screen distractions can create more room for God and the people we love.

Scripture LESSON

Matthew 22:34-40, The law is about Love

In this Gospel passage, a lawyer tried to trap Jesus by asking which of the 613 commandments in Jewish law was the greatest. Jewish scholars had debated the question for generations without reaching a consensus. Encouraged by the Pharisees, the lawyer hoped Jesus would say something that could be used to discredit or even accuse Him.



Jesus silenced His challengers by affirming that everything begins and ends with love: love of God and love of neighbor. Even the Pharisees could not argue with His answer.

The Ten Commandments reflect these same priorities: the first three concern our relationship with God, while the remaining seven address our responsibilities toward others. At their heart, all the commandments call us to love. The lawyer's attempt to trap Jesus ended in silence, while his question gave us one of Christ's clearest teachings: the Two Greatest Commandments.

What can a parent do? Explain that it is easy to love people who are nice to us but loving everyone – even when they aren't nice - is what God asks us to do. It's how He loves us.

Feasts & Celebrations

October 6 – St. Bruno (1101). St. Bruno was born in Germany, studied in France and became a theology professor. He founded the Carthusian Order in 1084, whose life was based on prayerful solitude, manual labor, and poverty. He was never formally canonized.

October 7 – Our Lady of the Rosary (1571). Originally called, "Our Lady of Victory," this feast commemorates the Christians' critical victory against the Ottoman forces at the Battle of Lepanto, attributed to praying the Rosary.

October 24 – St. Anthony Mary Claret (1870). St. Anthony was born in Spain in 1807. After his ordination, he founded the Claretian order in 1849 and became the archbishop of Cuba. He established the Religious Publishing House, producing over 200 works.

October 28 – Saints Simon and Jude, Apostles (First Century). St. Simon was a Zealot – Jews who believed the Messiah would free them from political oppression. St. Jude was a fisherman. After following Jesus, they eventually traveled to Persia where they preached the Gospel until they were martyred.

Parent TALK

When Kara was a teenager, she loved playing her music loudly. When I asked her to turn it down, she grumbled that she could barely hear it.

One evening, we were eating dinner on the back porch when the neighbors turned on their music - loud. The bass was so powerful that our table vibrated. Eventually, we retreated indoors.

Later that night, the music was still blaring. Since the party didn't seem to be winding down, I took over some cookies and politely asked if they would lower the volume. They apologized, thanked me for the cookies, and quickly turned it down.

When I came back home, Kara sheepishly said, "I guess I know how it feels to listen to someone else's music when you don't want to!"

That evening taught her what all my reminders hadn't: respect is more than good manners. It means considering how our choices impact others.

Our Mission

To help parents raise faithful Catholic children

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