

Catholic Parenting Newsletter

Volume 15 Issue 2
March/April 2021

"To thrive, love requires attention, communication, and time—to share or confide a need, to play a game, to tell a joke, to watch and cheer on—time to be present to another's failure or success, confusion, despair or moment of decision."

Follow the Way of Love

"We worry about what a child will become tomorrow, yet we forget he is someone today."

Stacia Tauscher

"While you may still be lamenting some changes that COVID-19 has brought to your family life, help your child make a list of advantages that your family has, for example: food, warmth, a pet, friends, ability to read..."

Susan Vogt

March 17



Happy St. Patrick's Day!

The Easter Season: Love in Action



One of Jesus' central teachings is, "Love one another as I have loved you" (Jn 15:12). The best way to help everyone in the family to understand Christ's love is by painting pictures of love in action.

Love Welcomes—How do we welcome new people in our neighborhood, our school or our parish? Who

are some people we know that show love through a welcoming attitude and hospitality? (Does Grandma show her love through cookies and milk?)

Love Teaches—How can we help family members and friends recognize what is good or bad? Who are some people that teach love through telling stories or singing songs?

Love Heals—Jesus always tried to help

people who were sick, blind, deaf or lame. How do we help people in our family, our neighborhood or our parish who are not feeling well or who are disabled? Who do we know that cares for people who are suffering?

Love Serves—Jesus never put himself first. He washed the feet of his disciples as an example of how to serve others. How do we put others first? Who do we know that tends to put other people first? (Moms and Dads!)

Love is Truthful—Jesus never backed down when he knew something was right—even when other people didn't like what he was doing. How do we stand up for what is right? Who are some examples of people that stand up for what is right?

Love Forgives—When Jesus was on the cross, he asked his Father to forgive the men who hurt him. How do we forgive?

Magnifikid — Help Children Pray and Follow Sunday Mass

MagnifiKid is for children between the ages of 6 and 12.

The ideal spiritual guide for your children, perfectly adapted to their lives:

- to accompany them on the path of daily prayer;
- to help them develop and nourish their spiritual lives;
- to hand on to them our rich Christian spiritual values;
- to encourage them to participate fully in the life of the Church.

Every week, MagnifiKid offers:

- All the readings and the prayers of the Sunday Mass with explanations of the difficult words and the meaning of the rituals;
- A suggested prayer for Morning and Evening;
- Many suggestions on how to live the entire week with the Lord;
- Various games, a comic, and activities to help children learn about Christian life and culture;

Pope Francis proclaims “Year of St Joseph”

With the Apostolic Letter “Patris corde” (“With a Father’s Heart”), Pope Francis recalls the 150th anniversary of the declaration of Saint Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church. To mark the occasion, the Holy Father has proclaimed a **“Year of Saint Joseph”** beginning with the feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8, 2020. Pope Francis describes Saint Joseph as a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father; a father who is creatively courageous, a working father, a father in the shadows.



Pope Francis notes how, “Every day, for over forty years, he has “recited a prayer to Saint Joseph. This prayer, he says, expresses devotion and trust, and even poses a certain challenge to Saint Joseph,” on account of its closing words: “My beloved father, all my trust is in you. Let it not be said that I invoked you in vain, and since you can do everything with Jesus and Mary, show me that your goodness is as great as your power.”

St. Joseph’s feast day as husband of Mary is Friday, March 19. Joseph said yes to the awesome responsibility of taking care of Jesus and Mary, and keeping them safe. Celebrate St. Joseph on March 19 by asking for his care and protection of your family this day and always.

St. Joseph the Worker’s feast day is May 1. In this vocation he served those he loved with all his heart and strength. But it is also his humility and loving diligence as a hardworking yet poor provider that serves as an example to all who work to fulfill a vocation or provide for a family. Pray with your children to St. Joseph for guidance and protection.

A Child’s Prayer to St. Joseph —

St. Joseph, watch over me and care for me just as you cared for the child Jesus; and by your help, may I come to know your Son, and so grow in strength and wisdom and the favor of God. Amen.

Helping Kids Understand the Dignity of Others



All parents want to raise kids who know how to respect their own dignity and the dignity of others, but how do you do it?

In his *Theology of the Body*, St. John Paul II argued that the opposite of love isn't hate. The opposite of love is "use" — that is, when you use somebody. When you love somebody, you treat them like a person. You build them up. You make them feel special. In some way — big or small — you help them grow into a stronger, better, happier, healthier or holier version of themselves. That's what love does.

But when you use somebody, you treat them like a thing such as a tool or another object. If I'm nice to someone because I love them, I build them up, I treat them like a person. But if I'm nice to someone because I want something out of them, I'm using them, I tear them down, I treat them like a thing.

St. John Paul II said that because people were made in the image and likeness of God, human beings have a right to be loved as persons, never used as things. We respect our own dignity by refusing to allow ourselves to be used by others. We respect the dignity of others by refusing to use them or treat them as things. The only appropriate response to any human person — ourselves or others — is love.

Catholic speaker Mary Beth Bonacci gave a terrific illustration of this in her book *"Real Love"* (Ignatius Press, 2nd edition, 2012), in which she makes a distinction between "real love" and what she calls "pizza love." In short, I might love pizza. I might long for a delicious, cheesy slice of gooey pizza. But if I accidentally dropped my pizza on the floor, I certainly wouldn't dedicate my life to cleaning up the pizza and helping it become the best pizza it could be again. I wouldn't give my life to making the pizza whole. I certainly wouldn't be willing to die to save my pizza. At best, I'd scrape it off the floor, throw it away, and get another slice. How terrible would it be to treat people that way?

If I have real love for someone, I would never use them or throw them away. I would do everything I could to help them be happy, healthy, strong and holy. I would do chores for them. I would complement them. I would help them. I would do anything for them. Even die for them.

When you're reading to your kids or watching a television show or movie, ask them: "Do you think that person really loved so-and-so? Or did they just pizza love them?" Talk about it. When they talk about the way their friends treat one another, ask them to reflect on whether their friends' behavior — or their own — represented real love or pizza love. Remind them that real love always works for the good of another person.

Kids as little as ages 3 or 4 can understand the difference between real love and pizza love. Encouraging your children to always act like people mean more than pizza is a simple way to challenge them to respect their own dignity and the dignity of others.

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

Pope Francis encourages all of us to pray
the following prayer to St. Joseph together:

*Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted his only Son;
in you Mary placed her trust;
with you Christ became man.*

*Blessed Joseph, to us too,
show yourself a father
and guide us in the path of life.
Obtain for us grace, mercy, and courage,
and defend us from every evil. Amen.*