



JANUARY 2016

TO TEACH AS JESUS DID

Sacred Space

O holy Magi, you were living in continual expectation of the rising of the Star of Jacob, which would announce the birth of the true Son of justice, obtain for us an increase of faith and charity, and the grace to live in continual hope of beholding one day the light of heavenly glory and eternal joy.

O holy Magi, who, entering full of faith into the stable of Bethlehem, prostrated yourselves on the earth, to adore the new-born King of the Jews, though He was surrounded only by signs of poverty and weakness, obtain from the Lord for us a lively faith in the real presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, the true spirit of poverty, and a Christ like charity for the poor and suffering.

<http://www.catholicdoors.com/prayers/novenas/p00073.htm>

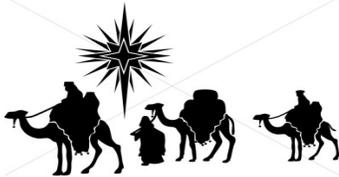


Ideas for Celebrating Epiphany

Spend sometime over the holiday break to get ready for Epiphany. For lots of ideas including crafts, prayer and Epiphany blessings, go to:

<http://www.catholicicing.com/category/epiphany/> or try:

<https://www.pinterest.com/explore/epiphany-crafts/>



From the Resource Center

Our Mother of Perpetual Help icons and images seem to show up continuously if you keep your eyes open! June 27, 2016, marks the 150th Anniversary of Pope Pius IX entrusting the Icon of Our Mother of Perpetual Help to the Redemptorists, with the mission to “make her known.” This Jubilee Year of the icon, the year leading up to June 27, 2016, would be a great time to learn the fascinating history and details of the miraculous icon (including theft of the image, an unheeded deathbed plea by the thief to return the image, an inspirational message from the Blessed Mother to return the image, a church destroyed, and an old priest’s devotion that results in providential outcomes). The ERC has several devotional and informational books available. You can also learn more at the following sites: The story of the icon’s history: <http://www.maryprayforus.org/about-us/icon-story/>

Interactive Icon to highlight the symbolism contained within the miraculous image:

<http://www.maryprayforus.org/icon.html>

Perpetual Help Devotional videos:

<http://www.maryprayforus.org/video.html>



A Mid Year Tune-Up: How to Create a Culture of Holiness within your Classroom

We teachers and catechists sometimes tend to shun the word “holiness” and may believe that only saints and people of extreme faith are really holy. Or we may even believe that holiness doesn’t have much to do with teaching religion. Holiness is a lifestyle, and yes, we can teach this to our students. We can show it to them by how we live and we can help them build this holiness lifestyle into their own lives. Here’s how to get started:

1. Prayer Before you even start teaching, while you’re preparing your notes for class, let your heart move toward Christ. Be quiet for a moment, and just let yourself be connected to the heart of Jesus. Become the “earthen vessel” through which he will touch your students with love. Open yourself to following the pathway that will be set before you with your students. The gestures, words, and sacred moments needed for your teaching will all be given to you.

2. Let your students tell their stories. By glancing backward like that, we can more plainly see the hand of God working. The call to holiness is embedded in a hundred moments of daily life when we have the chance to choose either self-giving love or selfishness. What are those moments and how do they connect to the doctrine, tradition, custom, or church teaching that is in your lesson? **3. Make faith real.** It is easy to get the impression that Christian or Catholic faith exists up in the sky, beyond us somehow, and all we do is stand here and look up at it. But in fact, faith lives in the very fabric of everyday life. It’s part of how we go through each day. Help your students make this connection. Affirm the gifts and contributions of your learners. Help them see that they are created and good.

4. Be a role model. Kids know a phony when they see one. What you teach them has to be evident in your own life. Your love for them is first of course, but your kindness, mercy, and compassion on all of creation, on all people of the earth, and on the poor and vulnerable –that’s what they will see. Do you notice how Pope Francis treats others? He withholds judgment, speaks with kindness, laughs and smiles easily, and sees himself as a humble pilgrim on the journey of faith. Let that be your example. **5. Help your students become aware that being part of the parish is important.** Parish life is designed to provide a drumbeat and set a cadence in our lives. Help your students hear this drumbeat. How is the drumbeat sounded? It is sounded at weekly and Sunday Mass. It’s vital. In it, the drumbeat is sounded through the readings, singing, praying, communion, and dismissal.

http://www.catholicfamilyfaith.org/uploads/1/3/3/1/13315538/whws118_holiness_in_the_classroom.pdf

FOR YOUR ENRICHMENT

The second corporal works of mercy is to give drink to the thirsty. These days we do not meet many thirsty people by the roadside, as the early Christians did. Supporting “clean water” policies to ensure that there will be clean water for future generations to drink is one way to give drink to the thirsty in our context. Using environmentally friendly laundry detergents & trying to conserve fresh water (easy on the lawn!) are other things we can do. Here is another way. In some countries, and in some states in the U.S., it is now legal to stop providing food and water to a patient who is terminally ill, or in a seemingly irreversible comatose or vegetative state. This is a serious moral evil that the Church has repeatedly condemned. It is one thing to cease painful or expensive medical *treatment* that has little chance of significantly improving a patient's condition. But food and water does not constitute medical “treatment”: It is basic human *care*, providing essentials that we all need, at every stage of life. A person's life has certainly not reached its natural end, its natural time to die, in God's plan, if that person can still survive with the basic care of adequate food and water. <http://www.thedivinemercy.org/news/How-Can-We-Practice-the-Corporal-Works-of-Mercy-Today-3153> Go to <https://www.dbqarch.org/> and click on Year of Mercy Resources for more ideas about giving drink to the thirsty.

St. John Bosco – January 31

John Bosco was born in Turin, Italy on August 16, 1815. His parents were poor farmers. When John was 2, his father died. His mother struggled to keep the family together. John worked as hard as he could to help his mother. He was intelligent and full of life.



John started to think about becoming a priest. A holy priest, St. Joseph Cafasso, helped him enter the seminary. As a priest, Don Bosco, which means Father Bosco, began his great ministry. He gathered together homeless boys to teach

them trades so they would not have to steal or get into trouble. By 1850, there were 150 boys living at his home for boys. His mother was the housekeeper. Don Bosco's boys proved that the boys would turn out well. One of them became a saint, St. Domonic Savio. Don Bosco started his own order of priests & brothers called the Salesians, after St. Frances de Sales. Don Bosco died on January 31, 1888. The entire city of Turin lined the streets to pay him tribute. His funeral became a joyous proclamation of thanksgiving to God for the life of this wonderful man. A young parish priest who had once met Don Bosco later became Pope Pius XI. He had the joy of declaring Don Bosco a saint in 1934. We can learn from Don Bosco what an impact for good one person can make. Isn't it a wonderful thing to reach out cheerfully to help others? www.wjpb.com/jan.html



