

# Catholic Parenting Newsletter

Volume 14 Issue 2  
March/April 2020

## NATIONAL DAY OF UNPLUGGING—

March 6 is “National Day of Unplugging.” This holiday consists of a 24-hour period from sundown to sundown, to unplug, unwind, relax and do things other than using today’s technology, electronics and social media. *Our children were born unplugged.* Celebrate the day by fasting from anything that takes you away from your family.

“Having a place to go—is a home.  
Having someone to love—is a family.  
Having both—is a blessing.”

Donna Hedges

“Let us love one another as God loves each of us. And where does this love begin? In your home. How does it begin? By praying together.”

St. Teresa of Calcutta

## March 19 is the Feast Day of St. Joseph—

Prepare Dad’s favorite meal in remembrance of Jesus’ earthly father. (St. Joseph, pray for our families)



## Carrying the Light of Easter

There can be no greater joy to be felt than on Easter when we hear the scripture read that the stone was rolled away and the angels declared, “He has risen!” As you leave Mass on Easter morning, discuss how your family can make this joyful moment last forever.



Joy springs from the deep well of gratitude, and gratitude comes from noticing. There is so much about Spring to be grateful for...the first shoots of green grass, the buds of the trees plumping in the longer days waiting to burst forth when the time is just right. With the hustle and bustle of our busy lives, it’s easy to overlook the beauty bursting forth all around us. Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Annie Dillard, a woman famous for her books on “noticing,” wrote, “How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives.”

As a family, choose to spend your days noticing. Talk about—what signs of Christ’s resurrection and new life are you grateful for this spring? Children can be great teachers when it comes to noticing. How many times have you had to stop during an evening walk to watch a worm crawl across your path? Children are the first to spot the rainbow after a storm or the bird nest nestled in the shrub near your front step. Noticing the small wonders makes our lives richer and more magical, and this is a skill that should be encouraged.

Pray together: *Thank you, God, for the flowers in the fields, the birds of the air, our family and friends far and near. Open our eyes to see the beauty all around us and help us carry the light and joy of the Risen Christ in our hearts all year long.*

**Recommended Reading:** *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk* by Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish

The ultimate “parenting bible” (*The Boston Globe*) with a new Foreword. A timeless, beloved book on how to effectively communicate with your child from the number-one *New York Times* best-selling authors. Internationally acclaimed experts on communication between parents and children, Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish “are doing for parenting today what Dr. Spock did for our generation” (*Parent Magazine*).

Now, this best-selling classic includes fresh insights and suggestions as well as the author’s time-tested methods to solve common problems and build foundations for lasting relationships, including innovative ways to: Cope with your child’s negative feelings, such as frustration, anger, and disappointment—Express your strong feelings without being hurtful—Engage your child’s willing cooperation—Set firm limits and maintain goodwill—Use alternatives to punishment that promote self-discipline—Understand the difference between helpful and unhelpful praise—Resolve family conflicts peacefully

Enthusiastically praised by parents and professionals around the world, the down-to-earth, respectful approach of Faber and Mazlish makes relationships with children of all ages less stressful and more rewarding.

# Holy Week, April 5-April 11

Your children may ask, “What is Holy Week?”

Jesus died on the cross to save us from sin so that we can obtain eternal happiness with God. The week leading up to Easter is the time when Christians remember the events surrounding Jesus’ death and resurrection. This time is called Holy Week. It starts with Palm Sunday and ends at the end of the day on Easter. This time of the liturgical year is holy and special.



- Palm Sunday—When Jesus entered Jerusalem, people placed palms on the ground. At Mass today we walk into church with palms that will be blessed during Mass.
- Holy Thursday—On Holy Thursday we remember the Last Supper. The Last Supper is the first Mass and the last meal Jesus shared with his disciples.
- Good Friday—On Good Friday we recall Jesus’ crucifixion and death on the cross. Good Friday is the only day of the year without Mass. It is a day for quiet prayer.
- Easter Vigil—The Easter Vigil is the first Mass to celebrate Christ rising from the dead. During this Mass, a fire is started outside and the Paschal candle is lit. It signifies that Christ is the light of the world! Adapted from *Take Out, Family Faith on the Go*

## Helping Children Develop Their Gifts

*Watching our children grow in their gifts and talents is one of our great joys as parents.*

Here are four things you can do to help your child discover and develop his or her special, God-given gifts:

**1. Expose children to a range of stimuli and experiences.**

Read books, play music, provide art supplies, and surround them with toys that combine fun with a challenge.

**2. Be alert for special interests.**

Most child-development experts say that the “globally-gifted” child is largely a myth. Some children will show an intense interest in one or two areas—music, art, math, writing, or other fields. This can indicate a special talent.

**3. Challenge—but be realistic.**

Children develop their skills when adults set high standards, but they can be demoralized by unrealistic expectations. It’s important to strike a balance.

**4. Pray for your child’s development.**

Prayer helps keep things in perspective. God is present in your family and in your child’s life. *It’s not all up to you.*

Adapted from *Our Catholic Faith and Family*

## Sermon on the Mount: *The Beatitudes for Families*

The Sermon on the Mount found in the Gospel of Matthew (chapters 5-7) proclaims some of the richest and most familiar readings of Jesus: the beatitudes (see 5:3-10).

**“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”**

The poor include both literally poor people, in need of basic necessities, and figuratively poor people, who are aware of their spiritual poverty, people who acknowledge their need and utter dependence upon God. The reward mentioned here is nothing less than the kingdom of heaven. What do we consider to be our family’s greatest riches?

**“Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.”**

Those who mourn could be anyone who is sad or experiencing a loss of any kind. Jesus promises comfort for those who suffer. When we suffer we have a choice to make: we can become bitter, or we can become more compassionate to others in pain. How do we find comfort in our family?

**“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.”**

The meek are people who are humble and patient. A person who chooses other ways to resolve conflicts without resorting to violence is meek. The reward is great wealth. How do we resolve conflict in our families?

**“Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.”**

The blessing is for people who hunger for justice in our world. Children have a great capacity to see wrongs and often possess a simple view of complex issues. Perhaps our children can use their creativity to help solve some of the local injustices in our neighborhood and community.

**“Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.”**

Mercy is a word that holds many meanings: forgiveness, kindness, compassion. It is easier to extend mercy to others when you begin with yourself. Rather than keeping track of mistakes, try to see God’s grace among us. With mercy, you will receive back the more you give.

**“Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.”**

Who better to be clean or pure of heart than little ones? They lack malice and have such innocence, especially during their youth. Of course they see God, because there is nothing clouding their vision! The clean of heart can also be people who single-mindedly see God first in all situations and people.

**“Blessed are the peacemakers, they will be called children of God.”**

What risks do we take to make peace? Jesus asks us all to be peacemakers: we are, after all, children of God. As his children, we must continue to work for unity and understanding. Our families are micro-cosms of the world in which we learn peacemaking skills. Peace begins at home.

**“Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”**

It can be difficult to do what is right, such as standing up to someone who is acting like a bully. But we learn from Jesus, and, through practice in our family, we see that doing the right thing is what it really means to be a follower of Jesus.

*Adapted from Take Out, Family Faith on the Go*

**Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas  
Marriage & Family Life Office**

**Catholic Parent Newsletter**  
12615 Parallel Parkway  
Kansas City, Kansas 66109

Phone: 913-721-1570 ext. 149  
Fax: 913-721-1577  
Email: famlife@archkck.org

## **Catholic Parent Newsletter**

Place your parish logo,  
and/or contact person  
information here!

### **Church of the Home Prayer**

**Loving God,**

**Your love is our source of courage and hope.**

**Your love is our strength when we are lonely,  
frustrated, and discouraged or when activities  
pull us away from one another.**

**Help us to recognize your presence in our  
family as we support and care for each other.**

**May our family time ring with laughter and  
our actions speak of the love that holds us together.**

**Loving God, we offer our family life to you  
as we try to model your love shown to us  
in your Son, Jesus. Amen**