

Partners in FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

November 2011

St. Mary's School
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Thoughtful Moments

A new year begins

Each year the Church begins a new liturgical year on the Sunday closest to the feast of the apostle Andrew (November 30). This year the first Sunday of Advent is November 27th. We begin Year B in the liturgical cycle.



A family meal

After-school activities and work schedules can render family dinners a thing of the past. Yet, coming together over a meal several times a week is the best way to stay connected, and reinforce family values. If dinner time isn't practical, try substituting family breakfasts or bedtime snacks. The important thing is to do it regularly and as a family.

All Saints Day

In the early Church, parishes often celebrated a different saint or martyr each day. Persecution of the Church led to more saints and martyrs than days of the calendar, so Pope Gregory IV initiated Nov. 1st as All Saints Day. It is a holy day of obligation.



Let the saints put your children on the right path

Cardinal Virtues are four virtues the Church has identified that will help us get to Heaven. When we teach our children to live by these virtues, we put them on the right path. Try explaining these virtues using saints as examples.

Temperance –

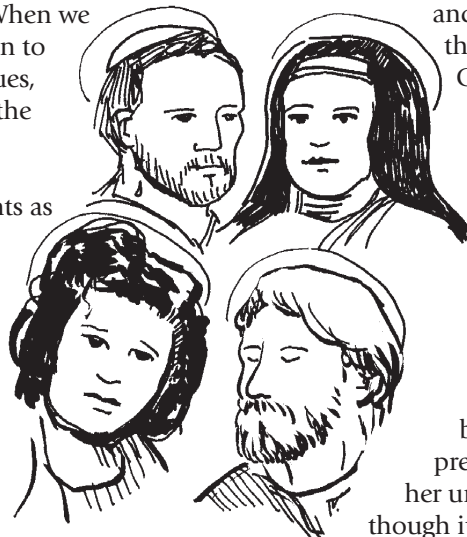
This virtue teaches moderation and self-discipline. St. Therese of Liseieux got everything she wanted as a child. Through temperance, she gave up her selfish ways and put her trust in Jesus. She is known for doing little things with great love.

Justice – Justice teaches us to respect the rights of others. St. Peter Claver used to meet the ships docking in Columbia

burdened with people to be sold as slaves. He brought the passengers food and medicine and assured them of their dignity and God's love. He baptized almost 300,000 slaves.

Fortitude – This virtue gives us the courage to do what is right despite difficult circumstances. St. Gianna Beretta Molla was a pediatrician and mother. When she became ill while pregnant, she refused to end her unborn child's life even though it meant her certain death.

Prudence – St. Joseph, the husband of Mary, demonstrated the virtue of prudence – making the right choices to do good. He followed the instructions of the angel and married Mary, fled to Egypt to protect his family, and was a faithful husband and father.

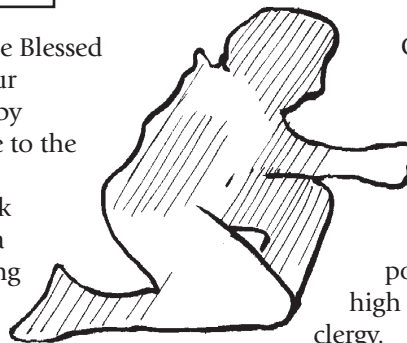


Why Do Catholics Do That ?

Why do we genuflect on the right knee?

In the presence of the Blessed Sacrament we show our respect and reverence by bending the right knee to the floor. The practice of genuflection dates back thousands of years as a sign of respect for a king or emperor.

In the Catholic



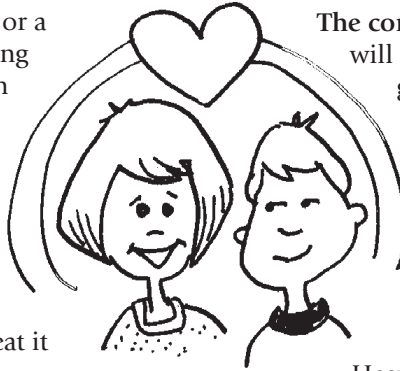
Church, we reserve the right knee for the Blessed Sacrament.

The left knee is used when genuflecting as a formal greeting for a prelate such as a pope, bishop, or other high ranking member of the clergy.

Is Heaven worth the wait?

To many children, a day off from school or a family vacation is heaven in itself. Sacrificing and doing penance to work toward Heaven after death is too abstract a concept to motivate them toward holiness. So how can we help youngsters understand how great Heaven really is?

All good things start there. "Every good endowment and every perfect gift is from above" (James 1:17). If all good things on earth come from Heaven, imagine how great it is at the source.



The company is best there. When we get there, we will have joyful reunions with beloved grandparents, aunts, uncles, and friends who have died before us. Best of all, we get to mingle with the saints, angels, and with Jesus, himself.

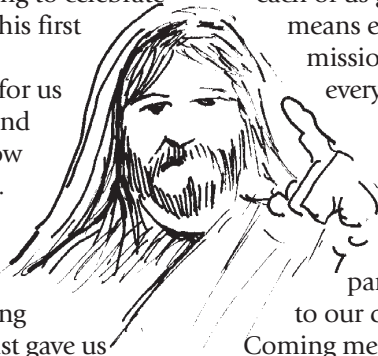
The one who loves us best is there. As much as earthly parents love their children, it's nothing compared to the love God has for each of us. He is the perfect parent – our true Father – and he is waiting for us in Heaven.

Scripture LESSON

**Mark 13:33-37,
Be watchful, be alert**

This gospel is from the first Sunday of Advent. We are preparing to celebrate the birth of Our Lord, his first coming.

But Advent is a time for us to prepare for the Second Coming. We don't know when this will happen. Jesus' message is to be watchful and alert for his coming. To be watchful involves getting our lives in order. Christ gave us the sacraments so we can do this, especially the Sacrament of Penance. Being in a state of grace means we're ready to meet Jesus.



However, this preparation involves each of us gathering the harvest. It means each of us being a missionary in our lives so everyone may come to know and love the Lord when they come face to face with God.

What can a parent do?

This Gospel gives parents a chance to explain to our children what the Second Coming means: that Jesus will come to earth again. This should not be something to fear. Rather, it will be as wonderful as Christmas itself since it means we'll be with God forever.

Parent TALK

Whenever Rachel and I need to talk, we go out to the garden. So it was no surprise to me that we spent countless hours out there this summer after my mother died.



Rachel was having a hard time understanding why God would take her grandmother away and missed her terribly. I, too, was struggling, so it

was hard to make her understand. It wasn't until one day when I was carrying in some cut flowers that I knew what to say.

I told Rachel that Grandma was like a flower God took care of. He made sure that she grew a little each day until she became the person he wanted her to be. That's when she had finally bloomed and he took her to live with him in his house in Heaven.

That made Rachel smile and she finally understood that death on earth meant life in Heaven.

Feasts & Celebrations

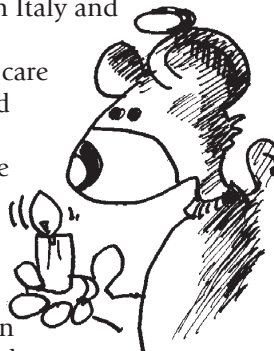
Nov. 10 – Pope St. Leo, the Great (461). Pope St. Leo helped the Church stay united despite attacks from false teachers and warring tribes. He is famous for his explanations of the faith.

Nov. 11 - St. Martin of Tours (397). The patron of soldiers, St. Martin was forced to join the army at the age of 15 but left to become a priest. He founded a monastery near Poitiers, France, and later became bishop of Tours.

Nov. 12 – St. Josaphat (1623). Born in the Ukraine, St. Josaphat converted to Catholicism, became a

Basilian monk, then a priest, and was named Bishop of Vitebsk (now in Russia). He worked for unity in the Church but was martyred.

Nov. 13 – St. Frances Xavier Cabrini (1917). Mother Cabrini started the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart in Italy and founded 67 institutions to care for the sick and forgotten in Europe and the Americas. She died in Chicago and was the first U.S. citizen to be canonized.



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