



## Apostolic Briefings & Communications

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Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary | Villa Maria House of Studies | Immaculata, PA 19345

# Spring is *here!*





## ***BEST PRACTICES: Mindfulness in the Catholic Tradition***

Mindfulness is a manner of being attentive to the here and now, with acceptance, without judgment. According to meditation teacher and physician Jan Chozen Bays, “Mindfulness means deliberately paying attention, being fully aware of what is happening both inside yourself – in your body, heart, and mind – and outside yourself - in your environment. Mindfulness is awareness without judgment or criticism” (p. 3). We can find mindfulness being exercised as far back as the Old Testament. God our Father was intentional regarding creating aspects of nature and of man and woman, then resting on the seventh day. *On the seventh day, God completed the work He had been doing; He rested on the seventh day from all the work He had undertaken. God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it He rested from all the work He had done in creation* (Genesis: Ch.1). We read in Psalm 46, “*Be still and know that I am God!*” Bottaro in *The Mindful Catholic: Finding God One Moment at a Time (2018)*, states, “If mindfulness is awareness of the present moment, God is the present moment. He defined Himself as ‘*I am who am.*’ God sees all as a present moment, and it is our goal to see as He sees.” Bottaro believes, “The practice of mindfulness, ... integrated with a trust in God, will help you let the moments be moments, and not turn them into more than they need to be. Paying attention to the full scope of your life will give you a greater sense of freedom, joy, and peace” (Kindle Loc. 241).

We discover in the New Testament how Jesus was mindful in all His interactions. He also took time out of His busy schedule of teaching and healing to be rejuvenated through silence and stillness in prayer. Consider how, before responding to the accusations of the Pharisees, Jesus paused before reacting and thus responded in a forthright manner, speaking according to His Father’s will. Also recall when the Pharisees brought the woman caught in adultery to Jesus, He didn’t lash out against her, but instead was silently drawing on the ground and then looked up and said, “*Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?*” She replied, “*No one, sir.*” Then Jesus said, “*Neither do I condemn you. Go, [and] from now on do not sin anymore*” (John 8: 1-11). We can find many other instances of Jesus being fully aware of Himself and His surroundings and He reminds each of us, “*I have told you this so that you might have peace in Me. In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world*” (John 16:33).

Not only Jesus, but also His Mother Mary taught us the importance of mindfulness as we read in the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 2, “*All who heard it were amazed by what had been told them by the shepherds. And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart*” (18-19). The Blessed Mother, together with Joseph, her beloved husband and protector, guided the young Jesus. Surely, they understood the overwhelming importance of their mission. Both were mindful and attentive to their daily tasks.

We too are charged with an awesome task of educating students academically, emotionally, and spiritually, most especially in the teachings of Jesus and our Catholic faith. The tenets of our faith are subject matter to be taught; more importantly they are a means of putting our faith into action. One such strategy for making our faith a lived reality is by following the Holy Family’s example of mindfulness.

Simply described, mindfulness is about paying attention to all the aspects of our lives; for example, being attentive to what we are doing at any given moment or paying attention to the breath of life or slowly breathing in and out as a means of calming ourselves. To avoid distractions by all things that have yet to be accomplished during the day, try for a few minutes to attend to the inhaling and exhaling of breathing. Notice how the chest and lungs expand and contract.

How often do we engage thoughtfully in a conversation? While we are listening to someone, often our minds are rapidly planning our response, judging what is said, and interrupting instead of giving our full attention to the speaker. How often when driving are we distracted by our thoughts, what needs to be done, what groceries to be purchased, laundry to be folded, . . .? If we are honest with ourselves, we recognize that we are regularly living very inattentive or unconscious lives. It makes me think of the song from Simon and Garfunkel, “*Slow down you move too fast, you got to make the morning last.*” Smalley and Winston (2011) believe that, “Mindfulness is an antidote to the dullness and disconnection of life lived on automatic pilot” (p. 12). **They reason that “we have become human doings instead of human beings.** Mindfulness is a means to rebalance doing and being” (p.17). Goldstein (2011) stresses that “mindfulness breaks the grip our thoughts have on us, allowing us to more often choose whether to act on them or not... Mindfulness also keeps us connected to the people around us, so we don’t just rush by them in the busyness of our lives” (p.21).

Focusing on the here and now, living each moment attentively will provide us with more peaceful living. God saw everything He had made as good and that includes each one of us. Therefore, if we believe and trust in the great

love God has for us, we can then conclude that all will be well according to God's plan. Bottaro (2018) reminds us, "My God, My God, why have You abandoned Me?" Why did Jesus go through that? Because we go through that. He knew He wasn't going to take away our suffering, so He joined us in it. God is really here for us. We can let go of our worries and trust Him." This does not mean we will have all the answers, but recognizing the truth that Jesus is one with us, we do not need to be bogged down by endless worrying. He is in charge, He is God, and we are not. With this in mind, we can then strive to live life more intentionally, giving full attention to the matter at hand, resulting in a less chaotic, more creative, and more peaceful existence.

This goal will not happen overnight; it requires consistent effort. For example, when working with family members, colleagues, students, and friends, we can aim to give them our complete attention and listen without interruption, looking them in the eye, and not being distracted digitally or by our thoughts. Attentive listening to the people we encounter daily demonstrates to the listener that we care, we respect them, and that we recognize that they too are God's wonderful creation. Consistently interacting in this manner will deepen our relationships and make them more meaningful. As parents and teachers, putting ourselves in the shoes of the child, viewing situations from their perspective, and giving them our undivided attention will help to develop in them a positive self-esteem and create a caring and accepting environment.

Chapman (2011) emphasized that recognizing how we interact with others can have a profound impact on the way we encounter others. **Pausing and thinking about what we are about to say and considering how what is said will affect the listener may save us from later regret.** If we are overreacting to a situation, we need to give ourselves time to regroup. Being mindful of how we communicate with others and asking ourselves if we are giving our full attention to a conversation, will help to improve and deepen our relationships (221). Jon Kabat-Zinn, Founder of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program, emphasizes in an article, "*Parenting with Mindful Awareness*," that parents and children obviously both have needs and that parents must take the time to be fully present to each of their children every day. He suggests that parents (and we could add teachers) should "imagine how you appear and sound from your child's/student's point of view, that is, what it is like having you as a parent/teacher today, in this moment" (p. 233). He continues that at times we must sincerely apologize to children if the situation warrants it. An apology demonstrates that the adult thought about the situation and considered the child's point of view. He finally exhorts the reader, "We only have right now. Let us use it to its best advantage for our children's sake and for our own" (p. 235).

Jennings (2018) recognized that teaching and dealing with all the issues educators must address in a single day can be quite stressful. She therefore recommends that teachers need to take time for themselves. She encourages teachers to utilize the practical strategy of "taking three deep breaths and assess the situation. This simple ability to respond, rather than react, does help to reduce a teacher's stress level" (p. 65). Rechtschaffen and Rechtschaffen (2015) note that studies conducted by Schonert-Reichl et al., (2015) reveal "that when students practice mindfulness, their stress, depression, and anxiety decrease, while their impulse control, emotional regulation, happiness, and empathy increase" (p. 59). Practicing mindfulness to relieve stress may be as simple as having the class take a few deep breaths before a test for the purpose of alleviating anxiety and of aiding full attention to the task at hand. Role-playing mindful communications will assist students to recognize how their words and/or body language can either build up or tear down relationships at school and at home. Encouraging students to pause before responding in an antagonistic manner and explaining that unlike the computer we cannot hit undo, will help them to develop more productive communication skills. As parents and educators, we too need to provide ourselves with time before replying to a verbal or digital communication. Regarding email, Scott & Davenport (2017) stress that "we must be mindful of our language and tone, and to remember that we're communicating with another human being. Take three deep breaths before hitting the 'send' button and ask, 'Is it true? Is it necessary? Is it kind?'" (p. 108).

Another technique for mindful living, suggested by Scott and Davenport, is that before getting out of bed in the morning that we take 10 minutes to lie comfortably, without falling back to sleep, and be aware of your breathing throughout the body, slowly reviewing the plans for the day. We know that Jesus speaks to us daily in His Word. Therefore, make it a daily practice to read or listen to the Mass readings for the day at <http://uscgb.org/bible/readings/> and click on a particular date on the calendar. Then in the classroom, read the Gospel for the day with students and share reflections. It has often amazed me how deep and close children are to God because their reflections are often truly profound. Participating in this mindful practice will result in a more peaceful classroom environment. Teaching and providing time for quiet stillness in the class, slowly giving attention to the web and flow of breathing is a great way to begin the day in calmness.

***May God help each of us to live more mindful lives for His greater honor and glory!***

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**Mindfulness Resources:**

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[https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/mindful\\_education](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/mindful_education) - Resources on mindfulness in the classroom

[https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/tips\\_for\\_teaching\\_mindfulness\\_to\\_kids](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/tips_for_teaching_mindfulness_to_kids)

---TEN STEPS TO---

## MINDFULNESS MEDITATION



**1**

**Create time & space.**  
Choose a regular time each day for mindfulness meditation practice, ideally a quiet place free from distraction



**2**

**Set a timer.**  
Start with just 5 minutes and ease your way up to 15-40 minutes.



**3**

**Find a comfortable sitting position.**  
Sit cross-legged on the floor, on the grass, or in a chair your feet flat on the ground.



**4**

**Check your posture.**  
Sit up straight, hands in a comfortable position. Keep neck long, chin tilted slightly downward, tongue resting on roof of mouth. Relax shoulders. Close eyes or gaze downward 5-10 feet in front of you.



**5**

**Take deep breaths.**  
Deep breathing helps settle the body and establish your presence in the space



**6**

**Direct attention to your breath.**  
Focus on a part of the body where the breath feels prominent: nostrils; back of throat; or diaphragm. Try not to switch focus.



**7**

**Maintain attention to your breath.**  
As you inhale and exhale, focus on the breath. If attention wanders, return to the breath. Let go of thoughts, feelings or distractions.



**8**

**Repeat steps 6-7.**  
For the duration of meditation session. The mind will wander. Simply acknowledge this and return to your breath.



**9**

**Be kind to yourself.**  
Don't be upset if focus occasionally drifts or if you fall asleep. If very tired, meditate with eyes open and rearrange posture to more erect (but still relaxed) position.



**10**

**Prepare for a soft landing.**  
When the timer goes off, keep eyes closed until you're ready to open them. Be thankful. Acknowledge your practice with gratitude.



## Mindfulness activities

1. KNOW YOUR EXISTENCE
2. ATTENTION TO ALL THE DETAILS
3. A SIMPLE COMPLIMENT.
4. A GOOD SIGN OFF OF THE DAY
5. MOVE YOUR BODY
6. GET YOURSELF SOME FRESH AIR
7. WATER, A FREE MEDICINE
8. A LITTLE MUSIC
9. NO PHONE, NO WORRIES
10. STRETCH, STRETCH AND STRETCH

[TheNaturalSide.com](http://TheNaturalSide.com)

**“Kid Smarts”** (a.k.a. Multiple Intelligences)  
**They’re not just for Language Arts!**

In this last issue we’ll wrap up the “kid smarts” by examining the final three: **visual/spatial, interpersonal and intrapersonal**. Remember, all kids are smart! It is up to us to determine not how smart they are, but how they are smart. In Einstein’s words, “Everyone is a genius, but if we judge a fish on its ability to climb a tree, it will forever consider itself stupid!” If you didn’t survey your class this year to uncover their dominant “smart”, I invite you to begin next year by doing that. You’ll be delighted to see how often you can use the “smarts” for instruction all year. It will also help you to differentiate your group work, and you’ll be encouraged to learn that you’re already doing some of it!

***Visual/Spatial  
Religion/Social Studies:***



- Flow charts and diagrams of time periods help students understand time relationships and sequence of historical eras. Could students create such charts themselves after studying a chapter or time period?
- Ask them to talk to or interview a historical or religious figure in their imagination.
- After studying a period of history (Church History included), they could paint or draw a small mural of events during that time.
- Let them go backwards in time to envision what it was like “back then”. Then go forward in time to imagine what the future will be like. A Future Cities project would apply here.
- Once they’ve seen a map of a country, challenge them to draw the map from memory. They could also make the map out of clay and supply physical features.
- Allow time for appreciating a culture through its visual arts. If there’s time, they might make a decoration from that culture or country to display in the classroom.
- Have some fun with the Western Schism of the 15<sup>th</sup> century by letting the class draw a comic strip or story board of the only era in the Church when there were three popes at one time!

### **Mathematics:**

- Drawing becomes more specific and demanding for math, so these students will be precise in drawing 3D shapes, using tangrams or other manipulatives. Let them demonstrate the four basic operations with those manipulatives.
- Their spatial sense will foster good estimates of measurements by sight and touch.
- Older students will benefit from color coding their math rules for geometry. Have them make a small set of study cards in one color for area rules: one side of the card contains only capital **A** and a drawing of the shape; the other side contains the rule in the same color. Total surface area can be done in the same fashion but in a second color. Volume should be in a third color. They can do a flash card drill with a study buddy. One partner shows the shape, the other says the rule. For the next round, do the opposite.

### **Science/Health:**

- After students view something through a microscope, ask them to draw what they see. Though these learners might not be artists, they have a keen eye for detail.
- During a health lesson on the food pyramid, have them create posters/flyers on healthy eating habits.
- As part of the study of Linnaean classification, students could create a collage of a particular category (e.g. mammals, vertebrates/non-vertebrates).
- Have them observe, either first hand or through pictures, patterns that occur in the world around them; then draw those patterns. There's a math connection here!

### **Music/Fine Arts/Phys. Ed.:**

- While listening to a piece of music, students close their eyes and imagine a sculpture suggested by the music. Afterwards they make it in clay.
- Again with eyes closed, students imagine entering a painting and describe the mood and surroundings.
- While watching a video clip of a dance from another culture, student try to put themselves in the dancers' shoes.

- If they are preparing to perform a play, they imagine then draw the sets for various scenes.
- Students can sketch out some physical feats: gymnastics, football plays etc.



### ***Interpersonal***

#### **Religion/Social Studies:**

- If verbal/linguistic children have written a script involving an important religious/historical figure, have the interpersonal students role play it.
- History is written from the viewpoint of the winner! In the style of a debate, challenge the class to make a case for different perspectives on a war. Don't exclude the Crusades in Religion!
- In the same vein, guide them to discuss the impact of key religious/historical decisions on today's world (e.g. The Monroe Doctrine or the doctrine of the pope's infallibility).
- When you are plowing through a particularly obtuse chapter, assign the class to do a "jigsaw" study of it. Count the students off 1 through 4. Gather all the ones in a corner of the room, the twos in another etc. Each group reads and masters an assigned section, talks about it and rehearses how to teach it when they return to their original groups.
- Invite the class to "pass over" into another time period or person's life and describe feelings, thoughts etc.
- These are the students in any subject who can enact an interview with a famous person. So if those who do the writing are too reluctant to perform, you can always count on these students or your BK children.

#### **Mathematics:**

- Put interpersonal students in a group to help solve *and explain* complex story problems. Younger students could draw the explanations.
- If these students are above average, use *each-one-teach-one* for new processes or operations. You teach first, then they can paraphrase/explain to a partner.
- Challenge teams to construct and solve problems which link many math operations.

### **Science/Health:**

- Can these students create alternate campaign slogans for “Just say NO” using new strategies?
- Assign teams for lab experiments.
- Assign controversial health topics to teams who then write team position papers and present them in class.
- Have students research and discuss *before and after* of scientific paradigm shifts (e.g. before and after the discovery of the polio vaccine).

### **Music/Fine Arts/Phys. Ed.:**

- If the class has learned a dance from another country in Social Studies, ask them to perform it in class. If this has not been done in Social Studies, this is the perfect time to teach it and surprise the Social Studies teacher!
- Assign teams to decide on a sculpture which they build out of clay. (It can be an original piece or they may replicate an existing piece.)
- Teach rounds, harmony and counter-melody songs.
- Use peer coaching teams for individual projects.
- Have students work in pairs to improve sports skills.
- Ask for interpersonal volunteers to make up a game and explain it in phys. ed. class.



### **Intrapersonal**

### **Religion/Social Studies:**

- Advocate the keeping of a journal titled “Questions in my life that religion/history might be able to answer”. Another option is a *feelings diary* as they read about current events.

- Teach the construction of a PMI chart (**P**lus, **M**inus, **I**nteresting) for religious/historical decisions.
- Allow students to reflect on which religious or historical figure they would want to be, and include the *why* of their choice.
- After a lesson containing “things that didn’t go well”, ask the students to reflect on their own mistakes from the past that they won’t repeat. Teachers should be humble enough to admit mistakes from their lives as well.
- Demonstrate some “awareness techniques” to reduce stress. We know that, more and more, students come to our classrooms emotionally overwhelmed. These students in particular tend to keep emotions inside, and may benefit from things like: breathing exercises, observing their thoughts while not judging them, distinguishing between energizing emotions (love, compassion, joy) and depleting emotions (anger, worry, disappointment); and trying to let go of the latter. These techniques can be included in the various prayer forms we teach: meditation, being part of a Scripture scene and talking to Jesus.
- All children love stories, but this one will appeal to the intrapersonal ones in your room. As a young lad, Frederick Douglas pursued his education by himself. He ran errands in his neighborhood quickly in order to have time to beg a reading lesson from white boys. He brought bread to feed them and got more important bread in return: knowledge. Encourage children to tell stories of their family members who learned a skill, or overcame obstacles.
- Another engaging story involves the SS St. Louis, a refugee ship during WW II. It carried 1,000 Jews escaping Nazi Germany and sailed toward Cuba. When Cuba refused entry, the captain requested permission to dock in the U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt ignored the request, so the St. Louis sailed the Atlantic until finally the captain received permission from four European countries to disembark the refugees. Most survived, but many were sent to the death camps. Since these intrapersonal students express emotions well, ask them to reflect on American moral responsibility concerning this story.
- Ask: *How would you be different if you had grown up in another culture?*

### **Mathematics:**

- Challenge the students to track the thinking patterns which they use to solve various kinds of math problems.

- See if they can bridge the gap between math and real life.
- As you would in reading, use guided imagery to visualize story problems.
- Periodically ask them to self-assess their strengths/weaknesses in math.

**Science/Health:**

- Assign a “Be Healthy” project: for one month, students design meal programs and exercise plans. At the end of the month they evaluate the plans: Did I implement them? Was I consistent? Do I feel healthier? Would I continue?
- Use some of the “awareness techniques” above for achieving relaxation and a good night sleep.

**Music/Fine Arts/Phys. Ed.:**

- Have them imagine themselves as each character in a play.
- Ask them to observe how various kinds of music affect their mood.
- Supply clay for them to sculpt a representation of their moods.
- Using a mirror, let students draw themselves from different angles or in various moods.
- Ask for responses on how different physical exercises make the students feel.
- The deep breathing and relaxation methods above serve as a good cool down after exercise. They are also useful in calming children who are “on the verge”.

***That’s it for this year. Have a restful and safe summer. God bless all you do for your students. We’re fortunate to have you in Catholic education!***



# PRIME TIMES



Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary  
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Spring, 2020

## I See My Little Shadow

I see my little shadow,  
Standing next to me.  
My cat, too, has a shadow,  
As does the maple tree.



But then I see the groundhog  
Popping from the ground.  
He sniffs the air and twitches  
And quickly looks around.

If the groundhog sees his shadow,  
Oh, then we all will know  
That spring will soon be coming  
And gone will be the snow.

## Lincoln

When Lincoln was a little boy  
Once upon a time like me  
I wonder if he ever dreamed  
How truly great someday he'd be.

Mother says it's little things  
Done with a loving heart  
That makes a person truly great  
Right from the very start.



## A Valentine Song

Tune: This Old Man

All my love, I give to you  
So you can give to others, too.  
Give a little kindness  
And lots and lots of love,  
Says our Lord God from  
above.



## Groundhog Day

The first little groundhog  
Crept out of his lair.  
The second little groundhog said,  
"Is spring in the air?"  
The third little groundhog asked,  
"Is the time right?"  
The fourth little groundhog squirmed,  
"The sun is too bright!"  
The fifth little groundhog squeaked,  
"My shadow I see!  
I'm not staying out here,  
No siree!"  
"Back to my burrow  
I'm going to creep  
And for six more weeks  
I'm going to sleep!"



## ABC Lincoln

Celebrate Abraham Lincoln by creating a log cabin. Give each student several popsicle sticks. Either have the students write a dictated word on each stick or have the words already on them. Then they can glue the popsicle sticks in alphabetical order on a piece of construction paper. Create a roof by coloring a brown triangle on top. The student could draw a picture of Abe next to their log cabin.



## Song of Snowflakes

Tune: Sing a Song of Sixpence

Sing a song of snowflakes  
Flying through the air  
Pretty little snowflakes  
Falling everywhere  
Tired little snowflakes  
Resting on the ground  
Quiet little snowflakes  
Make not a sound.



## Making Hearts

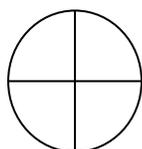
Use this poem to help students make hearts:

First, you make a V  
Then turn your paper and make 3  
Cut me out very carefully  
And...a valentine heart you'll see!



## Seasonal Pie

As a pre-writing experience, students can complete a seasonal pie by listing the different things they do or see in each season. Students can use the information gathered on the pie chart to write about their favorite season of the year.



## Seasonal Word Banks

To keep students motivated and independently writing creative stories, plan time each month to brainstorm seasonal words. Compile the words on a large seasonal cutout or chart paper and display. When students are ready to write, they will be able to refer to the cutout or chart for writing and spelling motivation.

## Marching Song

Tune: Yankee Doodle

We will march to town today  
And have a celebration  
We will sing about our flag  
To honor our great nation.



Yankee Doodle keep it up  
Yankee Doodle Dandy  
Our flag is such a special gift  
Let's all keep it handy.

## George Washington

George Washington  
was a gentleman  
and a soldier brave and fine.  
The people made him president  
in 1789.

George Washington  
was number one.  
He was the first to be  
President of the United States,  
that was young and brave and free.



## Clean Sweep

Assigning classroom charges encourages students to be responsible for their own environment. Even the little children like to be in charge of something. At the end of the day, declare "House Cleaning" time. Set a timer for the time needed to get the classroom in order; each student knowing exactly what he or she is responsible to accomplish. The students quietly spring into action picking up scraps of paper, straightening desks, games, bookcases and centers. When the timer goes off, the children are to be back in their seats, and the room looks neat, orderly and ready to begin a new day.



## Old Socks and Gloves

What do parents do with odd socks and gloves that were once a pair? Encourage parents to donate them to your classroom. These items are great for cleaning white boards. Just slip one on and begin rubbing.



## High Frequency Bingo

Create Bingo cards with a different high frequency word in each box. Distribute to the students along with chips/blocks to cover the words when they are said. Choose some favorite age appropriate books and begin to read them to the class. If they hear one of the words on their card in the story they can cover it. Continue to read until there is a winner.



## Writing with Wordless Books

Use wordless books to encourage writing in the classroom. This can be done either as a center or whole group. Provide lined paper sectioned off with page numbers to your students. Then pick a wordless picture book for them to read. They will then write dialogue or commentary for each page. When finished students can share their version of the book with the class.

## Lent Poem for Bulletin Board

**L**iving these 40 days  
**E**ntering the journey  
**N**ew life is coming  
**T**ime to prepare



## On St. Patrick's Day

Tune: If You're Happy and You Know It"

On St. Patrick's Day you might see a leprechaun  
On St. Patrick's Day you might see a leprechaun  
If you close your eyes and wish and pretend  
that you are Irish,  
On St. Patrick's Day you might see a leprechaun.

Additional verses:

On St. Patrick's Day . . . a rainbow bright  
On St. Patrick's Day . . . a pot of gold  
On St. Patrick's Day . . . a shamrock green



## Nerf Football

Cover a nerf football with numbers. Throw the ball to the students. Wherever the student's fingers grab the ball, the student must add or multiply the two numbers. If an error is made, the teacher rings a bell and the student throws the ball back to the teacher. If the student is correct, he/she can throw the ball to another student.



## St. Joseph

Tune: "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star"

Joseph made things out of wood.  
He showed Jesus all he could.  
Gave Him food and clothes and love,  
Showed Him sun and stars above.  
Played with Him and hugged Him tight  
He loved Jesus day and night.



## It is Springtime

Tune: London Bridges

Leaves are growing on the trees, on the trees,  
on the trees.

Leaves are growing on the trees.  
It is springtime!



Additional verses:

All the grass is turning green . . .  
See the birdies building their nests . . .  
Watch the flowers start to grow . . .

## Little Brown Seed

A little brown seed  
Snug and warm in its bed  
The big yellow sun  
Shines so bright overhead.



The rain gently falls.  
Can you hear the wind blow?  
“Wake up,” calls the breeze,  
“Little seed, start to grow!”

## Penmanship License

This certifies that \_\_\_\_\_ has permission  
to use a pen (or write in cursive) for certain  
assignments.

Congratulations and God bless you.

Teacher's signature and date

Licenses are issued according to neatness,  
legibility, and effort. (Licenses must be renewed  
each semester or year according to school/teacher's  
policy.)

## Sent From Heaven

Tune: Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star

Mary, Mary chosen one,  
You're the Mother of God's Son.  
Sent from heaven up above;  
Sent to earth with God's great love.  
Sent to tell us just how we  
Might live for eternity.  
Mary, Mary chosen one,  
You're the Mother of God's Son.



## Volunteer “Thank You”

All throughout the long school year  
You've been here to volunteer.  
Sharing time and your great smile,  
With an eager willing style.  
Thanks so much from us all!  
Please come back again next fall!

## Shape Math

On the board draw a simple geometric shape such  
as circle, triangle, rectangle or square. Assign each  
shape a money amount. Challenge the students to  
draw a picture using the shapes that will be worth a  
certain amount of money. For example: If the  
circle is worth 5 cents, the triangle, 2 cents, and the  
rectangle, 3 cents, which shapes would equal 20  
cents? 3 circles, 1 triangle, and 1 rectangle.



## Counting Exercises

When students are taking out text books or lining  
up have them count from 0-25. As they master 0-  
25, have them count backward from 25 to 0. The  
goal can be increased to 50 or have them count by  
2s, 5s and 10s. Once mastered then count  
backward by 2s, 5s, or 10s.



## Thinking in Place Value

Prepare a vertical list of numbers on a chart or  
board. Have students add or subtract from the  
numbers on the list. Ex. Add 2 tens to each  
number or subtract 3 ones from each number: 635,  
462, 1137, 26, and 2207. Each day you can change  
the place value to be added or subtracted from the  
list of numbers. The list of numbers could be  
shortened according to students' ability or time to  
practice.



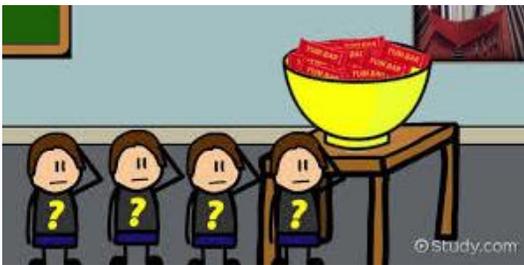
## Two Minute Math

Write numbers on the board --- 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 9. For 2 minutes invite students to write addition and subtraction combinations to calculate the number 10. The student with the most number sentences correct may choose the six numbers for the next game.



## Backward Math

Fill spare moments with math practice! Give students an answer and have them make up a matching problem. Challenge the class to see how many different problems they can come up with in one or two minutes. This works well as a written or oral activity. Students could also work in teams.



## Instant Bingo

For a quick math drill, invite students to write five numbers (from 0-18) on a strip of paper or a line in their math copybook. Present addition and subtraction flash cards one at a time. If the student has the correct answer, he or she can cross the number out with tan X. The first player to cross out all five numbers declares "Bingo!" This idea is also used with spelling and vocabulary word. Students choose 5 words. The teacher gives the definition or the word. If the student has that word he or she crosses it out.



## Story Time

Why not give students extra motivation for personal reading and a chance to improve oral reading skills? Instead of the teacher reading to the class, set up a schedule and occasionally allow anyone who is interested to read a story of their own choice to the class. The teacher may need to check the book to make sure it is appropriate. As an extra, the student can ask questions about the story. Ex. Setting, main character, problem, what they like about the story. With chapter books the student would read one or two chapters and ask a few questions. Then encourage other students to take the book out of the library to find out what happens next.





# IHM Good Writers Club



Grades 3 & 4

## APRIL

Wake up, tiny flowers!  
Hear the birds sing.  
Make ready the meadows  
To celebrate spring.

## MAY

You are all beautiful,  
O Mary!  
In you there is no trace  
Of original sin.

Grades 5 & 6

## APRIL

Wake up, sturdy branches,  
In treetops so tall!  
New buds replace leaves  
That fell in the fall.

## MAY

Thank You, God, for little things  
For butterflies with pretty wings,  
For winds that make the flowers sway,  
And other things I've seen today.

Grades 7 & 8

## APRIL

Do not worry about tomorrow.  
The same loving Father who cares for  
you today will take care of you  
tomorrow and every day.

(St. Francis de Sales)

## MAY

Real integrity is doing the right thing,  
knowing that nobody's going to know  
whether you did it or not.

(Oprah Winfrey)

Spring, 2020

PROFICIENCY IN PENMANSHIP



This certifies that

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has attained that level of proficiency in penmanship  
required by the IHM GOOD WRITERS CLUB

for Grade \_\_\_\_\_

and thereby is entitled to this

**Certificate of Merit**

awarded by the IHM Good Writers Club

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Date

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Member of the official Board of Evaluators

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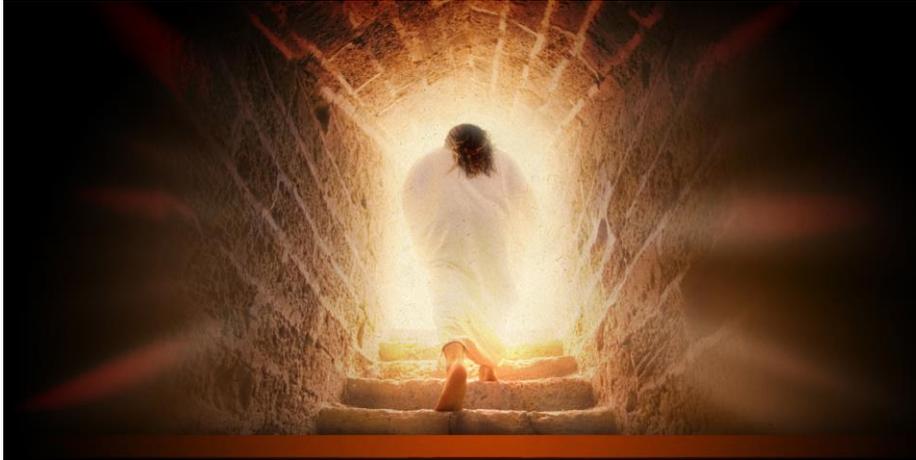
Date

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Member of the official Board of Evaluators

***I.H.M. ABC NOTES –Resources for Teaching Religion  
Spring 2020***

***Joyful Bearers of God's Redeeming Love***



In this issue...

**Religious Education Treasures...What Are Sacramentals?**  
***Sister Jeanne M. Baker, I.H.M.***

**Religion Bulletin Boards ... "I Have a Mission"**  
*Themes for March, April, May*  
***Sister Edward William Quinn, I.H.M.***

**Summer Calendar ...Daily Spiritual Practices for Children**  
***Sister Mary Anne Sweeney, I.H.M.***

**Saint Joseph... Honoring the Great Patron of the Universal Church**  
***Sister Eileen Tiernan, I.H.M.***

**Catholic Technology Resources for Religious Education...Websites & Apps**  
***Sister Judith Kathleen Knowlton, I.H.M.***

**Seek First the Kingdom...Parents – First Teachers of Prayer**  
*(Part 6 of 6: Sunday Gospel "Take--Aways")*  
***Sister Patricia M. McCormack, I.H.M.***  
***Spanish Translation by Sr. Eileen Reilly, IHM***

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Many thanks to those who contributed Religious Education ideas to this Issue.  
Thank you for being Joyful Bearers of God's Redeeming Love!

## WHAT ARE SACRAMENTALS, ANYWAY?

Consider this scenario:

Jeopardy Program

Category, 'Church Topics': blessings, rosaries, statues, scapulars

Contestant's reply: What are sacramentals?



This certainly is the correct answers, but what are sacramentals, anyway?

- The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches us that sacramentals are *“holy things or actions of which the church makes use to obtain for us from God, through her intercession, spiritual and temporal favors.”*
- A sacramental is anything set apart or blessed by the church to excite good thoughts and to help devotion. It is through the prayers of the church offered for those who make use of these sacramentals, as well as through the devotion they inspire, that they convey and obtain God's grace and blessings.
- Unlike the sacraments which bestow upon us sanctifying grace, sacramentals are sacred signs meant to prepare us for the sanctifying grace received in the sacraments and to remind us of the call to holiness in the sacraments.
- There is no complete list in the Church naming all the sacramental but they can be placed into two groups:

### BLESSED MATERIAL OBJECTS

Statues and images of Our Lord, Our Blessed Lady, and the saints, rosaries, crucifixes, holy water, palms, prayer books, holy oil, relics, medals, scapulars, litanies etc.

### HOLY ACTIONS

Blessings by the priest, bishop, Sign of the Cross, genuflections, Stations of the Cross, Washing of the Feet on Holy Thursday

### TEACHING YOUR STUDENTS ABOUT SACRAMENTALS

The best way to teach your students about sacramentals is, most probably, the “SHOW and TELL” experience, and what better place to do this than your church!

- In a previous lesson, explain to your students what sacramentals are, emphasizing that they may be MATERIAL OBJECTS or ACTIONS, giving examples of both. You might like to entice your students about your next lesson by telling them that you will be taking them on a ‘holy field trip.’
- If possible, invite your parish priest or deacon to introduce your students to the various sacramentals found in your church.
- As you enter church, have your students recognize the holy water font. Explain to them that holy water is a sacramental which reminds us of the waters of Baptism. Have them carefully bless themselves. Making the Sign of the Cross is also a sacramental.



- Before entering the pew, review how they are to genuflect, either blessing themselves or saying a short aspiration, “Jesus I adore You.” Again, tell them this action is a sacramental.
- Ask them to quietly look around the church to see if there are any objects near the altar that are sacramentals: the candles, the sanctuary lamp, and the votive candles. These all remind us that Jesus is the ‘Light of the World.’
- Looking at the crucifix, explain that this reminds us of Jesus’ great love for us by dying on the cross. If your church has a Resurrected Jesus, tell them that this shows us that after Jesus died on the cross, He resurrected from the dead on the third day.
- Walk around your church to take notice of the statues and images. Explain that just as we have pictures of grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, in our homes, the church has statues and pictures to remind us of all God’s holy people, the saints, Our Lord and Our Lady, who love us very much, and to whom we can pray to.
- As a closing lesson, have your students work in small groups to brainstorm. Direct them to write down all the sacramentals that they know. Have them tell if they are ACTIONS or MATERIAL OBJECTS.
- Younger children can fold a piece of paper in fours and draw 4 or 8 sacramentals that they saw when they visited the church.



### TEACHING ABOUT SACRAMENTALS THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL YEAR

**SEPTEMBER** - Sign of the Cross; genuflecting; picture of Our Lady of Sorrows, September 15th

**OCTOBER** – Blessing of Animals, Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, October 4<sup>th</sup>; Feast of the Holy Rosary, October 7<sup>th</sup>; statue of Our Lady of Fatima, October 13<sup>th</sup>

**NOVEMBER** – Grace Before & After Meals for Thanksgiving; The Miraculous Medal , Feast of St. Catherine Laboure ,Nov. 28<sup>th</sup> ; ‘Hail and Blessed be the Hour’ Prayer ,Feast of St. Andrew , Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>

**DECEMBER** Novena to the Christ Child; Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus

**JANUARY** – “Chalking the Door” ,Blessing of the Home and the Classroom on the Feast of the Epiphany

**FEBRUARY** - Blessing of Candles, February 2<sup>nd</sup>,Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord; Blessing of Throats, February 3<sup>rd</sup>,Feast of St. Blaise; being signed with blessed ashes on Ash Wednesday

**MARCH** –Stations of the Cross, crucifix; Angelus ,March 25<sup>th</sup>)

**APRIL** – Washing of the Feet on Holy Thursday; Blessing of Easter Water, Easter Vigil; Chaplet of Divine Mercy & Image , 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Easter

**MAY** - Holy Rosary; different Images of Our Lady : Our Lady of Good Counsel, Our Lady of Lourdes, Our Lady of Guadalupe

**JUNE** - Image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Litany of the Sacred Heart.



### DID YOU KNOW?

- A SCAPULAR is a particular type of sacramental.
- The word scapular comes for the Latin word ‘scapula’ which means shoulder blade.



- The **scapular** was a type of work apron, frequently used by **monks**, consisting of large pieces of cloth front and back joined over the shoulders with strips of cloth. It forms part of the habit of some religious orders including the Carmelites, Benedictines, and Dominicans.
- There are about 18 scapulars approved by the church
- The most well-known scapular is the **SCAPULAR OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL** often called the '**BROWN SCAPULAR.**'
- The story of the Brown Scapular is about the visit of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, who appeared to St. Simon Stock, a Carmelite monk, from Cambridge, England, on July 16, 1260.
- Our Blessed Lady, holding the Child Jesus in her arms, and the scapular in her hand, said to St. Simon, *"Take, beloved son, this scapular of thy order as a badge of my confraternity and for thee and all Carmelites a special sign of grace; whoever dies in this garment, will not suffer everlasting fire. It is the sign of salvation, a safeguard in dangers, and a pledge of peace and of the covenant."*
- During the Middle Ages, pious lay people adopted a smaller version of the religious scapular. This consisted of two small pieces of woolen cloth joined by two strings, and was worn around the neck and underneath the person's clothing. Eventually these scapulars were signs of groups of laity who joined together and attached themselves to the works of a religious community. *(Father William Sanders)*
- Catholics from all over began wearing the BROWN SCAPULAR, praying to Our Lady to guide and protect them, asking her to be with them, especially, at the hour of death.
- The Church celebrates the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel on July 16<sup>th</sup>.



<http://www.catholictv.org/shows/wow-the-catholictv-challenge/sacramentals-0> VIDEO SHOW

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4SMESmQ8Ukg> YOU TUBE WHAT ARE SACRAMENTALS – GR. 4-8

[http://freebrownscapular.com/brown\\_scapular\\_miracles.html](http://freebrownscapular.com/brown_scapular_miracles.html) MIRACLES OF THE BROWN SCAPULAR

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7C-tSP3icM> YOU TUBE SACRAMENTAL SIGNS GRADES 6-8

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBSFgJEvJBk&t=29s> YOU TUBE WORDS & PICTURES – ALL GRADES

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLJ2VupvOfM> OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL GRADES 1-4

# Religion Bulletin Boards

2019- 2020

## *“I Have a Mission”*

*Our Mission: Following in the Footsteps of Jesus*

### *March*



*Watch  
With Me*

*Prepare a bulletin board with a picture of Jesus praying. Read the Gospel passage of Jesus praying in the Garden before His Passion. Explain how Jesus’ prayer was universal—He prayed for everyone, even His enemies. Ask the children to place their intentions on a cross and pin these to the bulletin board. Take a different intention each day to pray for in a special way during Lent.*

### *St. Joseph*



*Pray for those who care for us!*

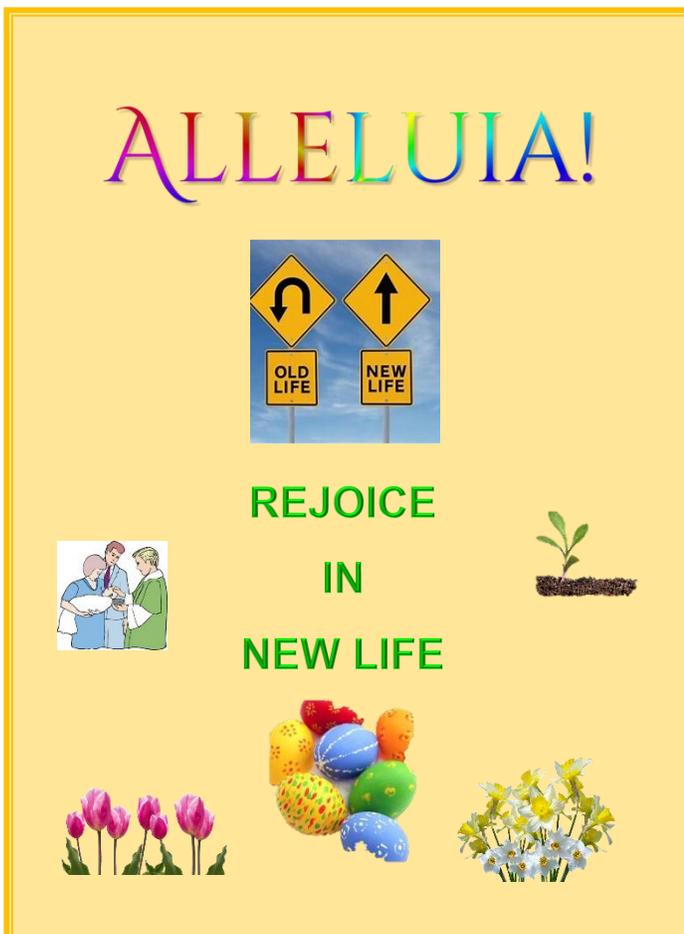
*Because school is generally not in session near Father’s Day, we don’t often have the opportunity to recognize Fathers as much as we do mothers for Mothers’ Day. The feast of St. Joseph provides an opportunity for us to recognize those special people who care for us. A “Special Person’s Day” on or near the feast of St. Joseph could be celebrated. Students could recognize their fathers or some other special person by writing them cards/having a special prayer service for them. Place their names on the bulletin board near the picture of St. Joseph.*

# APRIL

## A Mission of Rejoicing for New Life



Ask the students to reflect on and share with others the things they do for those they love. Try to get them to realize that while we often use a heart as a symbol of love, one of the greatest symbols of love in our faith is the empty cross which represents the love Jesus showed to us through His Death and Resurrection. Similar to the design on the left, ask the students to design a bulletin board for the classroom showing a cross with a background of signs of new life.



Design a bulletin board using the symbols of "New Life" as they represent the new life of the Easter Season. Ask the students to each bring a picture of something that they can contribute to a collage on the Bulletin Board. When they bring in the picture, have them explain how their picture represents new life. Explain how Baptism is an Easter sacrament because it brings new life to the soul. Ask why eggs are used as an Easter symbol. Flowers? Butterflies? The Rising Sun? How can these things be reminders to them of the new life Jesus brought into the world? How can they be reminders to say a prayer of Thanksgiving?



# MAY

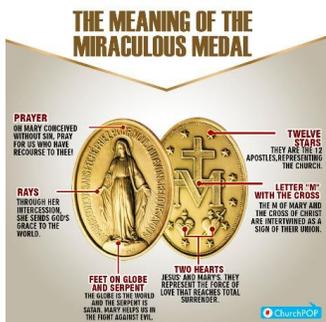
## Our Mission to Bring Others to Mary



### Hail Mary,

**Full of Grace**, The Lord is with **thee**. Blessed **art thou** among women, and blessed is **the fruit of thy womb**, Jesus. Holy **Mary**, Mother of God, **pray for us sinners now**, and at the hour of death. **Amen**

O Mary, **conceived without sin**, pray for us who have **recourse to thee**, and for those who do not have recourse to thee, especially the **enemies of the Church** and those recommended to thee. Amen.

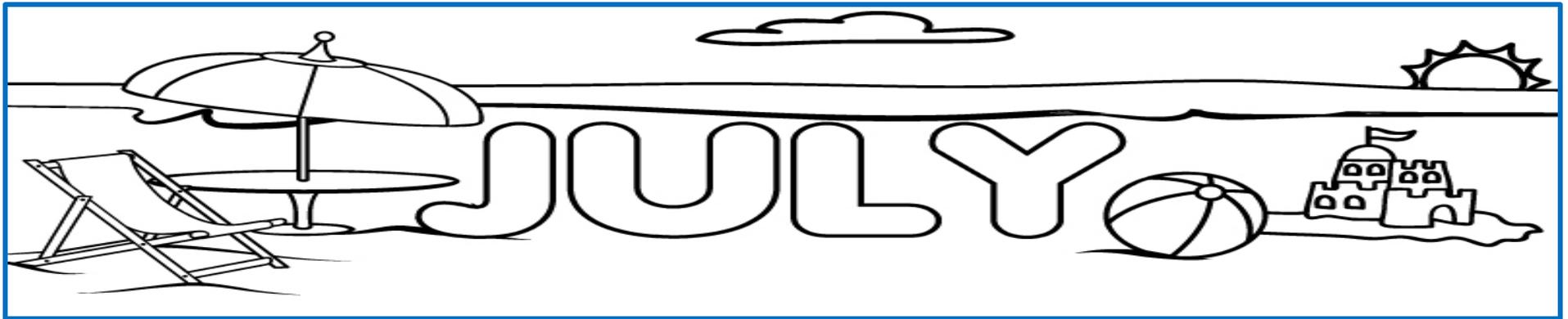


### Memorare

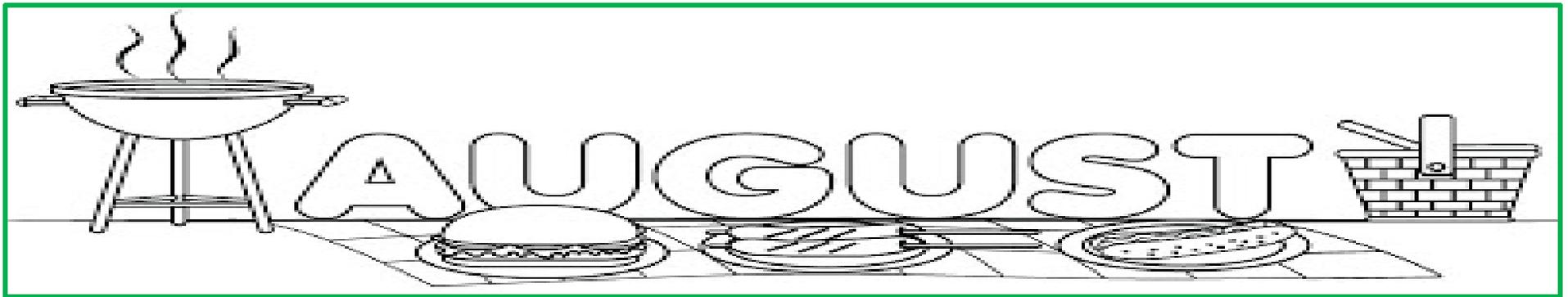
Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, That never was it known That anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession, was left unsided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly to you, O virgin of virgins, my Mother; To you do I come, before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful. Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, But in your mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

There are many beautiful prayers to Mary. The month of May provides the opportunity to teach the meaning of the prayers we say. Depending on the level of the students, place an enlarged copy of a time-honored prayer to Mary. Highlight the words/phrases they might not readily understand and teach them the meaning of these words/phrases. At some point in time, have them write the prayer to check to see that phrases such as “full of grace” is not being interpreted as “full of grays.” Say the prayer with them each day during the month. Some of the prayers that could be used include:

- Hail Mary
- Hail, Holy Queen
- Memorare
- Angelus
- Regina Coeli
- Immaculate Mary (Hymn)
- The Miraculous Medal Prayer
- The Magnificat



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 SAY PLEASE & THANK YOU OFTEN TODAY	2 TAKE TIME TO READ	3 PRAY 3 HAIL MARY'S FOR THE USA	4 GO TO MASS TONIGHT OR TOMORROW
5 MASS	6 OBEY YOUR PARENTS RIGHT AWAY	7 BE EXTRA NICE TO YOUR FAMILY	8 PRAY 3 OUR FATHER'S FOR THE SISTERS & TEACHERS	9 EXERCISE	10 TAKE TIME TO READ	11 GO TO MASS TONIGHT OR TOMORROW
12 MASS	13 COMPLIMENT SOMEONE TODAY	14 WHEN YOU USE WATER, THANK GOD FOR BAPTISM	15 MAKE A CARD OR VISIT SOMEONE WHO IS SICK	16 TAKE TIME TO READ	17 BE HELPFUL AT HOME	18 GO TO MASS TONIGHT OR TOMORROW
19 MASS	20 TELL JESUS YOU LOVE HIM OFTEN	21 BRING JOY TO 2 PEOPLE TODAY	22 TAKE TIME TO READ	23 THANK GOD FOR YOUR PARENTS	24 OFFER A SACRIFICE FOR THE POOR	25 GO TO MASS TONIGHT OR TOMORROW
26 MASS	27 CLEAN YOUR ROOM	28 TAKE TIME TO READ	29 GIVE FOOD TO THE POOR	30 SHARE A SMILE OFTEN	31 PRAY TO YOUR ANGEL	



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 GO TO MASS TONIGHT OR TOMORROW
2 MASS	3 EXERCISE	4 PRAY OUR FATHER 3X FOR POPE FRANCIS	5 TAKE TIME TO READ	6 DO A KIND ACT FOR SOMEONE	7 FORGIVE SOMEONE TODAY	8 GO TO MASS TONIGHT OR TOMORROW
9 MASS	10 TAKE TIME TO READ	11 BRING JOY TO 2 PEOPLE TODAY	12 BE HELPFUL AT HOME	13 LEARN ABOUT YOUR PATRON SAINT	14 PRAY THE GLORY BE 3X FOR YOUR CLASSMATES	15 FEAST OF MARY'S ASSUMPTION THANK GOD FOR MARY
16 MASS	17 SMILE AS MUCH AS YOU CAN TODAY	18 TAKE TIME TO READ	19 OFFER A SACRIFICE FOR PEACE	20 TAKE A WALK THANK GOD FOR NATURE	21 PRAY HAIL MARY 3X FOR THE SICK	22 GO TO MASS TONIGHT OR TOMORROW
23 MASS	24 TELL JESUS YOU LOVE Him	25 CLEAN YOUR ROOM	26 TAKE TIME TO READ	27 PRAY TO SAINT JOSEPH	28 GET SOME EXTRA REST	29 GOD BLESS YOU!

# Saint Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church

Feast Day: March 19<sup>th</sup>



Saint Joseph was called by God to serve him in a very important manner. God entrusted to Saint Joseph the care and protection of his Son, Jesus, and Jesus' mother Mary. We do not know much about Saint Joseph from Scripture, but what the Gospels do tell us is that Joseph was a just man. It would make sense that God would choose a man such as Joseph of Nazareth to take on such an extraordinary task. As well as being a just man, some other attributes of St. Joseph are his faithfulness, his humility, his silent yet strong stance, and his obedience to the will of God. The Catholic Church has long venerated Saint Joseph, knowing that he watches over and guides all of us, just as he did Jesus and Mary. For this reason, he is the patron saint of the entire, universal Church.

## Sleeping Saint Joseph

Pope Francis has a very strong devotion to Saint Joseph, and in 2015 he introduced us to one of his favorite images of him, the "sleeping Saint Joseph." Since then, this image has grown in popularity world-wide. Pope Francis explains...

***I have great love for Saint Joseph, because he is a man of silence and strength. On my table I have an image of Saint Joseph sleeping. Even when he is asleep, he is taking care of the Church!***

***Joseph's rest revealed God's will to him. In this moment of rest in the Lord, as we pause from our many daily obligations and activities, God is also speaking to us.***

***But like St. Joseph, once we have heard God's voice, we must rise from our slumber; we must get up and act.***

This image of Saint Joseph sleeping comes right from Matthew's Gospel. Here we find three accounts of God giving Joseph guidance on what to do through a dream. ***(Matthew 1: 18-24 and Matthew 2: 13-15 and Matthew 2: 19-23)*** In each instance, God sent an angel to speak to Joseph as he slept, and, in each instance, Joseph got up and did what the Lord told him. So, we

can see where the power of this image comes from, and we ask Saint Joseph to “sleep on” our concerns and intentions that we bring to him for his help and intercession.



## Seeking the Intercession of Saint Joseph

One of the ways people ask for Saint Joseph’s intercession with this devotion is to write their problem or concern on a piece of paper and put it under the “Sleeping Joseph” statue. Pope Francis himself does this, as he then sleeps peacefully knowing that Saint Joseph is looking out for the Church! This could be one way to teach children the Catholic belief of asking the saints to intercede or pray for us, to turn to them with our needs and concerns.

## Honoring Saint Joseph in Your Classroom

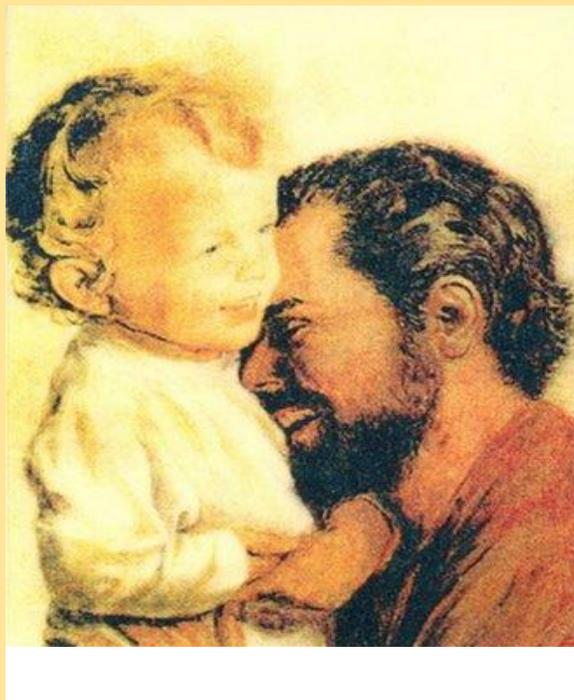
You can purchase “Sleeping Saint Joseph” statues at many Catholic religious shops, or on websites that sell Catholic articles. For little children, they can make and cut out their own version. The website [www.looktohimandberadiant.com](http://www.looktohimandberadiant.com) (click the Saints tab) has a craft that children can make, as well as many other good ideas!

# Joseph's Song

Another way to honor Saint Joseph is through song. "Joseph's Song" by Michael Card is a beautiful and meditative reflection on Joseph's role of being asked to be Jesus' father on earth. It is usually considered to be a Christmas song, but works just as well to honor St. Joseph on his feast day. Older children may want to listen and reflect on St. Joseph's willingness to "fit into" God's plan for him. How does that relate to our lives?

There are numerous prayers and devotions to St. Joseph. These can be found in prayer books and on Catholic websites. Make sure to plan a way to honor this great Saint on March 19<sup>th</sup> with your students.

**Saint Joseph, pray for us!**



# CATHOLIC TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

*Instruct the wise and they become wiser still. Proverbs 9: 9*

## Church Pop

<https://churchpop.com>

*ChurchPOP* is a Christian culture brand that is fun, informative, and inspirational. In addition to offering articles, the site also offers games, quizzes, comics, infographics and videos. Users can also sign up for a daily email or follow them on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter. The app is also available in Spanish.

## Catholic Apptitude

<https://catholicapptitude.org/2020/01/12/best-lent-apps-for-2020/>

Head on over to the Catholic Apptitude website for the best Lent apps. The site has a list of their choices for Lent 2020. Some of these apps may be familiar to you but you may find something new for personal use as well as for the classroom.

There is also a page on Catholic Apptitude where you can recommend an app you enjoy for others to try.

## Apps for Ipad, Iphone, Ipod

### Catholic Game App

Catholic Game app tests your knowledge of our Catholic faith. There are 1,000 questions on the Mass, Theology and Dogma just to name a few. You can also play a game using symbols and images of our faith. Questions range from easy to very hard and you have only 30 seconds to answer.



### Mass Times for Travel App

The purpose of the Mass times ministry is to help Catholics get to Mass by helping them find churches worldwide. This is done by hosting and sharing the most comprehensive database of Catholic Churches and worship times in existence. It is the official app of [MASSTIMES.ORG](http://MASSTIMES.ORG)!



### CatholicTV App

The CatholicTV App is a portable ambassador of the Catholic faith. Watch the daily Mass, pray the Holy Rosary, enjoy CatholicTV programming, and keep updated on what's happening at America's Catholic Television Network. CatholicTV is faithful to the teachings of the Catholic Church.



### Shared Wisdom

*Two heads are better than one.* Please submit your favorite technology resources for Catholic religious education at [krantzihm@yahoo.com](mailto:krantzihm@yahoo.com). Submissions will be included in upcoming issues. Many thanks to those who shared tools for this issue.



# Seek First the Kingdom

*Parents in Partnership with God – Sharing Faith with Children*

*A Ministry of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Immaculata, Pennsylvania*

## PARENTS – FIRST TEACHERS OF PRAYER Part 6 of 6: Sunday Gospel “Take-Aways”

As the *First Herald of the Gospel* to children, it is the parent-privilege to introduce a child to God and to prayer-ways that engage the child in conversation with God.

Conversation leads to knowing;  
knowing leads to loving;  
loving leads to serving.

This bulletin is one of six newsletters:

- Prayer Prompts
- Parent Blessings
- Love for Scripture
- Blessed Sacrament Prayer
- Participate in Mass
- Sunday Gospel “Take-Aways”

May the suggestions that follow support you, the parent, to fulfill this divine task.

*“All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient and equipped for every good work.”*

(2 Timothy 3: 16-17)

This is especially true of the Gospels. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John relate stories and teachings of Jesus. The words, lessons, messages, and advice are as relevant today as they were when first recorded. Prayer happens at the place where the Scripture intersects with our personal lives. So we must listen reverently to catch God’s word for us in a particular Gospel.

Become familiar with the life-giving messages in the Sunday Gospel. Perhaps one sentence will “pop out.” Commit it to memory and put it into your “spiritual pocket” for future use.

Put yourself in the place of each character in the Gospel story. Take away lessons for the heart, attitudes and behaviors to cultivate into personal character development or attitudes and behaviors to remove from your personality, or to avoid, or to tone down.

Let the **Gospel Character** (figure) tutor you or mentor you. Each one has something to teach us. We learn virtue and values from folks like Mary, Joseph, angels, shepherds, kings, disciples like Nicodemus and Andrew, and townsfolk like Zaccheus or Peter’s mother-in-law. We can also learn what not to be when we study folks like Herod, Pilate, Judas, persecuting soldiers, mob-participants who shouted, “Crucify him! Crucify him! The truth is that we are a part of all of these people at various moments in our lives.

**Before going into Sunday Mass choose one Gospel Character on which to focus attention.**

**Then on the travel home or at home share Gospel ABCs with your family members.**

**A = Attitudes:** Manners or feelings that lead to life and loving relationships like openness, forgiveness, conversion, awareness, sensitivity, etc. OR approaches that block life and love like suspicion, rash judgment, self-righteousness, or negativity.

**B = Behaviors:** Actions or reactions to a person or a circumstance that are life-giving like: welcoming others, sharing gifts of nature and grace, owning up to mistakes, offering reconciliation, asking forgiveness, etc. OR life-blocking behaviors like: lying, betraying another, gossip, excluding others, acting on prejudices, seeking revenge, etc.

**C = Consequences:** Effects or results of thought and action. Positive attitudes and behaviors produce joy, energy, enthusiasm for life, vital relationships, healing, etc. Negative attitudes and behaviors paralyze. They block the heart to what good there is and negativity becomes a “turn off” to others and, possibly, builds up into depression.



# Busquen Primero el Reino

*Padres de Familia Cooperando con Dios-*

*Compartiendo su Fe con sus Hijos/Hijas*

*Un Ministerio de las Hermanas, Siervas del Inmaculado Corazón de María*

## PADRES - PRIMEROS MAESTROS DE ORACIÓN

### Parte 6 de 6: *El Evangelio del Domingo*

Como el **Primer Heraldo del Evangelio** para los niños, es el privilegio de los padres presentar a un niño a Dios y a las formas de oración que involucran al niño en la conversación con Dios.

La conversación conduce al conocimiento;  
saber conduce a amar;  
amar conduce a servir.

Este boletín es uno de seis boletines informativos:

- Mensajes de oración
- Bendiciones de los padres
- Amor por la Sagrada Escritura
- Oración del Santísimo Sacramento
- Participación en la misa
- Domingo Evangelio "Para Llevar"

Esperamos que las sugerencias que se describen a continuación sean un apoyo para Usted

*"Toda la Escritura es inspirada por Dios, y útil para enseñar, para redirigir para corregir, para instruir en justicia, a fin de que el hombre de Dios sea perfecto, enteramente preparado para toda buena obra."* (2 Timoteo 3: 16-17)

Esto es especialmente cierto al respecto de los evangelios, Mateo, Marcos, Lucas y Juan relatan historias y enseñanzas de Jesús. Las palabras, lecciones, mensajes y consejos son tan relevantes hoy como lo fueron cuando se escribieron por primera vez. La oración ocurre en el lugar donde la Escritura se cruza con nuestra vida personal. Por lo tanto, debemos escuchar con reverencia para captar la palabra de Dios para nosotros en un Evangelio en particular.

Familiarícese con los mensajes que dan vida en el Evangelio dominical. Quizás alguna cita, le interpelará. Guárdela en su memoria y póngala en su "bolsillo espiritual" puede servirle en el futuro.

Sitúese en el lugar de alguno de los personajes que aparecen en el Evangelio. Saque algunas lecciones para que su corazón, paulatinamente vaya formando nuevas actitudes y comportamientos, atenuando los no deseables.

Permita que ellos: María, José, ángeles, pastores, reyes, discípulos como Nicodemo y Andrés, y gente del pueblo como Zaqueo o la suegra de Pedro puedan reorientar sus virtudes y, valores. Cada uno tiene algo que enseñarnos.

También clarifica las características indeseables para conducirnos adecuadamente de acuerdo al evangelio de personajes como: Herodes, Pilato, Judas, soldados perseguidos, participantes de la muchedumbre que gritaban: "¡Crucifícalo! ¡Crucifícalo! La verdad es que poseemos características de todos ellos, en varios momentos de nuestras vidas.

**Antes de ir a la misa, elija un personaje del Evangelio en el que enfocar su atención.  
Luego, yendo a casa o en casa, comparte el ABC del Evangelio con los miembros de su familia.**

**Este artículo continúe en el reverso.**

### **A = Actitudes:**

Modales o sentimientos que conducen a relaciones amorosas con otros caracterizadas por ser abiertas, compasivas. Relaciones basadas en la justicia que orientan hacia actuar conscientemente, con sensibilidad, etc.

O bien a relaciones que podrían conducir a enfoques que bloqueen la vida y el amor como la sospecha, el enjuiciar livianamente o la negatividad.

### **B = Comportamientos:**

Acciones que conduzcan a abrazar todas las circunstancias que favorezcan vida como: dar la bienvenida a otros, compartir regalos de la naturaleza y la gracia que de ella proviene, reconocer errores, ofrecer reconciliación, pedir perdón, etc.

O acciones que propicien comportamientos que bloquean la vida como: mentir, traicionar a otro, expandir rumores, excluir a otros, actuar sobre prejuicios, buscar venganza, etc.

### **C = Consecuencias:**

Efectos o resultados de pensamiento y de acción. Las actitudes y comportamientos positivos producen alegría, energía positiva, entusiasmo por la vida, relaciones vitales, sanación, etc.

Las actitudes y comportamientos negativos paralizan, bloqueando el corazón a lo bueno que hay. Dicha negatividad se convierte en un "obstáculo" para los demás y en oportunidades deriva en depresión.