

Catholic Parenting Newsletter

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“Grandparents are the ring linking generations, to transmit to young people the experience of life and faith.” Pope Francis

“We show our children the face of God when we demonstrate the true nature of love – gentle, sure, and unconditional.”

Josh & Stacey Noem

Labor Day September 6

Pray for those workers whose contributions have helped to make our country strong and prosperous.

Pray for those who currently do not have jobs.

Pray for those who hold jobs of authority, may they make just decisions for the well-being of the common good.



BACK TO SCHOOL: *FRIENDSHIP IS IMPORTANT FOR CHILDREN*

As our kids head back to school, some are looking forward to connecting with their friends, and some are dreading the feelings of rejection. The pandemic has offered some new challenges for maintaining friendships.

Friendship is important as it can lead us toward growth, connection, and personal improvement. On the other hand, however, it can lead us toward emotional pain, and distractions if we are not careful with those we choose to be our friends. Friends influence our children within three core needs:

1. A Sense of Belonging – Ask, “Do you feel like you belong, or that you have to find ways to fit in with your friends?” In other words, “Are you stressed about what they think of you? Or are you at peace when you’re hanging out with them?”

2. A Sense of Worth – You can

ask, “Do your friends make you feel like you’re a valuable person to them? Or are you constantly guessing whether they really care about you and your friendship?”

3. A Sense of Competence – You can ask, “Do your friends build you up and encourage you, or do they constantly put you down?”

These three areas help a child discover their identity and will form a foundation for their identity and character. Ask your child what they like about this friend or these friends.

Every relationship has some “give and take.” One of the reasons why friendship is important is that, as friends, our kids can contribute to the growth and encouragement of their friends as well. If children do not form healthy friendships in their formative years, the odds of having relationship issues later in life significantly increase. *Focus on the Family*

Recommended Reading: “*Building Better Families - A Practical Guide to Raising Amazing Children*” by Matthew Kelly

Kelly shares with us remarkable insights and sensible everyday strategies for transforming the family into what it should be: a place where each of us can become the-best-version-of-ourselves. Kelly explains: “A family is not what we think a family should be, or what we hope to have, or should have, or what would be ideal—a family is what we actually have...”

In *Building Better Families*, Kelly explores important issues by raising questions such as: What makes a successful parent? Do you realize that your children are in the middle of a cultural war? What are the five things children really need? *Building Better Families* is filled with examples that can be applied to your daily experience of parenting and family, while at the same time illuminating the broader and deeper significance of family for society and the future of humanity.

Celebrate National Family Day—September 26

Family Day is a day to remind parents to connect with your children at various times throughout the day. This can be while driving your kids to school or to soccer practice, tucking little ones into bed or having **frequent family dinners**. These every day activities have a lasting effect on your children. Each of these moments offers an opportunity to communicate with your kids and to really listen to what's on their mind. As children age, it is vital to keep those lines of communication open, especially during adolescence when they are at risk of engaging in risky behavior including smoking, drinking or using other drugs.



Become a Family Day STAR! Commit to:

S—Spend time with your kids

T—Talk to them about their friends, interests and dangers of nicotine, alcohol, and drugs

A—Answer their questions and listen to what they say

R—Recognize that I have the power to help keep my kids substance free!

Get Active....Every day can be Family Day! Here are some great ways to stay engaged in your children's lives:

- Be there: Get involved in your children's lives and activities.
- Open the lines of communication and keep them wide open.
- Set a good example: Actions are more persuasive than words.
- Set rules and enforce them with consequences if your children fail to follow them.
- Monitor your children's whereabouts.
- Maintain family rituals such as eating dinner together.
- Incorporate religious and spiritual practices into your family life.
- Engage the larger community.
- Get to know your kid's friends and their parents.

Adapted from CASA Family Day

“7 Ways to Find Joy Each Day”

- 1) **Begin each day by thanking God for all the good things in your life.**
- 2) **Give God all of your fears and worries.**
- 3) **Do something nice for someone.**
- 4) **Let go of anger and resentments that drag down your spirit.**
- 5) **Show family members and friends how much you appreciate them.**
- 6) **Get rid of material possessions that are not essential to your daily life.**
- 7) **End each day by thanking God for all the good things in your life.**

Adapted from Take Out, Family Faith on the Go

The Role of a Responsible Parent in the Formation of Character

There seems to be an increase in violence among children. It is a good idea to remind ourselves that parents are not powerless. We need to make a concentrated effort to teach our children to be kind and considerate of others.

Be clear about how you want your children to treat others. As parents, establish clearly-defined character goals for your children: how do you want them to treat others, how do you want them to behave in society, what values do you want them to embrace, etc.

Live your life consistent with your values and your goals for your children. "Walk the Talk." Children learn best from role modeling. Be certain that your actions are consistent with your words. Show your children that you stand for something. Articulate your values into actions. Demonstrate respect for authority, school personnel, diversity and for those less fortunate. Be the kind of person you want your children to be.

Treat your children with dignity and respect. Demonstrate on a daily basis that you respect and value your children (and expect them to treat you with respect as well); let them know that they are loved, that you value their ideas and feelings; nurture their self-worth. Express your love and affection. Allow children the right to make mistakes and help them view their manner. Say you're sorry when you are too harsh or when you slip and say something hurtful to them. Do not allow siblings to abuse each other verbally or physically.

Use everyday teachable moments. Talk with children; share personal stories; watch for the unpredictable, spontaneous opportunities of daily life to model or point out powerful examples of both positive and negative social responses. Read fables or stories which demonstrate moral character; use movies or current events to discuss social responsibility. Talk about respect for diversity. Keep the lines of communication open.

Actively engage children in acts of kindness. Involve children when you're preparing dinner to take to a sick friend, selecting a gift for a grandparent's birthday, planning a surprise for a sibling. Help children discover opportunities where they can perform acts of kindness.

Provide positive feedback. Make a point of noticing and acknowledging when you see children exhibiting compassion and caring, being thoughtful of others, showing generosity or volunteering to help a friend. Words of recognition, a hug, a smile...these actions, not material rewards, help instill an inner sense of genuine caring and compassion.

Adapted from Family Information Services

Feast Day of the Holy Guardian Angels—October 2

Guardian Angels are created to accompany us on this earth. They pray for us and protect us. Pray the Guardian Angel prayer with your children daily. Pray to your angel, and to their angels too.

Angel of God, my guardian dear,
To whom God's love
commits me here,
Ever this day, be at my side,
to light and guard,
To rule and guide. Amen.



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and/or contact person
information here!

A Prayer for Families

All-Loving God, we thank you for all of your good gifts, especially the gift of family.

For parents and grandparents who nurture our faith and lift us up in difficult times, *we thank you, God.*

For brothers and sisters who laugh and listen and celebrate with us in joyful times, *we thank you, God.*

For holidays and holy days when we join together around the table and remember the bond that unites us, *we thank you, God.*

For all those who love us and care for us and welcome us home again and again, *we thank you, God.*

For the gift of eternal life and the promise that we will one day join all of the beloved who have gone before us, *we thank you, God.*

With guidance of the Holy Family, may we remain a strong and vibrant family of faith, now and forever. Amen.

by Heidi Busse