



Thoughtful Moments

Goal Setting 101

The skill of setting and meeting goals is critical for a successful life. Start by helping to set small goals – a good grade on a test, learning to throw a ball a certain distance, or organizing a bedroom. When they learn to set and meet the small ones, adopt longer term goals and meeting them will become a habit.

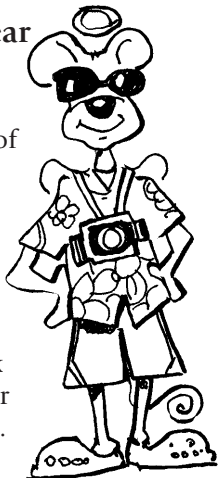


Too busy?

We want our children's lives to be perfect so we coach the team, volunteer in the classroom, lead the scout troop. In fact, we may spend more time around our children than with them. If so, it's time to let something go. Their lives aren't perfect without you.

Make it clear

Parents have to do more than just state disapproval of alcohol and drug abuse. A recent study found that teens who have seen a parent drunk are more likely to get drunk themselves as their peers who haven't.



Celebrate the saints of summer

School may be ending this month but the summer can be a great time to learn more about the saints. For example:

St. John Francis Regis – This saint traveled through the mountains of France converting souls. Take a family hike and imagine St. John

spreading the word of God on his travels. *(Feast day: June 16)*

Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha (1680) –

Born into the Mohawk clan in New York, smallpox left Kateri orphaned, disfigured, and half blind. She became Christian and grew in her faith in a Christian village. Kateri worked hard in the fields, so tending plants would be a fitting tribute to her. *(Feast day: July 14)*

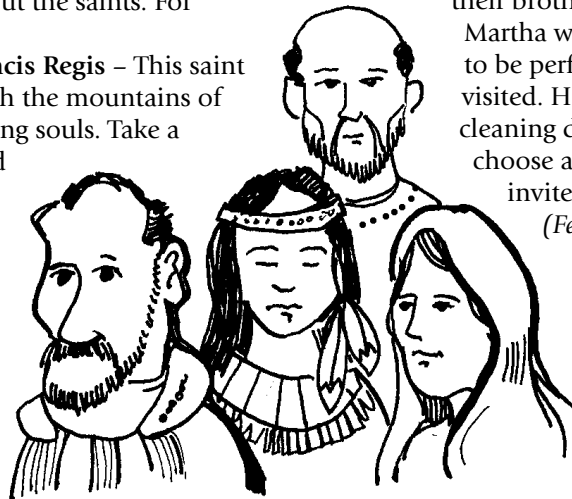
St. Martha (1st century) – Jesus was a dear friend to Martha, Mary, and their brother Lazarus.

Martha wanted everything to be perfect when Jesus visited. Have a family cleaning day and then choose a special guest to invite over for dinner.

(Feast day: July 29)

St. Dominic (1221) – Unlike other priests of his day, Dominic became a traveling preacher in

the tradition of the Apostles. His holy life style and inspiring preaching won back many to the Church who had left to follow false teaching. He founded the Order of Preachers (Dominicans). Spend time gazing at the night sky together in honor of the patron saint of astronomers. *(Feast day: August 8)*



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why is the altar special in our churches?

In the early Church, the altar came to symbolize Christ himself since it is the site of his sacrifice in the Mass. Relics of martyrs used to be (and sometimes still are) placed in the altar so that the Mass was



celebrated over them. This made the altar a special place in the church.

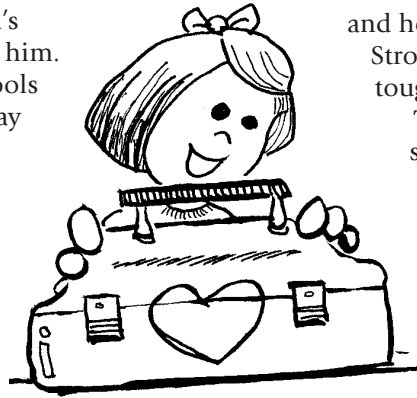
The priest has a special relationship to the altar through his connection to Christ. He begins his celebration of Mass with a kiss on the altar.

Fill children's faith toolbox

It can be hard to raise children in God's friendship in a world that doesn't know him. Our best strategy is to give youngsters tools they can use to stay close to him and pray they use them as adults.

Tool #1 – love. Children first learn about God's love from their families. We must act out of love, teach love, and model love so that children learn to love.

Tool #2 - prayer. In prayer, God counsels us, teaches us, comforts us,



and helps us persevere. Teach children to pray. Strong prayer habits will carry them through the tough times of their lives.

Tool #3 – service. No child is too young to do something helpful for the family, and each should do as much as he can. Contributing to the family is the first step in contributing to the larger family of God.

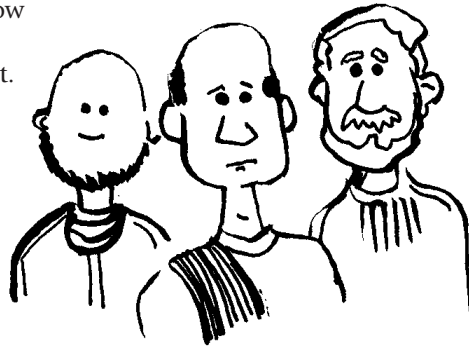
Tool #4 – trust. With God, all things are possible. Let your children witness your trust in God. Show them that you love him with all your heart.

Scripture LESSON

Luke 9:51-62, What does it take to be a disciple?

In this Gospel reading, the first man wanted to follow Jesus but wasn't prepared for the cost. Jesus pointed out that he has no home, no shelter, no family – none of the things people normally want for a happy life. It may not always be comfortable to follow him.

Burying one's parent was considered a binding religious duty among the Jews, so the second man wanted to fulfill that duty before setting out with Jesus. Jesus' answer pointed out the importance of acting when he says it is

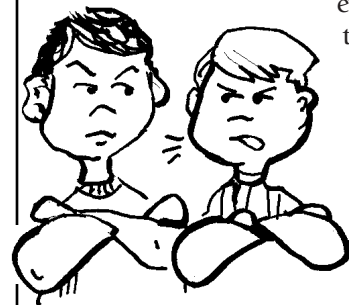


time. In the third story, Jesus explained that looking back while plowing can ruin the row. He wanted the third man to understand that we need to have a singleness of purpose to be his disciple.

What can a parent do? Remind your children that it isn't always easy to be a follower of Jesus. There are things we have to give up and comforts we may have to sacrifice. But the rewards will be unimaginable

Parent TALK

Toby and Alden fought over



everything. I tried mediating, negotiating, even punishing, but nothing worked. I decided to step out of it.

The next night, the fight was about who got to pick the next television show. I calmly turned off the TV and told the kids that when they agreed on what to watch, they could turn it back on. Instead, they stomped out.

The next fight was about which book I should read at bedtime. Again, I calmly got up and walked to the doorway. I said that when they could agree on a book, I would be back, but they better hurry. It was 15 minutes to bedtime.

A few minutes later, Toby came to get me. "We decided that you should read a book we both wanted to hear," said Alden. "This way, we both win." Needless to say, I read that book with great enthusiasm.

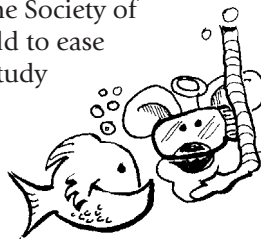
Feasts & Celebrations

This month we honor the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The unquenchable flame of the Sacred Heart symbolizes Christ's unending love for us. Mary's pure mother's heart follows her son's, and goes out to everyone he loves.

June 1 – St. Justin (165). When ordered by a pagan judge to renounce his faith or die, St. Justin responded, "Nobody in his senses would give up truth for falsehood." He was beheaded as a result.

June 3 – St. Charles Lwanga and his companions (1886). While serving Ugandan King Mwanga, St. Charles and 21 of his friends were executed for refusing the evil king's immoral demands. They were all baptized before they died.

June 21 – St. Aloysius Gonzaga (1591). St. Aloysius prayed vigorously and fasted from age 7. Upon joining the Society of Jesus, he was told to ease up in order to study and spend time with the other students. He died while nursing the sick.



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