



TO TEACH AS JESUS DID

FEBRUARY 2017

Sacred Space

Dearest Heavenly Father,

I want to thank you for the precious gift of love you have given to the world and to me. Thank you for blessing me every day with this love and the power and strength that I get from You. Without your love for me I can't be. I can't function. I can't even breathe because I NEED your love to sustain me. It's like food and medicine for my soul Lord.

Please continue to let me feel your comforting love in my life and Lord I give myself over to you to perfect in me this gift of love that I may be able to express it and share it with others. Lord, I have not always been good at this so forgive me. Some people are harder to love than others, but I want to be like your Son Jesus so please continue the work you are doing in my heart so my heart will be like yours. In Jesus name I pray.

Father I love you so much!

<http://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=2973>



Saint of the Month: Fra Angelico

Fra Angelico was an Italian painter of the early Renaissance who combined the life of a devout friar with that of an accomplished painter. He was called Angelico (Italian for "angelic") and Beato (Italian for "blessed") because the paintings he did were of calm, religious subjects and because of his extraordinary personal piety. Originally named Guido di Pietro, Angelico was born in Vicchio, Tuscany. He entered a Dominican convent in Fiesole in 1418 and about 1425 became a friar using the name Giovanni da Fiesole. Among his works from this period are two of the CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN (San Marco and Louvre, Paris) and THE DEPOSITION and THE LAST JUDGMENT (San Marco). In 1447, with his pupil Benozzo Gozzoli, he painted frescoes for the chapel of Pope Nicholas in the Vatican; they are SCENES FROM THE LIVES OF SAINTS STEPHEN AND LAWRENCE (1447-1449). He died in the Dominican convent in Rome on March 18, 1455. Angelico's representation of devout facial expressions and his use of color to heighten emotion are particularly effective. His skill in creating monumental figures, representing motion, and suggesting deep space through the use of linear perspective, especially in the Roman frescoes, mark him as one of the foremost painters of the Renaissance.



http://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=478

Painting by Fra Angelico

Valentine Spiritual Bouquets

How about teaching younger grades about the beauty of a spiritual bouquet with a fun craft? Make these simple flowers using lollipops with paper heart blossoms and leaves. Kids can write simple messages on the leaves or Scripture quotes and then give a small bouquet to a loved one, shut-in or some one who is ill. Remind students that with each message comes a thoughtful prayer. Image from

<http://artsymomma.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/lollipop-flowers-valentines-day-craft-photo-260-FF0201VALENA14.jpg>



For Your Formation

Ordinary Time is also a beautiful time on the Church calendar. You may look at ordinary time as down time but it can be an opportunity for wonderful personal growth. Check out this article from OSV that details six exceptional ways to live ordinary time: create a novena, keep a gratitude journal, focus on God's abundance, put your faith in action, read a book with moral value and keep the Sabbath.

<https://www.osv.com/MyFaith/Vocation/Article/TabId/691/ArtMID/13734/ArticleID/11449/Ordinary-Time-Growing-in-Faith-Throughout-the-Year.aspx>

**From the Education Resource Center (ERC):
Great ideas for winter classes!!!!!!!!!!!!**

Noticing restlessness in your faith formation sessions????

It might be time to introduce a little more active learning in your classroom. Consider using skits, fingerplays, and movement to share stories and teach the faith. The Education Resource Center has a variety of books for all grade levels. See below, or contact the ERC (dbqcmcd1@dbqarch.org or 563-556-2580 X214) for more options and further assistance.



BK #268095	Skits From Scripture: Ten Plays From The New Testament
BK #200042	Wiggly Giggly Bible Stories About Jesus
BK #268394	Goof-Proof Skits For Youth Ministry - Volume Two
BK #269321	Ready-To-Go Scripture Skits (That Teach Serious Stuff): The Sequel
BK #269366	Humongous Book Of Bible Skits For Children's Ministry, The
BK #269558	Favorite Action Bible Verses: More Of God's Word In Finger Plays
BK #269588	Twelve Fun And Easy Plays For Middle Schoolers
BK #269659	Thirty New Testament Quick Skits For Kids
BK #201112	Action Rhyme Book, An: Stand Up And Walk With Jesus
BK #269585	Old Testament Readers Theater: Read-Along Scripts For Young Christians
BK #268113	Echo Stories For Children: Celebrating Saints And Seasons In Word And Action
BK #269345	Gospel Theater For The Community: Ninety-Two Plays For Education And Worship
BK #270366	Spotlight On Saints! A Year Of Funny Readers Theater For Today's Catholic Kid

Engaging Families in Catechesis

Best Practices in Family Faith Formation

As church leaders and educators, we all recognize that the family is the first community of faith and the most powerful influence on the faith of children and teenagers. We also recognize that parents are the first educators of their children, providing the foundation for a spiritual and religious life. We are aware of the tremendous changes family life has undergone in the past forty years, and the present day diversity in family forms and structures. We know that families are stretched and stressed in new and challenging ways, putting new demands on family life. Since families are house bound during the winter months, send these ideas home in a newsletter or have your catechists do so. Consider this a mid-winter reminder that parents are the primary catechists of their children. • Talk about religious faith; • Have family devotions, prayer, or Bible reading at home; • Plan and implement family projects to help other people. John Roberto of Lifelong Faith Associates suggests that the following ideas will strengthen catechesis in the home, which in turn has an effect on catechetical efforts in the parish and Catholic school. John cites these simple ideas for domestic spirituality.

- Praying: bedtime rituals and prayer, grace before meals;
- Having family conversations;
- Displaying sacred objects and religious images, especially the Bible;
- Celebrating holidays;
- Providing moral instruction;
- Engaging in family devotions and reading the Bible.

http://www.faithformationlearningexchange.net/uploads/5/2/4/6/5246709/best_practices_in_family_faith_formation.pdf

Ash Wednesday is March 1

Preparing Your Classroom for Lent:

- Figure out what more you can do as a catechist or teacher. (Even though “giving something up” for Lent is traditional, you can also do *extra* offerings too, such as saying extra prayers, going to Adoration, or attending daily Mass.)
- Think “Prayer, Fasting, Almsgiving”... how are we going to do more of these things during this season? Can you come up with a class project for Lent?
- Lenten countdown calendar of some kind. Try downloading this printable calendar. <http://www.catholicicing.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/printable-lent-calendar-for-kids.pdf>
- Ash Wednesday plans (Ash Wednesday is a great day to attend Mass as a family whether it is a school mass or later in the day mass for parish Faith Formation families)
- Almsgiving (You could make an offering box for Lent with your kids)
- Go to Confession with your class if possible. Most schools and FF Programs offer Reconciliation during Lent.
- Stations of the cross activities. Go online to find many ways to pray the stations of the cross.
- Pray the Rosary (Especially the sorrowful mysteries during Lent)
- Put out “decorations” for Lent, such as putting a crucifix or crown of thorns in a central location in your home or classroom. Holy Week/Easter plans can hold their horses. We need to observe Lent first.

<http://www.catholicicing.com/lent-preparation-for-children-are-you/>