

Partners in FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

November 2017

Saint Matthew Catholic Church
Durham, NC



Thoughtful Moments

St. Catherine Labouré

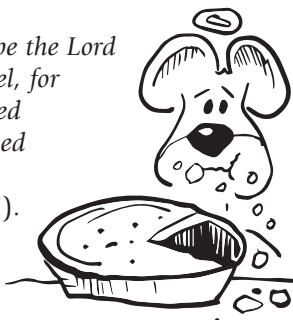
Born to a large farming family in France, St. Catherine joined the Daughters of Charity. One night in 1830, she had a vision of a "shining child," who led her to the chapel, where she saw the Blessed Mother. Our Lady asked St. Catherine to have a medal of her image made, bearing the words, "O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee." The devotion of the Miraculous Medal continues to this day.



God's great gift

Our children really belong to God but he has trusted us with the awesome responsibility of their upbringing. "They are the children whom God has graciously bestowed on your servant" (Genesis 33:5). It's our job to teach them about God's love. That's one way we know that he loves both them and us.

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people" (Luke 1:67).



Follow God's best friends to Heaven

God wants us to get to know his best friends, the saints. In fact, the saints were such good friends to him on Earth that they get to spend eternity face-to-face with him in Heaven. Learning about God's best friends can help us to become one, too.

Choose someone new. Choose a saint you don't know but would like to meet. Research the saint whose feast day falls on each family member's birthday or learn about the patron of your diocese or parish. Discover what made him or her a saint and brainstorm ways you can imitate such holiness.

Choose a cause. Is there an event from the news that has touched you or your family? Find a saint devoted

to that cause. For example, St. Vincent Ferrer, the patron of reconciliation, might be a good choice if you are praying to end a conflict. St. Thomas More, the patron of politicians, can intercede for our elected leaders.

Choose a habit. To help practice more virtue in your family, pick one and find a saint who exhibited it.

St. Teresa of Calcutta illustrates kindness, as she showed extraordinary kindness to the poor. St.

Maximilian Mary Kolbe would be a good model of generosity, since he generously gave his own life to save that of a man with a family.



Why Do Catholics Do That ?

Why do Catholics pray for the dead?

All who die in God's friendship go to Heaven. But if we haven't properly atoned for our sins, we are purified in Purgatory first. The Catechism of the Catholic Church calls Purgatory, "a final cleansing of human imperfection before one is able



to enter the joy of heaven." Praying for the souls in Purgatory helps them pass through faster than they would otherwise. "Thus he made atonement for the dead that they might be freed from this sin"

(2Maccabees 12:46).

Giving thanks

Later this month we will give thanks for the blessings we have received throughout the year. Yet God's gifts don't just come once a year, so neither should our gratitude. Try these tips to model gratitude for children all year round:

Say it out loud. Let your children hear you say "thank you" often. Not only does it demonstrate gratitude, saying the words will keep you from taking your blessings for granted.

Share a gift. When you are at the dinner table on Thanksgiving, and at other times of the year, take a



moment for each person to name something for which they are thankful. Hearing how God has blessed the people around you will remind you of the personal love he has for each of us.

Don't complain. Gripping and gratitude don't mix. Children notice when our words don't match our attitudes.

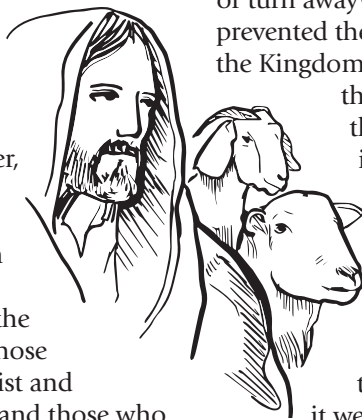
Live thankfully. Each day, look for small blessings and pleasures. Noticing them will help you remember that God makes all things well and deserves our thanks.

Scripture LESSON

Matthew 25:31-46, "You did it for me."

In this Gospel reading, Jesus tells the parable of the separation of the sheep and the goats. In Jesus' time, sheep and goats were treated similarly and were herded together, but were separated at a certain point. Jesus compares the separation of livestock to the separation of people at the end of time—between those who really believed Christ and followed him faithfully and those who didn't.

The evidence of our faith in Christ will be how we treated people in need. How do we respond to others'

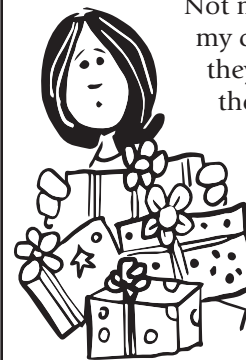


suffering? Do we try to make it better, or turn away? What ultimately prevented the "goats" from entering the Kingdom of God was not that they harmed anyone, but that they stood by indifferently and did nothing.

What can a parent do? Teach your children to look out for the needs of their peers and to treat them with kindness, as if it were Jesus himself who was lonely, hungry, without a jacket and so on. Jesus counts even the smallest kindness done to someone in need as done to him, personally.

Parent TALK

Mom was tight with money when I was young. When I asked for the latest toys or cool clothes, she usually said, "We don't have money for that." I knew we weren't poor; she just didn't want to spend it.



Not me. I have showered my children with gifts—they get things before they know they want them. A few years ago, we were packing for a move and I saw boxes of unopened games and clothing with price tags still on

them in Kara's closet. She said, "Mom, I don't want to hurt your feelings but I don't need all this stuff." So rather than move it, we gave it away.

Now I buy a few gifts that the kids really want for Christmas or their birthdays, and only what they need in between. They really treasure what they get and I realize my mother really did know best.

Feasts & Celebrations

Nov. 2 – All Souls Day. This is a day when we pray for the dead, especially our loved ones and souls in Purgatory. Our prayers and sacrifices can help them get to Heaven faster.

Nov. 9 – Dedication of the Lateran Basilica (1646). The Lateran Basilica was built by Emperor Constantine and is the pope's cathedral. The Church-wide feast of the Lateran's dedication is an expression of the Church's unity with Rome.

Nov. 18 – St. Rose-Philippine Duchesne (1852). Born in Grenoble,

France, she joined the Visitation nuns at age 19. After the French Revolution, she came to the Louisiana Territory as a missionary in 1818. She opened the first free school for girls west of the Mississippi River, and the first Catholic school for Native Americans.

Nov. 30 – St. Andrew (1st Century). The son of a Galilean fisherman and brother of Simon Peter, he introduced Jesus to Peter. After the Resurrection, he conducted missions in Turkey, Greece and Macedonia. He was martyred on a X-shaped cross.



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