

# To Teach As Jesus Did

November 2017

## **SACRED SPACE: Thanksgiving**

Thanksgiving Day is a time to thank God for all the gifts He has bestowed upon each of us. We truly are abundantly blessed. And so we pray...

### **A Prayer of Thanksgiving and Gratitude**

Father in Heaven, Creator of all,  
and source of all goodness and love,  
Please look kindly upon us  
and receive our heartfelt gratitude  
in this time of giving thanks.

Thank you for all the graces and blessings  
You have bestowed upon us:  
our faith and religious heritage,  
our food and shelter, our health,  
the love we have for one another,  
our family and friends.

Dear God,  
In your infinite generosity,  
please grant us continued graces  
and blessings throughout the coming year.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

*Gretchen Filz*



## **SCRIPTURE: Teaching As Jesus Did**

Scripture reminds us why we should give thanks and how to express our gratitude. During the holidays, we can become overwhelmed with many activities and tasks, and we sometimes forget *why* we should be celebrating. Take time in the busyness of the season to pause and reflect on a Bible verse as you meditate on all the ways God has blessed you! Then share the Scriptures with your family, friends, or class to help bring peace and joy to all!

Say a thanksgiving prayer together to inspire you and your family to talk about your blessings. Consider the following Bible verse during this season of gratitude:

*"You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God." (2 Corinthians 9:11 NIV)*

## **SAINT OF THE MONTH: St. Elizabeth of Hungary**

St. Elizabeth was born on July 7, 1207, to Hungarian King Andrew II and Gertrude of Merania. While Elizabeth was very young, her father arranged for her to be married to a German nobleman, Ludwig IV of Thuringia. Because of this plan, Elizabeth was sent away at the age of four for education in the royal court of Thuringia. Elizabeth was only six years old when her mother was murdered. This event changed Elizabeth's perspective on life and death, and she worked and prayed diligently for peace. At the age of fourteen, she was formally married to Ludwig, and they had three children. One of Elizabeth's daughters entered religious life. Elizabeth lived her life in prayer and service to the poor, modeling her actions on the mission of St. Francis of Assisi. She set aside time each day to take bread to the poor people in her land. After Ludwig's death, Elizabeth vowed never to marry again, and lived a celibate life. She died at the age of 24. St. Elizabeth is often depicted with a basket of bread to show her devotion for the poor and hungry.

[http://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint\\_id=45](http://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=45)

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## **SERVICE PROJECT: All Souls Day, November 2**

The Catholic Church celebrates All Souls' Day every year on November 2 – a day to remember, honor and pray for those who have died. Unlike All Saints Day, this day is dedicated to the souls of those who have died in God's grace and friendship, and have not yet reached heaven. The Church encourages us to pray, especially during the month of November, for these souls. Find ways for your parish, school, and community to focus on prayer for all the faithful departed.

- Provide a Book of the Faithful Departed and invite all to include the names of their deceased loved ones so the community can lift them up in prayer.
- Leave an empty chair at the Thanksgiving dinner table in honor of departed family members.
- Join together in a "Service of Light" where family members can light a candle in memory of loved ones.

We pray: "Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls, and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen."

<https://www.northtexascatholic.org/features-article?r=WXEKPLWQH2>

## **ENGAGING TEENS: Relationship with Christ**

Studies show that today's teens are perpetually plugged into technology, they pride themselves on being socially conscious, and they are currently the least religious generation in American history. Does your parish or school have effective youth ministry? How do you encourage teens to engage in the faith? According to Catholic youth ministers from around the country, effective Catholic youth ministry requires four key components: Personal, Sacramental, Formative, and Challenging. This month, we begin our focus on the Personal component:

- *Call teens to a personal relationship with Christ, helping them to understand the Catholic faith as an intimate relationship with Christ and his Church, and not merely a list of rules to be followed.*

This can be a challenge, since it is difficult to call teens to a relationship with Christ when they don't know what a relationship is. Meet teens where they are, whether they come from a happy home or a broken home, whether they have many friends or are lonely. Help them to realize that Christ is always present, in every circumstance, and in every heart. Help them to build a relationship with Christ that draws them closer to his love. This is the first step.

<https://www.osv.com/OSVNewsweekly/Article/TabId/535/ArtMID/13567/ArticleID/14409/Plugging-teens-into-the-faith-A-how-to-guide.aspx>



## **RESOURCE CENTER SPOTLIGHT: National Vocation Awareness Week**

Check out the new Discovery Mission Catholic Vocation Bible School kit from Vianney Vocations. This vOcation bible school kit can be used any time of year, not just for summer vAcation bible school programs. Primary and intermediate grade students are introduced to the vocations of marriage, priesthood, religious sister, and religious brother with stations set up for art, prayer, a game, a snack, role play, and more. Whether you use all the elements or choose the ones that best fit your schedule, this introduction to vocations will surely be fun for everyone! Ask for KA #04735. Contact the ERC for this and other vocation related resources.



What can you do as a teacher, faith formation leader, or catechist, to encourage our young people in considering vocations to the priesthood and religious life?

## **FOR YOUR FORMATION: Prayer**

Many who minister in the Church focus so diligently on teaching others that they sometimes lose sight of their own discipleship as followers of Christ. As disciples, we must take time to sit at the feet of Jesus to find spiritual refreshment and renewal. One way catechists, teachers, parents and small group leaders can renew their spirit is to pray regularly:

- Attend daily Mass
- Engage in a prayerful daily examen
- Read or meditate on Scripture
- Pray the rosary, recite traditional prayers, or compose spontaneous ones.
- Participate in Eucharistic Adoration or Liturgy of the Hours
- Sing or listen to religious music

Just a few minutes a day can keep the lines of communication open between you and the One you serve.

<https://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/parish-ministry/advancing-ministry-skills/keeping-yourself-spiritually-refreshed-as-catechist>

## **LOOKING AHEAD: Anticipating Advent**

It's seems that, right around the time the Halloween candy has lost its luster, the Christmas carols are being heard – often six weeks before the holiday! Something gets lost along the way when we don't take time to observe the Advent time of waiting and anticipation of the birth of Christ. Many of us put hours into planning our summer vacations, or our weekend tailgating getaways to football games. This year, let's all plan ahead to prepare our hearts, minds and environment for Jesus' coming.

- Settle into the quietness of the season by getting the bulk of your shopping done before Advent begins.
- Set up an Advent wreath in the home, and light the appropriate candles each Sunday evening.
- Limit snacks and sweet treats to Sundays or feast days during Advent.
- Cut up pieces of yellow yarn for kids to line baby Jesus' manger with kind deeds and sacrifices.

Think of other practical and tangible ways to communicate the importance of waiting during this holy season.



## **TEACHABLE MOMENTS: November 9 Feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica**

This feast marks the anniversary of the dedication of the cathedral Church of Rome, on land owned by the Laterani family, by Pope Sylvester I on November 9, 324. Honored as the episcopal seat of the pope as bishop of Rome, the Lateran Basilica is the mother and head of all churches of Rome and the world. It was given the title the Basilica of the Savior, but later was dedicated to John the Baptist, and is now known as St. John Lateran Basilica.

<https://www.ewtn.com/saintsHoly/saints/D/dedicationofstjohnlateranbasilicainrome.asp>