

# Apostolic Briefings & Communications



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

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We thank  
You, Father  
for holding  
Us~  
Like the  
Rain holds  
Spring-  
time!

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## How Much Is Too Much Screen Time?

Do we ever consider how much is too much? To what am I referring? All the advances in technology are wonderful in so many ways, but what about the effects of too much screen time on children? In a 2015 *Common Sense Media* survey of more than 2600 8-18-year-olds, it was reported that tween 8 to 12 years old averaged 6 hours of daily media use, while teens 12 to 18 years old averaged 9 hours of media use per day (Sousa, 2017, p. 32). This data does not account for screen time during the school day, doing homework, talking on the phone, or texting. Furthermore, it is estimated that infants spend on average 90 minutes a day on screen; toddlers, 2 hours a day, and 4-year-olds, four hours a day. Today 56% of 6-year-olds have their own cell phone and 80% of 12-18 year olds have cell phones (Clement, 2018, p. 24). Children are spending more time using some form of technology than on any other activity, thus robbing them of many valuable opportunities for developing and fostering real life interactions, discovering and experimenting on a variety of topics, and just daydreaming and playing make-believe with family and friends. It causes one to wonder why top technology executives in the Silicon Valley send their own children to schools with limited use of technology. It may be the fact that they know that technology games, whether they are supposedly for academics or for enjoyment, are designed to be addictive and to lengthen one's time and frequency of usage when using the software (Clement, p. 174). Bill Gates, founder of Microsoft Corporation, prohibited his 10-year-old daughter from playing video games because he noticed she was becoming addicted. Gates' son complained about the 45-minute-per-day restriction for screen time his father imposed on his children (p. 174). This example suggests that tech savvy executives recognize the risk of addiction in young children.

Dr. David Sousa, a renowned international consultant in educational neuroscience, states that, "technology has become the dominant factor in children's lives, and, because of neuroplasticity (*ability of the brain to change as a result of experience*), it is rewiring their brains (Sousa, 2017, p. 33). Think about it for a moment--how often we see young children in a shopping cart with an electronic device in hand. It's a great babysitter. Mom can get the needed groceries without the bombardment of questions. However, isn't grocery shopping a great opportunity to apply real world concepts that students learn in math or science class? In addition, what about interacting with others, teaching social graces, and enjoying just plain face-to-face conversation? The use of a tablet or other electronic devices is robbing children of actual real life conversations, opportunities for learning, and developing bonding time with parents. Do we really want screen time replacing actual relationships? Students don't need more screen time at home or at school. What they need are opportunities for actually solving problems, discovering interests through working with others, and exercising not only their minds, but also their bodies. Obesity is on the rise in children because of their often sedentary life style. Indisputably, there are educational benefits available with the plethora of sources accessible on the Internet, but the reality is that the majority of children are not actively investigating an array of intellectual pursuits, but, instead, are mindlessly involved in gaming for hours on end, texting, sending selfies, and posting the latest happenings on social media.

Another startling fact is that brain cancer is on the rise. Dr. Devra Davis of Yale School of Medicine claims that:

Cell phones do in fact cause brain cancer. She maintains that the developing brains of young children absorb twice the amount of microwave radiation as adult brains do. Prolonged exposure to radiation during childhood will cause cancer later in life. Cancers like brain tumors take ten to twenty years to take root. Dr. Davis further advises that pregnant women should keep their phone away from the abdomen, especially towards the end of pregnancy" (Kersting, 2016, p.21).

John Halligan, father of Ryan Halligan who committed suicide as a result of cyber bullying at age 13, travels throughout the United States, Canada, and Latin America to inform parents, teachers, and students of the dangers of social media and the harm it causes when children's communications aren't monitored on a regular basis, whether it is their utilization of Instagram, Snapchats, or text accounts. Visit his website to learn more: <http://www.ryanpatrickhalligan.org/> One book that he suggested at his presentation to parents is called, "*Disconnected. How to Reconnect Our Digitally Distracted Kids*" by Thomas Kersting. This book is a real eye-opener explaining and offering real life examples of the effects of an abundant amount of screen time on people's brains, especially children. Consider when we were kids, we would play outside until Mom called us in for dinner. Many children today lack this experience; instead, they have their nose glued to a screen with very little real life interaction with others. They are constantly taking selfies and hoping to get likes from friends, thus always checking their phone. When they don't receive a certain amount of likes, anxiety and stress sets in as they ruminate as to what the problem is: do their friends think that what they posted was stupid, do they not like me anymore, or other possible scenarios. In addition, many teens

create avatar images of themselves and some prefer this made-up icon to their actual features. Without their phone, many teens feel lost and disconnected. There is a real fear of missing something, a fear that causes undue stress. Mr. Halligan, in his presentation, suggested that parents not allow their child to be involved in Snapchat. One girl told Mr. Halligan that because her parents deleted her Snapchat account, she was happier because she was no longer involved in all the drama, or the back and forth backbiting and nastiness. If you consider today's reality, children can be harassed 24/7 through the use of social media, which can explain the increase in teen anxiety, depression and suicide.

Due to the lack of real life interactions, Kersting explains that many young people today who interview for a job are lacking in communication skills. He provided one example where a medical student was being interviewed for a position and she rudely inquired to the interview doctor, "Why are you asking me all these questions, with her arms folded in disgust?" Obviously, she did not earn the position. Eye-to-eye contact is becoming a rarity with many today. Kersting tells how some teenagers don't even know how to greet others by saying something such as simple as, "Hi, I'm Tom Smith, nice to meet you." In observing an interaction between two teens, Kersting noticed how awkward the two teens seemed. He suggests that it may be due to the fact that most of teens' daily communications are through texting or social media, not a face-to-face meeting. Teens will honestly admit that texting is easier than speaking, due to the fact that sometimes, one does not know how to reply to a question or comment. This may be true, but they are missing the body language cues that someone will demonstrate if called ugly or some other inconsiderate term. Consider how often you see families out to dinner at a restaurant not conversing with one another, rather their heads are down looking at their screens. Having electronic devices and screens control young people is causing "many of our children's problems, ranging from anxiety disorders to family problems to school and social problems" (Kersting, 2016, p. iii).

Kersting sites the work of Dr. Gary Small, professor of psychiatry at UCLA, who studied the impact of technology on the brain and "discovered that when research subjects spent as little as an hour a day online, the activity patterns in their brains changed dramatically." Dr. Small exhorts that "a young person's brain, which is still developing, is particularly sensitive and is also the kind of brain that is most exposed to modern technology" (p. 4). Dr. John Ratey of Harvard Medical School "coined the term *acquired attention deficit disorder*, describing how too much screen time was rewiring kids' brains." In addition, Dr. Michael Van Ameringen of the McMaster University in Canada conducted a study of 254 freshmen and found that "those who met the criteria for Internet addiction showed higher rates of inattention, impulsivity, anxiety, and depression" (p. 5).

Kersting provides the following warning signs to determine whether a child is spending too much time using any form of electronic media, including television, video games, handheld devices, and computers. If a child does exhibit these signs, the parent needs to step in and limit the amount of time on these devices. He strongly suggests that no electronics should be in a child's bedroom, no video games during the week, no smartphones in the car or during dinner, and mandatory unplugging times. If a child breaks the guidelines, consequences must be issued consistently.

#### **Warning Signs of Overuse of Electronic Media:**

- Loses track of time when using electronic devices
- Becomes agitated when interrupted
- Prefers to spend time using electronics rather than being with friends or family in person
- Does not follow time limits
- Forms relationships with people online
- Loss of interest in other activities
- Seems restless when not using a device and preoccupied with getting back on
- Avoids homework and chores because of spending too much time with electronics
- Sneaks on a device when no one is around and lies about it (p. 30-31)

The impact of electronics is real and we need to become informed. The following is a website that provides teen's actual experience with game addiction: [www.video-game-addiction.org](http://www.video-game-addiction.org) Children with this addiction want to stop but just don't know how. Like an alcoholic, gaming must be discontinued. This is why it is so important that devices be in clear view of parents; otherwise, boys and girls alike will search sites that the parent would not approve, such as pornography. It is estimated that the "average teenage boy watches fifty pornographic video clips per week" (Clement, 2018, p.162). Girls too view Internet pornography, but boys are five times more likely to view such clips.

The excessive screen time is altering the brain. The neuropathways of the brain which regulate how we communicate, cope, concentrate, and socialize are being changed due to overuse of technology. Kersting provides an example of how a parent took away her child's electronic devices as a punishment. The normal coping and emotional reaction of a child dealing with this punishment would be to demonstrate displeasure. In contrast, a child with unhealthy coping skills would exhibit a fit of rage at such a punishment. More and more children are beginning to display fits of rage when dealing with everyday frustrations. If a child becomes furious when a parent asks him or her to quit a game or pull away from a group chat, this is a possible warning sign of a growing addiction and the problem needs to be

addressed sooner rather than later. Limits must be placed on electronics and Kersting strongly suggests that no electronics should be in a child's bedroom. Electronics are interrupting children's sleep patterns because they jump whenever they hear an alert on their phone or tablet. This results in fatigued children in the classroom. Often children are not interested in listening to lessons or explanations by the teacher or a parent at home. Adults are simply not able to compete with the constant bombardment of bright lights and instant everything.

Children are so used to communicating in bits and pieces, not in complete sentences, that their ability to reason out problems, comprehend reading selections, and other real life problem solving skills is becoming limited. Many children when texting no longer apply proper grammar skills because that would take too long. In fact, recently a student asked his teacher, "Do we still capitalize days of the week?" Most likely the reason for such a question is that children no longer take the time to apply grammar rules when texting.

Many teens and adults believe that they can accomplish assignments by multitasking. This is a false assumption as explained by Dr. Sousa. He explains that the brain is wired to focus on one task at a time. "The brain cannot carry out two cognitive processes simultaneously.... Whenever the brain shifts from focusing on Item A to focusing on Item B and back again to Item A, there is a cognitive loss involved" (Sousa, p. 33). He provides an example: A high school student is doing his homework on World War II when his cell phone rings. He notices the call is from his girlfriend. He decides to take the call and while he is talking with his girlfriend, the information he learned from WW II is slowly fading because the working memory has limited capacity. Following the conversation, he returns to his assignment, wondering where he was, and it is actually like starting over. Sousa notes that "some studies indicate that a person who is interrupted during a task may take up to 50 percent longer to finish the task and make up to 50 percent more errors" (p. 34).

What can we do as educators to curtail the amount of screen time during the school day? One suggestion is creating engaging lessons that involve all the senses and require students to communicate with peers in group projects that involve critical thinking skills in which they must explain their thinking processes. Students are not accustomed to think time; therefore, teachers must provide opportunities to develop these skills. Research explains that if areas of the brain are not used, pruning takes effect. "Pruning allows the brain to focus on the pathways it actually needs. This creates the use-it-or-lose-it principle of cognitive ability" (Clement, p. 57). Often children today have great difficulty in using their imagination due to the fact that playing video games occupies their leisure time. If we as teachers take students out to recess and there isn't any equipment, they may ask the teacher, "What are we supposed to do?" The teacher may respond, "Just make up your own game." The teacher may then notice a puzzled look on faces. Also consider how in recent years every step has to be explained in order for students to complete a simple assignment. Clement offered this example: An employee who earned his Master's Degree in media arts and design was asked to video tape a three-hour speech. The employer asked the employee how he did with the videotaping. The employee explained that he was only able to record 30 minutes of the speech because the equipment lost its charge. The boss, quite annoyed at the response, asked, "Why didn't you plug the equipment in?" The employee answered, "Because you didn't tell me to. How was I supposed to know?" As a result, the young employee was terminated that day (p. 54).

As educators today, it is important that we make it a priority to teach students communication and problem solving skills. In the classroom, we must also make every effort to use technology as a tool, not as the main course of instruction. Require students to explain the steps to solving a problem, role play how to interact in various situations, and encourage students to read actual books. Emphasize with students that everything on the Internet is not absolute truth. Educate them to realize that often adults and children try to portray the perfect life on the screen, making every situation public. Stress that posting every life event is not necessary. Students need to find their self-worth internally, not by the number of likes they receive. Children need to deal with the real world in order to live and develop into caring individuals who are able to problem solve critically, recognize and have compassion for others, and communicate effectively. Children don't need things. They need parents and teachers who are willing to spend time with them, pray with them, play with them, and truly listen to their dreams and individual issues rather than their turning to cyberspace for answers.

God's special blessings on all parents and educators in this global world! ***With God all things are possible!***

<https://www.wiredsafety.com/> - Excellent resource for educators, parents, and children.

Clement, J. & Miles, M. (2018). *Screen Schooled: Two veteran teachers expose how technology overuse is making our kids dumber*. IL: Chicago Review Press. Kindle Edition.

Kersting, T. (2016). *Disconnected: How to reconnect our digitally distracted kids*.

Sousa, D. (2017). *How the brain learns*. (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). CA: Corwin Press.

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## More Productive ELA Classes Using “Kid Smarts”

In this last issue, we’ll examine the remaining MIs (multiple intelligences) or what we’ve been calling “**kid smarts**”. These smarts are: interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist. There will also be an *attention getter* (AT) or two with each MI.

**Interpersonal:** These are the children who work well in groups. They participate and are usually vocal; however, don’t allow them to monopolize the group work. They possess a depth of understanding of people’s thinking and feeling. Most often there’s a sense of empathy. They make excellent team members, and often become leaders e.g. Student Council members. One *caveat* though: since they are vocal, they sometimes act as lawyers in their own defense. They feel they can talk



their way into or out of anything!

### **In ELA class students could:**

- interview a person who has read the text, using the questions and answers to write an article.
- plan a pamphlet to promote reading of the story or book. Use examples from the text to justify their opinion.
- write a short biography of one of the characters. Mention personal qualities achievements, challenges etc.
- participate in a jigsaw: divide a topic or segment of text into a number of parts. Each child studies a part and teaches that part to the rest of the group. (This technique works well for Social Studies or Science chapters as well.)

AT: Whisper to one child “It’s time to refocus. Pass it on.” The child passes it on to the group, who passes it to the next group and so on. Because these tend to be the talkative students, you could also use: T: Zip it, lock it: Ss: Put it in my pocket. *Management tip:* When taking little children to or from a special class,

have them put a finger on their lips, and the other hand on their hip. Both hands are occupied so there's no touching, talking, pushing or shoving!

***Intrapersonal:*** These children can usually control emotions and use them to understand others and themselves. They observe, listen, and like to work alone. In this era of group work, we have to respect their need for time alone. Since emotions make learning stick and these students relate to emotion, try to connect an emotion to learning the content. Then they'll remember it.



**In ELA class students could:**

- use a diary format to explain how the text made them feel.
- list positive information or interactions among characters in story.
- write first person accounts of events.

ATs: Since these students are usually the quiet ones, use something short and simple.

T: Hakuna Ss: Matata

T: And the bear... Ss: Snores on

T: Get it? Got it? Ss: Good!

***Naturalist:*** These students like to be outdoors, are attuned to protecting nature, usually have pets, and maybe collect plants. Their sensory skills are better than most other students.



**In ELA (or Science) class, students could:**

- draw a landscape/animal/plant described in text.
- create a short “owner’s manual” explaining how to care for or live with one of the plants/animals in text.
- write a “green” essay and submit it to the local or school newspaper.
- write a persuasive paragraph from the point of view of an endangered species, or a plant or animal in nature.

These students might be more attuned to learning grammar if sentences were related to nature e.g. *The wind is howling in my ears.* (Now find a different verb that is equally powerful.) *Robins fly swiftly through the sky.* (Now substitute different adverbs about how the birds fly.) *People should not throw trash from their cars.* (Change the prepositional phrase to something equally abusive of nature.)

ATs:

T: Water, water everywhere... Ss: Don't you waste it, don't you dare.

T: For the beauty of the earth...Ss: Thanks be to God!

T: Meanwhile... Ss: Back at the ranch...

If I find more ideas for you to use, I'll write about them next year. Have a restful summer. ***God bless your hard work. Relax. Have fun. You deserve it!***

# PRIME TIMES



Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary  
Immaculata, Pennsylvania 19345

Spring, 2019

## SONGS AND POEMS ON THE MOVE

Using a song or poem when transitioning from subject to subject may help some students to stay focused and be ready for what comes next. The following songs and poems may assist in this area. Once a poem or song is learned use it as a tool for locating parts of speech. One idea is to have students find parts of speech (nouns, verbs, adjectives etc.) and color code them using markers or highlighters. This makes whole groups, centers, or homework activity more fun. Check out MarkerMania.com for more ideas.

### PLURALS

**Tune: London Bridges**



Plurals just means more than one  
More than one, more than one.  
Plurals just mean more than one  
More than one you see.

We can show it's more than one  
Add an s and it's done  
We can show it's more than one  
More than one you see.

Sometimes es is in need  
When on the end there's s, x, or, z.  
Oh, sh add es too  
More than one you see.

Dog to dogs and cat to cats  
Add the s. That is that.  
Fish to fishes, bunch to bunches  
More than one you see!

N. Vandenberg

## HOMOPHONE

**Tune: Mary had a Little Lamb**

Homophones they sound alike,  
Sound alike, sound alike.  
Homophone they sound alike,  
But they have different meanings.

Homophones they sound alike,  
Sound alike, sound alike.  
Homophones sound alike, but they have  
Different spellings.

## SYNONYM AND ANTONYM SONG

**Tune: London Bridges**

Synonyms are similar-  
Truth and fact,  
Perform and act!  
Synonyms are similar-  
Split and crack!

Antonyms are opposites-  
Huge and tiny,  
Dull and shiny!  
Antonyms are opposites-  
Smooth and spiny!

## RULES WORTH TEACHING

Pennington Publishing Blog

1. The I before e Rule
2. The Final y Rule
3. The Silent e Rule
4. The Double the Consonant Rule
5. The Ending "an" or "en" Rule
6. The "able" or "ible" Rule
7. The Ending "ion" Rule
8. The Plurals Rule

## VERBS IN ACTION

**Tune:** The Farmer in the Dell

All action words are verbs.  
They make writing superb.  
High-ho-the derry –o  
All action words are verbs.  
A verb tells what you do,  
Like jump, or swim, or chew.  
High-ho-the derry-o,  
A verb tells what you do.

Each sentence must have one.  
The verb adds all the fun!  
High-ho-the derry-o  
Each sentence needs a verb.

## SYLLABLES

**Tune:** Mary Had a Little Lamb

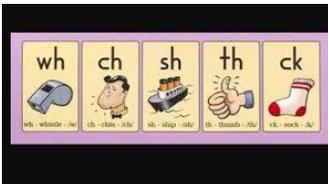
Syllables are parts of words,  
Parts of words, parts of words.  
Syllables are parts of words.  
Clap them out with me!

Fly has just one syllable,  
Syllable, syllable.  
Fly has just one syllable.  
Clap it out with me!

Butter has two syllables,  
2 syllables, 2 syllables  
Butter has two syllables.  
Clap it out with me!

## THE “H” BROTHERS – SH, WH, TH, CH

The **Sh** brother is always telling the brothers to be quiet. ( shhhh!)  
The **Wh** brother is learning to whistle. (blowing sound of \wh\  
The **Th** brother likes sticking his tongue out while blowing. (thhhhhh)  
The **Ch** brother loves trains. (Choo, Choo!)



## WINTER ANIMALS

Winter is cold.  
There is snow in the sky.  
The squirrel gathers nuts,  
And the wild geese fly.



The fluffy red fox  
Has his fur to keep him warm.  
The bear's in her cave,  
Sleeping all through the storm.

## THE PARTS OF SPEECH POEM

Every name is called a noun,  
As field and fountain, street and town.  
In place of a noun the pronoun stands,  
As he and she can clap their hands.  
The adjective describes a thing,  
As magic wand or bridal ring.  
The verb means action, something done,  
As read and write and jump and run.  
How things are done the adverbs tell,  
As quickly, slowly, badly, well.  
The preposition shows relation,  
As in the street or at the station.  
Conjunctions join, in many ways,  
Sentences, words, or phrase and phrase.  
The interjection cries out, “Hark!”  
I need and exclamation mark

## SIGHT WORD DRILL

Use a circle from a pizza pie or create your own circle out of card board. Divide the circle into 8 pieces. Print sight words on small card stock or index cards. Put putty on the back of the cards then stick them on the circle (a card in each piece.) Each day choose a few students to point to the words and name each word. You can time each student and the student that went around the circle and correctly names the words in the least amount of time goes into the winners circle. At the end of the week the 5 students in the winner's circle compete against each other. The winner or winners receives a treat or a prize from the prize box. Each week you can place 8 more words in the circle for the next week's drill. This type of drill may be used with number words, color words, math facts etc.

## THE VERB GAME

1. Divide students into groups of three or four.
2. Choose a place (the park, school, at home, the library etc.)
3. Set the timer for 2 or 3 minutes.
4. Everyone in the group writes down as many action verbs as they can think of for that place.
5. When the time is up, students compare their verbs with those in the group.
6. Cross off any verbs that someone else in the group also has.
7. The person with the most verbs is the winner!



## PLAYDOUGH FRACTIONS

Learning equal parts and partitioning can be achieved through the use of playdough. Give each student a container of playdough and ask them to cut out 2 circles. Cookie cutters or plastic cups are easy to use. Have them use a craft stick to cut the first circle in half. Talk about the meaning of half. Have them cut the second circle in half and then half again. How many pieces? Talk about the meaning of fourths. You can continue with other shapes – square, rectangle. Visit Miss Giraffe’s Class: fractions for more ideas on using playdough for fractions.



## TIME CHANT

How many seconds in a minute?  
Sixty, any way you spin it!  
How many minutes in an hour?  
Sixty minutes, now don't be sour!  
How many hours in a day?  
Twenty-four for work and play!  
How many days in a week?  
Seven will help you reach your peak!  
How many weeks in a year?  
52. Now let's all cheer!



## The Giving Tree and STREAM

Read the story *The Giving Tree* to your students. Next divide your class into small groups of 3 or 4. Each group will receive a supply of toothpicks, gumdrops, mini marshmallows, and a piece of brown construction paper. Begin to reread the story this time pausing at the first “and the tree was happy”. Have the students work together using the provided materials to create the Giving Tree. Continue reading until the second “and the tree was happy”. Have the students alter their projects to reflect the missing apples. Continue reading until the third “and the tree was happy”. Have the students alter their projects to reflect the missing branches. Continue this pattern until left with a stump. After each step take a picture of the altered project to see the change. This project can be followed up with a writing piece or poster board to be displayed in the hallway. This project can also be applied to the book *The Three Trees*.



## The Call of the Apostles

Tune: "I've Been Working on the Railroad"

Peter, Andrew, James and John  
Left their nets to follow You.  
Philip ran to tell Nathaniel,  
Who's also named Bartholomew...  
Then came tax collector Matthew,  
And the brothers Jude and James,  
Doubting Thomas, Simon Judas...  
You called them each by name.  
And You called me too,  
And You called me too,  
Call me to follow You-oo-oo .  
And You called me too,  
And You called me too,  
Call me to follow You.

## Lent Poem

**L**iving these 40 days

**E**ntering the journey

**N**ew life is coming

**T**ime to prepare



## Little Brown Seeds

Little brown seeds are small and round  
Are sleeping quietly under the ground.  
(pretend to sleep)  
Down come the raindrops...  
Sprinkle, sprinkle, sprinkle.  
(wiggle fingers and downward motion)  
Outcomes the sun...  
Sparkles, sparkle, sparkle.  
(close and open hands)  
Little brown seeds way down below  
Up through the earth they grow, grow, grow.  
(crouch down and slowly raise head)  
Little green leaves come one by one  
They hold up their heads and look at the sun  
(stand up and raise arms towards the sun)

## The Rain

Pitter , patter, raindrops,  
Falling from the sky;  
(wiggle your fingers)  
Here is my umbrella  
To keep me safe and dry!  
(place your hands over your head)  
When the rain is over,  
And the sun begins to glow,  
(make a large circle with your arms)  
Little flowers start to bud  
(cup your hands)  
And grow and grow and grow.  
(spread your hands apart slowly)



## Celebrate Earth Day

In all the whole wide universe  
There is one special place.  
The name for it is planet earth,  
There lives the human race.

This planet blue and beautiful  
Has air and lands and seas.  
This planet is our only home,  
It gives us all our needs.

Earth's animals and plants and rocks  
Its water, soil, and air,  
Need people who will work and work  
to give them love and care.

Come celebrate your home, the Earth  
On April twenty- two.  
Let's learn how we can help our home  
The job is up to you!

## End of the Year Poem

You're a very special person  
And, (child's name), you should know,  
How I loved being your teacher  
How fast did you grow!  
Please come back to visit me  
As through the grades you go.  
Try hard to learn all that you can  
There is so much more to know!  
The one thing I tried to teach you  
To last your whole life through,  
Is to know that you are special  
Just because, (child's name), YOU ARE YOU!





# IHM Good Writers Club



Grades 3 & 4

## APRIL

Open your eyes  
Look all around  
See the new life  
You have found.

## MAY

When a snail is in a hurry  
And there is someplace he must go  
He gets there when he gets there  
Even though he's very slow.

Grades 5 & 6

## 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 7 & 8

## APRIL

America's children  
The strong and the frail  
Freedom unites them  
The dark skin, the pale.

## MAY

Cherish the children  
Disregarding their race  
For each of us add  
To American's smiling face.



Spring, 2019

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

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

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION RESOURCES**

*IDEAS TO SHARE WITH ALL WHO ENGAGE IN FAITH FORMATION THROUGH  
THE TEACHING OF RELIGION*

### ***I.H.M. ABC NOTES ---Spring 2019***



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### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

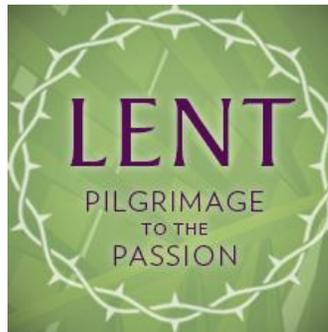
Many thanks to those who contributed Religious Education ideas to this Issue.

Thank you for being Joyful Bearers of God's Redeeming Love!

# LENTEN PENANCE SERVICE

Call to Prayer: As we received ashes on Ash Wednesday, we listened to the words: “REPENT and BELIEVE in the GOSPEL.” Repent means to be sorry for our sins, so sorry that we want to change. Today we come to say we are sorry and we want to be better disciples as we confess our sins to the Lord. We also ask for the faith to believe in Gospel message of mercy, for no sin is ever greater than God’s mercy and forgiveness.

Gathering Hymn “*Loving and Forgiving*” Verse 1



## Opening Prayer

Priest: Let us begin together with the Sign of the Cross:

All: In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen

Priest: O God, You are the Source of all mercy and goodness. You show us that prayer, fasting, and almsgiving lead us away from sin and closer to You. Look graciously upon the humble confession of our sins and lift us up by Your Mercy. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

## Gospel Acclamation Scripture Reading

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your Spirit.

Priest: A Reading from the Gospel of St. Luke 15: 3 – 7: The Good Shepherd

All: Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ.

## Homily/Reflection

## Examination of Conscience

- Reader: God our Father, sometimes we have not been the disciples You have called us to be  
All: You always love us and forgive us.
- Reader: We have been disrespectful to our parents and teachers:  
All: You always love us and forgive us.
- Reader: We have been angry and unkind to each other:  
All: You always love us and forgive us.
- Reader: We have been lazy at home and in school, and have not been helpful to our family or teachers, classmates or friends:  
All: You always love us and forgive us.
- Reader: We have been selfish, have told lies, and have used bad language:  
All: You always love us and forgive us.
- Reader: We have not said our prayers or gone to Mass each week:  
All: You always love us and forgive us.
- Priest: Now with Jesus, our brother, we come before our Father in heaven and ask him to forgive our sins:  
All: *Our Father. . .*

## Act of Contrition

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against You whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with Your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In His name, my God, have mercy. Amen.

## Sacrament of Reconciliation

### *Individual Confessions*

### Concluding Prayer After Confessions

- Priest: All-holy Father, you have shown us your mercy and have made us a new creation in the likeness of your Son. Make us living signs of your love for the whole world to see. We ask this through Christ our Lord.
- All: Amen



### **Concluding Rite**

Priest: May the Lord guide your hearts in the way of his love and fill you with Christ-like mercy.  
May he give you strength to walk in newness of life and to please him in all things.

All: Amen.

Priest: May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Priest: The Lord has freed you from your sins. Go in Peace.

All: Thanks be to God.

Closing Hymn: *“Loving and Forgiving”* Verse 2

# Sharing our Spiritual Treasures



## "THE RELIGION CLOCK"

### HELPING STUDENTS MEMORIZE BASIC FACTS ABOUT OUR FAITH

In this day and age, retrieving information just takes a quick inquiry on Google. What used to be a normal part of a day in school, memorizing facts is almost a lost art. Reciting daily catechism questions, multiplication facts, and prepositions, still resonates in one's brain. One simple way that we learned basic religion facts was by using "The Religion Clock." Sister would simply spin the minute or hour hand of the clock and we would take turns telling her a specific fact correlating with that number. As we went to the next grade, this mode of learning still continued, but with more complex statements. Listed below are some of the basic facts that you can use. If you don't have a bought educational clock, it is simple enough to make.

This is the Religion Clock. The circle shows that God has no beginning and no end. He always was and always will be.

**1... ONE GOD** There cannot be more gods than one, God created heaven and earth and all things. He made all things out of nothing.

**2... TWO NATURES IN GOD THE SON, JESUS** The Divine Nature and the human nature, The Divine Nature means that He always was and always will be. The human nature means that He became man

**3... THREE DIVINE PERSONS IN GOD** God the Father, who created us; God the Son who redeemed us; and God the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us. Also, **THREE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES**

**4... The FOUR GOSPEL WRITERS** Matthew-apostle, tax collector (an angel as symbol.) Mark - disciple of Peter (Lion as symbol.) Luke-disciple of Paul. (Ox as symbol) John - apostle, the 'beloved disciple" (Eagle as symbol)

Also, **4 CARDINAL VIRTUES**



The Clock's Details



**5...WOUNDS OF CHRIST** side ,hands, feet, (also the crown of thorns on His head) Also, **5 parts of a good confession:** examination of conscience, contrition, confession, resolution, penance



**6... HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION (In addition to every Sunday)**

Jan. 1- Mary, Mother of God; Ascension; Aug. 15 -Assumption of Mary;  
Nov. 1- All Saints Day; Dec.8- Immaculate Conception; Dec. 25- Christmas  
Also, **6 PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH**



**7... SEVEN SACRAMENTS** Baptism, Reconciliation (Penance), Holy Eucharist, Confirmation, Matrimony, Holy Orders, Anointing of the Sick



**7 WORKS OF MERCY**

**7 LAST WORDS ON THE CROSS**

**8...THE EIGHT BEATITUDES**

- 1) Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 2) Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the earth.
- 3) Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
- 4) Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for justice sake; they shall be called children of God.
- 5) Blessed are the peacemakers; they shall be called children of God.
- 6) Blessed are the single hearted, for they shall see God.
- 7) Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
- 8) Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice sake; the kingdom of heaven is theirs.



**9...CHOIRS OF ANGELS** Angels, Archangels, Thrones, Dominations, Principalities, Powers, Virtues, Cherubim and Seraphim



Also, **NOVENA - 9 DAYS OF PRAYER**

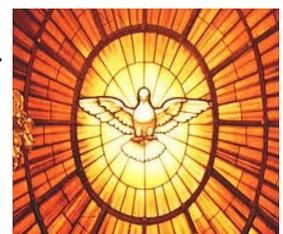
**10....TEN COMMANDMENTS**



**11... ELEVEN APOSTLES WHO REMAINED FAITHFUL** After Judas betrayed Our Lord. Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew (or Nathaniel), Thomas, Matthew, James the Less, Thaddeus (Jude), Simon, Zealot.



**12...TWELVE FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT** Charity, Joy, Peace, Patience, Goodness, long-suffering, humility, Faithfulness, Modesty, Self-Control, Chastity.



# Religion Bulletin Boards

2018-2019

## Celebrating Missionary Discipleship in the Church

*We continue this school year with prayer and reflection on the missionary work of the Church.*

*As previously noted, October 2019 was chosen to be an extraordinary month dedicated to the missionary work of the Church because of its proximity to the centenary anniversary of Pope Benedict XV's November 1919 apostolic letter, **Maximum Illud**, calling for renewed missionary zeal following World War I. World Mission Sunday falls on the penultimate Sunday of October each year.*

*Pope Francis said that he hopes the month will be a promising time of prayer and reflection on the testimony of missionary saints and martyrs, the Bible and theology, as well as catechesis and charitable missionary work towards the evangelization of the Church.*

*In preparation for the extraordinary Month of Mission, this year's bulletin boards will continue to focus on the Church's call for all to participate in the Evangelization of Mission. They will also focus on those who gave witness to missionary discipleship.*

*In March, the focus is on Missionaries who served in the lands of our Ancestry. March is a good time to do this since all are familiar with the celebration of St. Patrick's Day during the month of March. It is an opportune time to familiarize students with the missionary work of so many who brought faith to other lands.*

*During much of April we are in the season of Lent. At this time we can recall those missionaries who walked in the footsteps of Jesus by dying a martyr for the faith. We also recall the institution of the Eucharist at this time of year and can focus on missionaries whose faith was strengthened through devotion to the Eucharist.*

*May is a month dedicated to Mary. There are many missionaries whose devotion to Mary sustained them during times of difficulty. May is also a time when the school year is winding down and a good time to look back on all the aspects of missionary work the students have reflected on during the course of this school year.*

*Additional resources can be found at the Missionary Childhood Association web site:  
<http://phillymissions.org/our-work/youth-in-mission/>*

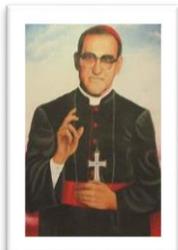
## March

### *Missionaries who served in the Lands of our Ancestry*

St. Peter Claver   St. Teresa of Calcutta   St. Patrick



### Faith of our Fathers



St. Oscar Romero

St. Paul Miki

St. Boniface

### Living Still

Teach (review) the hymn, “*Faith of our Fathers.*”

Have the students reflect on the words and on the role missionaries played in bringing the faith to others—sometimes in their own countries, but many times in other lands.

Prepare a bulletin board with images of saints who may have influenced the faith in the lands of their ancestry.

Have the students research the saints who may have done missionary work in the lands of their ancestry. Several good sources include:

<http://catholicsaints.info> and  
<https://www.catholic.org/saints/>

Have them do a project on one of the saints they have researched or have them complete the blackline master included with these notes.



St Katherine Drexel



St Elizabeth Seton

*Missionaries who  
supported Catholic  
Education in the U.S*



St Frances Cabrini



St John Neumann

### **Missionaries in the U.S.**

The feast of St. Katherine Drexel is on March 3. This is an opportune time to reflect on missionaries who had an impact on Catholic education in the United States. Prepare a bulletin board with pictures of these saints. (There are others who might be more relevant to your location.)

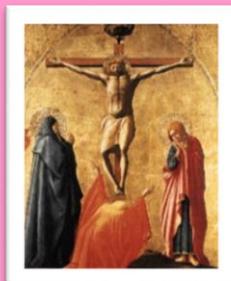
Encourage the students to read biographies of these saints and to learn more about them. Short video clips reviewing the lives of the saints can be found at:  
<https://www.catholic.org/saints/>

Obtain/create bookmarks/holy cards for these saints and have the students use them to mark the place in their books. Teach them to say a prayer to the saint as they open their books.

## April

### *Missionaries who gave their lives*

He Gave  
His Life  
for Us



Peter  
Paul  
Mark the Evangelist  
Philip the Apostle  
Andrew the Apostle  
Jude the Apostle  
Bartholomew the Apostle  
Thomas the Apostle

They gave  
their lives for  
love of Him!

What will YOU do?

The celebration of Good Friday gives cause to reflect on those, who, like Jesus, gave their lives for others and for the faith they believed in.

Have the students research martyrs and create a bulletin board timeline showing those martyrs who were missionaries. They can choose from the list of martyrs attached. So that all don't choose the . saint, you could cut the list into strips and have them randomly select two slips. They can then choose which of the two to research. Give them a copy of the template to complete and have them give an oral report to the class on their chosen saint.

Saints Who Were Martyrs

Saint	
Where this saint was from	_____
Where this saint gave service	_____
Was this saint a missionary?	_____
Tell about something that this saint did.	_____ _____ _____
What can you do to imitate the good qualities of this saint?	_____ _____ _____
Write a short prayer to this saint.	_____ _____ _____

### *Missionaries devoted to the Eucharist*



**The Eucharist Calls us to Communion  
with Christ and with the poor.**

Pray



Give

### **The Eucharist as Mission**

The Eucharist, instituted on Holy Thursday is Christ's greatest gift to the Church.. The Eucharist brings into existence a 'communion of believers.' This communion, however, does not stop around the Celebration of the Mass. Jesus encouraged believers \ not only to go out and make Him known to the world but to spring into action, to seek out the suffering and the poor. This was the goal of so many missionaries—many of whom were dedicated to the Blessed Sacrament. Dedicate a bulletin board during this season to the Eucharist. Share with the students the biographies of missionary-saints like St. Isaac Jogues (who first named Lake George the Lake of the Blessed Sacrament) encourage the students to contribute to the missionary activity of the Church through their Lenten sacrifices and increased participation in the Eucharistic Celebrations. Change the picture of the saint as you relate the biography of that saint.

## Mary, a Woman on a Mission



Mary, Mother of the Church

As she stood at the foot of the cross, Jesus asked Mary to take care of His Church. With the words He addressed to John, "Behold, your Mother," he invited us all into the family of the Church.

Mary is a woman on a mission, to bring the world to her Son, the Savior, Jesus Christ, by bringing them into the family. A bulletin board with a picture depicting Mary as mother of the Church celebrates Mary's role as the first missionary.

Many will remember the short aspirations to we were taught as children. Among these were:

**My Queen! My Mother! Remember I am your own.  
Keep me, guard me, as your property and possession.**

**Mary, Virgin Mother of God, pray to Jesus for me.**

Pray to Mary with the students often this month.

## To Our Lady

### Lovely Lady Dressed in Blue

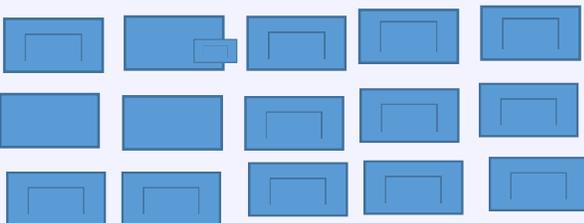
Lovely Lady dressed in blue  
Teach me how to pray!  
God was just your little boy,  
Tell me what to say!

Did you lift Him up, sometimes,  
Gently on your knee?  
Did you sing to Him the way  
Mother does to me?

Did you hold His hand at night?  
Did you ever try  
Telling stories of the world?  
Oh, And did He cry?

Do you really think He cares  
If I tell Him things  
Little things that happen? And  
Do the Angels' wings  
Make a noise? And can He hear  
Me if I speak low?  
Does He understand me now?  
Tell me... for you know.

Lovely Lady dressed in blue  
Teach me how to pray!  
God was just your little boy,  
And you know the way.



Many of us recall learning Mary Dixon Thayer's poem. "To Our Lady." Or the prayer of St. Bernard known as the Memorare. Since the beginning of Christianity, Mary has been the focus of prayers and poetry. Many of these were written by the saints and can be found in treasury of Prayers found on the following web site:

<https://www.catholicdoors.com/prayers/english/p00074.htm>

Have the students read and reflect on o of the prayers and poetry written by the saints about Mary. A few are found in this section but many more are found on the above site.

Have the students create their own poems/prayers to add to the bulletin board.



**Missionaries from Lands of Ancestry**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Country</b>	<b>Missionaries</b>	<b>What they Did</b>

## Saints who were martyrs

### According to early Christian tradition

- Saint Peter, first attested by Tertullian about AD 200<sup>[2]</sup>
- Paul the Apostle, first attested by Ignatius probably about AD 110<sup>[3]</sup>

### According to late or local Christian tradition

- Mark the Evangelist
- Philip the Apostle
- Andrew the Apostle
- Jude the Apostle
- Bartholomew the Apostle
- Thomas the Apostle

### Age of Martyrdom—2nd to 4th centuries

- Pope St Fabian and Saint Sebastian
- Polycarp of Smyrna
- Justin Martyr
- Perpetua and Felicity
- Saint Agnes
- Marcellin us and Peter
- Cyprian\
- Saint Alban
- Saint Pancras
- Saint Valentine
- Saint Petronilla
- Saint George
- Saint Lucy
- Lawrence of Rome
- Saint Cecilia
- Catherine of Alexandria

### Middle Ages—5th to 15th centuries

- Valentine and Engratia, ca. 715, Hermit martyrs of Segovia
- King Edward the Martyr, 979
- Joan of Arc, 1431
- 

### Reformation Era—16th century

- St Thomas More, 1535, executed
- St John Fisher, 1535
- Juan de Padilla, Spanish missionary to New Mexico, 1542
- St Edmund Campion, 1581

### Modern Era—17th to 21st centuries

- Martyrs of Japan, 1597-1639, (see also *Kakure Kirishitan*)
- Vietnamese Martyrs, 1625 - 1886
- Canadian Martyrs, North American Martyrs, 1642–1649
- Arthur Bell, O.F.M., 1643
- Isaac Jogues, S.J., 1646
- John de Britto, 1647-1693, born in Portugal and beheaded in India
- Francis Ferdinand de Capillas, O.P., 1648, missionary to China
- Oliver Plunkett, 1681, Archbishop of Armagh
- Andrew Dung-Lac (Vietnamese Catholic), 1839
- Korean Martyrs, 1839, 1846, 1866
- Peter Chanel, S.M., 1841
- Andrew Kim Taegon, 1846
- Martyrs of Uganda, 1885–1887
- Maria Goretti (also a rape victim), 1902
- Saints of the Cristero War 1926-1927, including:
  - Miguel Pro, S.J., 1927
  - Cristóbal Magallanes Jara, 1927
  - Mateo Correa Magallanes, 1927
- Maximilian Kolbe, O.F.M.Cap., 1941, died at Auschwitz
- Edith Stein O.C.D., 1942, died at Auschwitz
- Alberto Hurtado, S.J., 1952
- Francis Xavier Ford, M.M., 1952
- Óscar Romero, 1980, Archbishop of San Salvador
- Ita Ford, M.M., 1980
- Maura Clarke, M.M., 1980
- Dorothy Kazel, O.S.U., 1980
- Jean Donovan, 1980

# Saints Who Were Martyrs



Saint \_\_\_\_\_

Where this saint was from \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Where this saint gave service \_\_\_\_\_

Was this saint a missionary? \_\_\_\_\_

Tell about something that this saint did.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What can you do to imitate the good qualities of this saint?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

Write a short prayer to this saint.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**PRAYER OF  
ASPIRATIONS TO MARY  
(By Saint Alphonsus Liguori)**

Knowest thou, sweet Mary,  
Whereto I aspire?  
It is my hope to love thee,  
This is my desire.

I would ever be near thee,  
Queen most fair and sweet!  
Do not, do not drive me  
From my Mother's feet.

Then, O Rose most lovely!  
Let me hear from thee.  
Loving Mother! tell me  
What thou wilt of me.

More I cannot offer,  
Lo! I bring my heart;  
Lovingly I give it,  
Never from thee to part.

Lady, thou didst take it,  
It is no longer mine:  
Long since thou didst love it,  
And its love was thine!

Do not, then, forsake me,  
Mother of sweet Love,  
Till one day thou see me  
Safe in Heaven above.

**ASPIRATION TO MARY  
(By St. Alphonsus Liguori)**

O Mary, conceived without sin,  
pray for us who have recourse to thee.  
Holy Mary, pray for us!  
Immaculate Heart of Mary,  
pray for us now and at the hour of our death.  
Sweet Heart of Mary, be my salvation!  
Our Lady, Queen of Peace, pray for us!

**MARIAN PRAYER OF  
SAINT ALOYSIUS GONZAGA  
(A.D. 1568-1591)**

O Holy Mary, my mother,  
into your blessed trust and custody,  
and into the care of your mercy  
I this day, every day,  
and in the hour of my death,  
commend my soul and my body.

To you I commit all my anxieties and miseries,  
my life and the end of my life,  
that by your most holy intercession  
and by your merits  
all my actions may be directed  
and disposed  
according to your will  
and that of your Son.

Amen.

**MARIAN PRAYER OF  
SAINT ANTHONY OF PADUA  
(A.D. 1195-1231)**

Mary, our Queen,  
Holy Mother of God,  
we beg you to hear our prayer.  
Make our hearts overflow with Divine grace  
and resplendent with heavenly wisdom.  
Render them strong with your might  
and rich in virtue.  
Pour down upon us the gift of mercy  
so that we may obtain the pardon of our sins.  
Help us to live in such a way  
as to merit the glory and bliss of heaven.  
May this be granted us by your Son Jesus  
Who has exalted you above the angels,  
has crowned you as Queen,  
and has seated you with Him  
forever on his refulgent throne.

Amen.

**MARIAN PRAYER OF  
SAINT CHARLES BORROMEIO  
(A.D. 1538-1584)**

**PRAYER FOR HOLY PRIESTS**

O Holy Mother of God,  
pray for the priests  
your Son has chosen to serve the church.  
Help them by your intercession,  
to be holy,  
zealous and chaste.  
Make them models of virtue  
in the service of God's people.  
Help them to be prayerful in meditations,  
effective in preaching,  
and enthusiastic in the daily offering of  
the holy sacrifice of the Mass.  
Help them to administer the sacraments with  
joy.  
Amen.

## May Processions and Crowning an Image of Mary

One of the most popular devotions to honor our Blessed Mother has been the May Procession and May Crowning. In years past, it was quite common to experience these devotions in our Catholic culture. But in recent years, it is not as commonly practiced in all areas of Catholic life. Depending on where or when you “grew up” in the Catholic Church, or perhaps if you became a Catholic at a later age, you may not have had much exposure to these devotions.

Processions have had a place in religious or spiritual practice from the beginning of time. We see references to processions in the Old Testament, and even pagan cultures held processions to their “gods.” A procession is a way to honor someone of importance. In our Catholic tradition, we have processions associated with feast days of various saints, feasts of Our Lord (such as the Presentation of our Lord sometimes called Candlemas Day), and feasts to honor the Eucharist (such as Holy Thursday and Corpus Christi), and Palm Sunday. But perhaps the most popular of processions among Catholics is the annual procession held each May in honor of Our Blessed Mother.

In the early centuries of the Church, the faithful actually dedicated the month of August to Mary, as that month held the great feast of Mary’s Dormition (falling asleep) on August 15<sup>th</sup>. This feast is known to us now as Mary’s Assumption into heaven. Around the time of the middle ages, the month of May became more associated with devotions to Mary, until by the 18<sup>th</sup> century May was the month recognized by the Church as Mary’s month.

It is also customary to crown a statue of Mary as a way to show our recognition of her as our heavenly Queen. Jesus is our King...Mary, our Queen. The simple crowns, usually made of spring flowers with ribbons, are befitting the humility and simplicity of Mary’s queenship.

So, while we can, and do, show love and devotion to Mary every day and month of the year, we sort of ratchet it up in May! It is a beautiful month to gather spring flowers to place in front of an image or statue of Mary, sing the many beautiful hymns to her, crown her as Queen, offer her our hearts through prayers of dedication, and honor her with joyful procession!

*O Mary, we crown thee with blossoms today,*

*Queen of the Angels and*

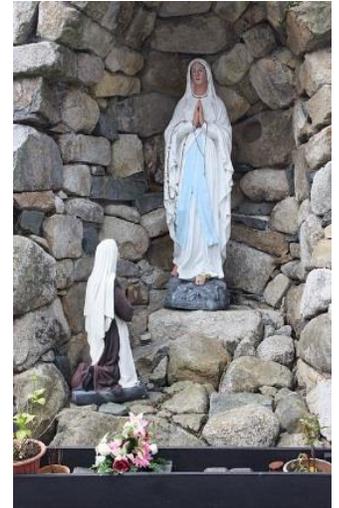
*Queen of the May!*



***Some ideas and resources for honoring Mary in your classroom, school or parish:***

- Build a “Mary Shrine” in your classroom. Move your statue of Mary to a prominent space and decorate with flowers. Perhaps children could take turns bringing a flower to place in front of Mary throughout the month of May. Use battery vigil lights. The children could offer their special intentions to Mary as they place their flowers and light the vigil.

- An idea for an art project could be to have each child make their own little “grotto” for Mary. A grotto is an outdoor shrine to Mary that usually looks like an open cave or enclosure in which a statue of Mary is placed. Each child has a shoe box (without the lid) and covers it inside and out with aluminum foil. Then place a little statue of Mary inside, or a picture of Mary pasted to cardboard or cardstock. The children could also add little flowers that they color and cut out. A battery vigil light can be added. The children can take home to have their own personal Mary grotto.



- ***Litany of Mary***, also called the ***Litany of Loreto***

This devotion offers prayer to Mary by calling on her many and varied titles. Each title of Mary conveys some aspect of our relationship to her, and she to us. You can find this prayer in many prayer books, also by “googling” the Litany of Mary.

You could pray this litany with your students, then choose some of the titles and design a banner or poster of each. These could be used to carry in a procession in your classroom or school/parish.

- Read the Annunciation account found in the Gospel of Luke 1:26-38. Discuss what it meant for Mary to say “yes” to what God asked of her. Cut out paper flowers with the word **YES** in the middle. Have children write on each petal a way that they can say YES to God as Mary did. Place the flowers in front of your Mary shrine.



- Read the story “*The Juggler of Our Lady*” by Anatole France. Have a discussion with your students about what gifts or talents they can offer to Mary.

- Pope Francis has introduced the world to the devotion to ***Mary, Untier of Knots***. At the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia in 2015, a poignant shrine was set up outside the Cathedral where visitors wrote their special intentions and prayer requests to Mary on a strip of cloth and tied it to the shrine. You can find more information and prayers to this particular devotion to Mary in books and images that are available on-line. In your classroom, you could have children write their prayer intentions on ribbon and tie to your classroom shrine during the days of May.



- Consult the “*Order of Crowning an Image of the Blessed Virgin Mary*” for an official liturgical celebration. A copy of this may be in your parish church sacristy. You can also purchase copies on-line.
- Check your Religion Text on-line support for resources on Mary. Some sites that offer resources: [www.loyolapress.com](http://www.loyolapress.com) -> Catholic Resources -> type *Mary activities* in the search box; [www.sadlier.com/religion](http://www.sadlier.com/religion) -> Sadlier Resources -> Catechist Café -> type *Mary activities* in search box
- Craft ideas can be found on *Pinterest* or *Catholic Icing*
- Some hymns that have traditionally been sung with May Processions:

<i>Immaculate Mary</i>	<i>Hail Mary, Gentle Woman</i>
<i>Hail, Holy Queen</i>	<i>Sing of Mary</i>
<i>Mary’s Song</i>	<i>Holy Mary, Now We Crown You</i>

- For your own self-education on all things Mary, there is a treasure trove of information at the University of Dayton’s *International Marian Research Institute* found at <https://udayton.edu/imri> -> **All About Mary**

*There are hundreds and hundreds of hymns, prayers, books and devotions to Our Blessed Mother. The Catholic Church has a long tradition of honoring her, so plan to be a part of this tradition during Mary's month of May!*



*Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us!*

# CATHOLIC TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

## Catholic Kids Bulletin

<http://www.catholickidsbulletin.com>

The *Catholic Kids Bulletin* website is a useful tool for all Catholics, particularly for teachers and parents. It contains articles on contemporary topics that adults will find helpful in teaching young people how to live out the Catholic faith in their daily life.

## Vocation network

<https://vocationnetwork.org/en/>

The *Vocations Network* website is a marvelous tool for personal and ministerial use. The site is sponsored by the National Religious Vocations Conference and includes a wide variety of resources for young people discerning a vocation. The materials presented on this site can also be useful for teachers and students preparing lessons and research projects about religious vocations.

## Sophia Institute

<https://sophiainstituteforteachers.org>

The *Sophia Institute for Teachers* website was created by Catholic teachers. The website offers lesson plans and materials that are easy to find with the site's search tool. Some materials are free and others require purchase.

## Apps for Ipad, Iphone, Ipod

### Decision Point App

The *Decision Point* app is produced by Dynamic Catholic and written by Matthew Kelly. It is a companion to the *Decision* Confirmation program used by many parishes. The app contains the entire program: videos, student workbook, and Leader Guide, in a digital format that young people will find engaging.



### Word on Fire Digital App

The *Word on Fire Digital* app is a digital library of the materials provided by Word on Fire Media Ministry founded by Bishop Robert Barron, Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles, CA. To access the videos in the digital library, one must subscribe monthly.



### Catholify App

The *Catholify* app is a social media app that connects the user to other Catholics in their area. It provides updated Mass times, virtual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, a customizable Catholic news feed and prayer intentions. In addition, it provides access to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Bible and the rosary.



### Shared Wisdom

*Two heads are better than one.* Please submit your favorite technology resources for Catholic religious education at [s.carment@yahoo.com](mailto:s.carment@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 3 of 6: Love for Scripture

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
- Participation in Mass
- Sunday Gospel “Take-Aways”

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

Saint Paul wrote to Timothy: “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, equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3: 16-17). Scripture is surely also a gateway to prayer.

God can speak to us in varied ways . . . through an overheard remark, a word or lyric in a song, a movie scene, nature, even while reading a mystery novel. A sure source of God’s voice is Sacred Scripture!

Accept the Scripture as God’s voice to you and respond, engage it, enter into conversation. For instance, pray with this verse from the prophet Jeremiah:

*“I know well the plans I have for you – plans for your welfare – not for your woe! Plans for a future full of hope.”* (Jeremiah 29: 11-14)

Parents exercise their baptismal role of prophet when they lead their children to know and love Scripture. Consider the following suggestions as “starter ideas.”

### 1. Collect and display favorite Scripture quotes like:

- “When you seek Me with all your heart you will find Me within you and it will change your lot” (Jeremiah 29: 11-14)
- “By waiting and calm you shall be saved. In quiet and in trust your strength lies.” (Isaiah 30: 15b)
- “Remember not the events of the past, the things of long ago consider not; see, I am doing something new!” (Isaiah 43: 18)
- “Every day is a feast day to a contented heart.” (Proverbs 15: 15)
- “Do not be afraid – I will save you. I have called you by name – you are mine. (Isaiah 43:1) . . . I will hold you in the palm of my hand (Isaiah 41:13).

2. **Father’s Love Letter** is a compilation of paraphrased Bible verses presented in the form of a letter from God. Obtain a free copy @ [www.FathersLoveLetter.com](http://www.FathersLoveLetter.com). Several times during a month read it slowly and reflectively to your child, perhaps as he/she is snuggled in bed.

3. From the Sunday Gospel **extract a “one-liner”** that has meaning for you. Memorize it and use it during the week in conversation with Jesus and with others.



# 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 3 de 6: Amor por la Sagrada Escritura

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
- Material Dominical para llevar a casa

San Pablo le escribió a Timoteo: "Toda la escritura está inspirada por Dios y es útil para enseñar, para corregir y para instruir en justicia, para que todos los que pertenecen a Dios puedan ser competentes, preparados para toda buena obra" (2 Timoteo 3: 16-17). La Escritura es seguramente también una puerta de entrada a la oración.

Dios puede hablarnos de diversas maneras. . . a través de una observación por casualidad, una palabra o letra de una canción, escena de una película, naturaleza, incluso mientras lees una novela de misterio. ¡Una fuente segura de la voz de Dios es la Sagrada Escritura!

Acepte las Escrituras como la voz de Dios para usted y responda, participe, ingrese en conversación. Por ejemplo, rece con este verso del profeta Jeremías:

*"Conozco bien los planes que tengo para ti: planes para tu bienestar y no para tu mal! Planes para un futuro lleno de esperanza."* (Jeremías 29: 11-14)

Los padres ejercen su función bautismal de profeta cuando guían a sus hijos a conocer y amar las Escrituras. Considere las siguientes sugerencias como "ideas iniciales."

#### 1. Reúna y muestre citas de las Escrituras favoritas como:

- "Cuando me busques con todo tu corazón me encontrarás dentro de ti y cambiará tu suerte." (Jeremías 29: 11-14)
- "En la conversión y en el reposo serás salvado; en la quietud y en la confianza estará tu fortaleza." (Isaías 30: 15)
- "No se acuerden de las cosas pasadas, ni traigas a la memoria las cosas antiguas. He aquí que yo hago cosas nuevas; pronto saldrán a la luz!" (Isaías 43:18)
- "Cada día es un día de fiesta para un corazón contento." (Proverbios 15: 15)
- "No tengas miedo, te salvaré. Te he llamado por nombre, eres mío. (Isaías 43: 1) . . . Porque yo soy el Señor, tu Dios, quien sostiene tu mano derecha; yo soy quien te dice: No temas, yo te ayudaré." (Isaías 41:13).

#### 2. Carta de Amor de Dios Padre

Descubrirá que la recopilación de versículos de la Biblia no son más que una forma de carta de Dios para todos nosotros. Obtenga una copia gratis @ [www.FathersLoveLetter.com](http://www.FathersLoveLetter.com). Sugerimos pueda leerla y reflexionar acerca de ella junto a sus hijos, por ejemplo antes de que se duerman.

3. Del evangelio del Domingo en misa, **podría extraer alguna idea** que tenga un especial significado para usted, acúñela y vuelva a ella en oración.