

To Teach As Jesus Did

March 2018

SACRED SPACE: **Lenten Meal Blessing**



We bless you, Lord, and we praise you,
for you have given us this meal to share,
provided by the earth and prepared by human hands.

Help us remember those who cannot eat
because of poverty or sickness.

Let the brief hunger we feel this Lent
make us hunger even more for justice.
May this meal strengthen us to do your will.
Blessed be God for ever.

Diana Macalintal, "Lenten Meal Blessing," in *The Work of Your Hands: Prayers for Ordinary and Extraordinary Moments of Grace* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014), Featured in the February 2018 issue of *Give Us This Day*.



HONORING ST. JOSEPH: **Teaching As Jesus Did**

Everything we know about the husband of Mary and the foster father of Jesus comes from Scripture. We know Joseph was a carpenter, a hard-working, compassionate and caring man. Despite his humble work and means, Joseph came from a royal lineage, as a descendant from David, the greatest king of Israel. He cared for Mary, taking her as his wife and fleeing with his family to a strange country when they were in danger. He trusted God, and he loved Jesus as his own son. Joseph is the patron saint of the Universal Church, families, fathers, the dying, expectant mothers, travelers, immigrants, house seller and buyers, craftsmen, engineers, and working people in general. There is much we still wish we could know about Joseph. But Scripture has left us with the most important knowledge: who he was --- "a righteous man" (Matt 1:18).

http://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=4

HIGHLIGHTING YOUTH MINISTRY CURRICULUM:

Who is Jesus Christ? – Objective #3

For those catechists following the Youth Ministry Curriculum offered by the Archdiocese of Dubuque, Theme #2, "Who is Jesus Christ?" began in January, 2018. This theme focuses on Jesus, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity. In learning about who Jesus is – "the ultimate revelation of a personal, loving God who invites us to live a life of peace and joy in relationship with God and the Church" – the participants will also learn who He calls them to be. The third objective listed in this curriculum invites you to "increase familiarity with the persons of the Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) and Their attributes. How might you introduce the Holy Trinity to youth?"

For more information, see: <https://www.dbqarch.org/offices/adolescent-faith-formation/new-high-school-religious-education-curriculum/>

FOR YOUR FORMATION: **Lenten Online Retreat**



This online retreat from Creighton University is perfect for busy people who wish to carry on a brief conversation with the Lord each day. The purpose of the retreat is to bring Lenten reflections into the day and to let them interact with the real things of the day – and most of all, to let them become a growing part of your relationship with the Lord. Prayerfully observe eight weeks of retreat from Ash Wednesday Week through the Second Week of Easter. The retreat can be found here: <http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Lent/LentOnlineRetreat/>

SAINT OF THE MONTH:

St. Patrick – March 17

St. Patrick's Day is a wonderful opportunity to learn about our Catholic faith. St. Patrick was held as a slave in Ireland for 6 years, and upon gaining he freedom he returned to Ireland, holding no grudge. St. Patrick is responsible for the conversion of countless numbers of people.

- Focus on the idea of forgiveness and letting go of grudges.
- Focus on our own call to conversion.
- Invite young people to learn the prayer Breastplate of St. Patrick.
- Pray for Catholic missionaries.
- Use a 3-leaf clover to explain the Mystery of the Trinity: Three Persons in One God.
- Create a Celtic Cross.

For more St. Patrick's Day activities, see:

<https://catechistsjourney.loyolapress.com/2009/03/4040-lenten-activities-a-spiritual-st-patricks-day-activity/>

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TEACHABLE SCRIPTURE MOMENTS:

Holy Thursday – Washing the Feet of Others

Read John 13:3-15 – Jesus Washes the Feet of His Disciples

The main purpose of foot-washing is caring for others, cleansing us in a sin-filled world, and to emulate Jesus in everything we do. As long as there are genuine emotions behind the act, the service to others will bring feelings of humility and empathy. It is a beneficial act for both parties. Here are some ways we can symbolically wash the feet of those to whom we want to be of service:

- Engage in a random act of kindness
- Leave flowers on a friend's doorstep
- Call someone just to check in on how they are doing
- Share words of love and appreciation
- Make amends for something hurtful you have done
- Stand up for those who are unable to do so for themselves
- Support someone, even if you disagree with their choices
- Lend a listening ear to someone going through tough times
- Invite a new person to your church, and attend Mass with them
- Use your God-given gifts in new ways



Read more at: <http://www.beliefnet.com/faiths/christianity/articles/the-real-meaning-of-foot-washing-for-christians.aspx#3r6DmuOIkPJ6MLik.99>

LOOKING AHEAD:

Upcoming Opportunities for Teaching the Faith

- March 19 – Solemnity of St. Joseph, Husband of Mary
- March 29-31 – Sacred Triduum and April 1 – Easter Sunday
- April 9 – Annunciation of the Lord
- First Holy Communion, First Reconciliation, and Confirmation
- Start planning your "summer" programming for youth, young adults, adults, and families

ENGAGING TEENS:

The Personal Component of Youth Ministry

This month, we continue our focus on the *Personal* component of Catholic youth ministry:

Effective Catholic youth ministry reaches out to teens as individuals, issuing personal invitation to participate in events, and not just relying on invitations through social media.

How are you reaching out to teens in a personal, inviting way?

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



CREATIVE IDEAS:

Stations of the Cross Coloring Pages

Check out these coloring pages from *Catholic Playground* to help kids learn how to pray the Stations of the Cross:

<http://www.catholicplayground.com/tenth-station-coloring-page/>

SUPPORTING PERSONS WITH DIVERSE ABILITIES:

March is Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Each year, March is set aside as Disability Awareness Month. The US Conference of Catholic Bishops' Declaration in 1978 stated, "There can be no separate Church for persons with disabilities. We are one flock that serves a single shepherd." Including persons with disabilities in all aspects of parish life continues to be our guiding principle. Here in the Archdiocese of Dubuque, the Office of Disability Inclusion provides valuable education, resources, retreat opportunities, and support to help parishes and Catholic schools live out this goal. For more information, contact Mindy Hart, Director of the Office of Disability Inclusion at dbqcpwd@dbqarch.org.

R-Word: Spread the Word to End the Word

The R-word is the word 'retard(ed)'. This word hurts because it is exclusive. It's offensive. It's derogatory. Check out this website to help raise awareness about the hurtfulness of the R-word by pledging and sharing your stories. Eliminating the R-word is a starting point toward creating more accepting attitudes and communities for all people. Language affects attitudes and attitudes affect actions. Pledge today to use respectful, people-first language.

<https://www.r-word.org/>

ENGAGING PARENTS AND FAMILIES:

Lenten Activities for Catholic Families

Rather than committing to one Lenten sacrifice, consider making a family list of activities to observe the holiness of this season in preparation for Easter. Here are a few ideas:

- Give up television, the internet, or other electronic devices for a day.
- Pray for someone who has been unkind to you or a family member.
- Visit an elderly friend or relative who doesn't get many visitors.
- Volunteer at a food pantry or homeless shelter.
- Pray for people in your parish's RCIA program as they prepare for the Easter sacraments.
- Ask for forgiveness from one another.
- Pray the rosary or the Stations of the Cross together.
- Do something to help the Earth.
- Read together from the Bible each evening.
- Observe Holy Thursday with a foot washing with family members.
- Attend the Holy Week Masses.



For additional ideas, see:

<https://www.reallifeathome.com/40-lenten-activities-for-catholic-families/>

DISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM:

Joe Paprocki's Ten Tips for Maintaining Discipline

As a catechist, you will inevitably encounter discipline problems at some point, especially in working with children and adolescents. Discipline is a necessary part of faith formation. Each Lent, we practice the disciplines of prayer, fasting and giving alms. The idea is that, in order to be a *disciple* of Jesus, one needs *discipline*. When you maintain discipline in your learning environment, you are acting in the image of God – in whose name you teach. In his "Ten Tips for Maintaining Discipline," Joe Paprocki suggests helpful ideas for providing a positive learning environment while avoiding the distractions a lack of discipline can bring to the classroom.

Tip #2: Identify the Improper Behavior

Once you have clearly identified discipline problems that are most troublesome, develop a plan for addressing them. Consider what causes improper behavior: boredom, immaturity, attention-seeking, hostility toward those present, personality clashes, emotional problems, family situations, guilt, inner conflict, or other problems that might affect a child or adolescent's actions. (Watch for more tips in upcoming issues!)

From *The Catechist's Toolbox* by Joe Paprocki © 2007, p. 73.

EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTER SPOTLIGHT:

The traditional Lenten practice of praying the Stations of the Cross is a great way to not only *teach* the story of the suffering and death of Jesus, but to also *enter into* and *participate in* the suffering of Jesus. Participants can *truly encounter Christ* with this prayer experience, especially using a presentation of the Stations that is age-appropriate, reflective, and able to touch individuals through multiple senses. This Lent, consider sharing virtual Stations of the Cross with images, music, and moving meditations that allow viewers to, in a small way, experience what Jesus experienced, journey with Him on the road to Calvary, and understand what the sufferings of Jesus mean for us today. Explore virtual Stations of the Cross for all age levels in this ERC listing.

Children's Stations of the Cross: <https://safeshare.tv/x/ss57fe48fa52fb8>

(ten-minute video moving continuously through each Station with colorful illustrations, instrumental music, and narrated meditations)

Stations of the Cross for Children from Loyola Press

English: <https://media.loyolapress.com/assets/lent/stations-eng/stations-eng.html>

Spanish: <https://media.loyolapress.com/assets/lent/stations-span/stations-span.html>

(flip-book style presentation with an image of each Station, instrumental music, and text to help viewers *speak to Jesus*)

Stations of the Cross from Catholic Online: <http://www.catholic.org/prayers/station.php>

(videos showing images from the Holy Land, movie clips and more with instrumental music, narrated meditations for young people, and prayers — option included to scroll down the page for a single image and text of the narration)

Virtual Stations of the Cross from Busted Halo: <http://bustedhalo.com/video/virtual-stations-of-the-cross>

(videos combining images and "flash-in text" in typical Busted Halo style videos, helping viewers reflect on and pray about Jesus' teachings about the Kingdom of God, the reason his vision of this Kingdom led to his death, and ways God is speaking to us today about the Kingdom through the Stations)

Stations of the Cross from CRS Rice Bowl: <https://www.crsricebowl.org/stations-of-the-cross>

(instrumental music, narration, and film footage of our global family, raising awareness of the plight and suffering of the poor, inspiring justice, charity, and solidarity in our Lenten practices)

For these and more engaging resources on the Stations of the Cross check out the Archdiocese of Dubuque Pinterest boards below or contact the ERC.

- Children: <https://www.pinterest.com/dbqarch/lent-for-children-for-the-liturgical-year/stations-of-the-cross/>
- Teens/Adults: <https://www.pinterest.com/dbqarch/lent-for-youth-for-the-liturgical-year/stations-of-the-cross/>

