

To Teach As Jesus Did

February 2019



SACRED SPACE A Prayer for Valentine's Day

Praise to the One whose love stirs the ancient embers,
sparks the breath of prayer.
Praise to the One whose love entices the wandering,
beckons the confused.
Praise to the One whose love grows wings on the weary,
dreams hope in the discouraged.
Praise to the One whose love soothes with the ointment of mercy,
transforms with the touch of compassion.
Praise to the One whose love threads the energy of friendship,
stitches the strength of fidelity.
Praise to the One whose love tickles the soul with laughter,
urges the heart toward joy.
Praise to the One whose love embraces the untamed,
dances with the passionate.
All praise to this Gracious One.
All gratitude to this Beloved.
All love to this Mentor of Friendship.
All devotion to this Shaper of Hearts.

<https://www.opw.catholic.org.au/prayer-and-reflection/a-prayer-for-valentines-day.html>

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE Teaching As Jesus Did

Let us love one another, because love is of God. (1 John 4:7)
We love because he first loved us. (1 John 4:19)
Trust in the Lord with all your heart. (Proverbs 3:5)



Here's an exercise that can incorporate scripture into Valentine's Day. Have small groups discuss these or other passages and share their thoughts with the large group. These verses could also be used in Valentine cards. Can you think of other scripture passages that call to mind the love God has for us?

HIGHLIGHTING YOUTH MINISTRY CURRICULUM The Mission of Jesus Christ (The Paschal Mystery) Objectives #3 & 4

Theme #4, "The Mystery of Jesus Christ (The Paschal Mystery)" began in January, 2019. This theme focuses on how, by dying, Jesus destroyed our death and how, by rising, he restored our life...the Paschal Mystery.

Participants will learn that for all eternity, God has planned for us to share eternal happiness with Him, which is accomplished through the Paschal Mystery of Jesus, to which we are called to live.

Objectives #3 & 4:

- * Explore the covenants of the Old Testament in order to understand how God never stops loving his people.
- * Understand that God established a new and everlasting covenant with His people through his Son Jesus Christ.

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

FOR YOUR FORMATION Embracing Ordinary Time

Ordinary Time is a beautiful time on the Church calendar. You may look to 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>

SAINT OF THE MONTH

Our Lady of Lourdes – February 11

It was on February 11, 1858, that a beautiful lady first appeared to Bernadette Soubirous of Lourdes, France. Bernadette's family was so poor they lived in a cellar that had once been a jail. Bernadette could not read or write, but she was a good girl. She loved God very much. She was pure and obedient, too. One day, she saw a vision of a woman wearing a white dress and a light blue sash. A white veil covered the woman's head and fell over her shoulders to the ground. On her feet were two lovely golden roses. Her hands were joined and a rosary hung from her right arm. Its chain and cross shone like gold. She appeared eighteen times to Bernadette, asking her to tell the people to pray, to do penance and to recite the Rosary for sinners. During the last apparition, Bernadette asked the beautiful lady who she was. The lady replied, "I am the Immaculate Conception." She was Mary, the Mother of God. A basilica was built where Bernadette saw Our Lady. Although the apparitions took place over a hundred years ago, miracles still happen there. Where she once appeared to Bernadette, Our Lady still shows her love for us. Let us try to say the Rosary to our Blessed Mother often. Through this prayer, we receive all the graces we need for ourselves and for those we love.

<http://www.wjbr.com/feb.html>



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TEACHABLE MOMENTS

February 2: Presentation of the Lord/Candlemas

The Presentation of the Lord, celebrated on February 2, occurs forty days after the birth of Jesus, and is also known as Candlemas day, since the blessing of candles is included in the day's liturgy. According to the 1962 Missal of St. John XXIII, the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite, this feast day is also referred to as the "Purification of Mary," and is known as a Christmas feast, since it points back to the Solemnity of Christmas. Many Catholics practice the tradition of keeping the Nativity crèche or other Christmas decorations up until this feast.

Consider incorporating aspects of the feast day into your family's celebration:

- Ask your parish priest to bless the candles that you will be using on your home altar or prayer space this year.
- Have a family Candlemas procession.
- Read Luke 2:22-35, the account of the Presentation including the Canticle of Simeon.
- Meditate on the constant fiat of Our Lady of Sorrows, who embraced the will of God even as Simeon predicted that a sword would pierce her heart.

<https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2018-02-02>

LOOKING AHEAD

Upcoming Opportunities for Teaching the Faith

February 2: Presentation of the Lord/Candlemas

February 14: Valentine's Day

March 13: Ash Wednesday – Lent begins

March 17: St. Patrick's Day

March 19: Solemnity of St. Joseph, Husband of Mary
and Patron of the Universal Church

April 14: Palm Sunday – Holy Week begins

April 21: Easter Sunday

June 9: Pentecost Sunday





ENGAGING TEENS The Formative Component of Youth Ministry

This month, we place our focus on the *Formative* component of Catholic youth ministry:

Effective Catholic youth ministry seeks to form teens in Christian living, helping them see how the teachings of the faith are applied to the circumstances of everyday life.

Faith can be both strengthened and challenged as life gets more complicated. Practicing faith does not simply mean going to Mass, praying the Rosary, or attending a youth group. Faith is lived, and it continually changes as our relationship with God changes. Having faith involves a willingness to be open to God's plan for a vocation, to be open to God's will, to God's tenderness, God's mercy, and God's voice.

Having faith means that we empty ourselves, and simply trust. It means that we give everything over to God so he has room to move us. It means that we empty ourselves so we may be filled with the Holy Spirit. Sometimes God shakes things up, and sometimes he doesn't. But we must be open, to listen, and to move when God calls us.

Encourage young people to enter into a deeper relationship with God by recognizing God in the everyday circumstances of their lives.

<https://www.osv.com/OSVNewsweekly/Story/TabId/2672/ArtMID/13567/ArticleID/14409/Plugging-teens-into-the-faith-A-how-to-guide.aspx>

DISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM

Joe Paprocki's Ten Tips for Maintaining Discipline

As a catechist, you will inevitably encounter discipline problems at some point. Discipline is a necessary part of faith formation. When you maintain discipline in your learning environment, you are acting in the image of God – in whose name you teach. In *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 #10: Get to Know the Age Group You Work With

Get to know the developmental characteristics of the age group you are working with. Some behaviors can be more easily understood and dealt with if you have a working knowledge of the physical, psychological, emotional, social, moral, and spiritual characteristics of the age group. Most catechist manuals include an overview of these developmental characteristics.

(From *The Catechist's Toolbox* by Joe Paprocki © 2007, p. 76.)

SUPPORTING PERSONS WITH DIVERSE ABILITIES

Tips for Catechesis

The catechist's ministry can be a challenging, yet rewarding ministry. For catechists given the responsibility of teaching children with physical or intellectual challenges, special accommodations might be needed. Here are some tips for ministering to individuals with special needs:

- * Talk with parents and other caregivers about the needs of the child, and what methods/strategies help them to learn best
- * Create an individualized Religious Education plan for the child with parents, catechists, and any other important person to be involved in the child's learning
- * Use meaningful, positive reinforcement
- * Use visual and tactile aids
- * Facilitate interaction with peers of all abilities
- * Assign "helping roles" suited to the child's needs and abilities
- * Maintain open communication with parents, catechists, and aides to share best practices for home, school, and church.

Consult the Education Resource Center at the Archdiocese of Dubuque regarding books, DVDs, games, and other multimedia and online resources helpful for catechesis of persons with special needs.

For additional information and resources for inclusion of persons with diverse abilities, please contact [Mindy Hart](#), Director of the Office of Disability Inclusion.

ENGAGING PARENTS AND FAMILIES Strengthening Family Faith

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 life of faith. We are aware of the diversity in family forms and structures, and that many challenges put new demands on family life. Here are a few ways for parents to practice strengthening family faith during the winter months:

- * Pray: Bedtime rituals, mealtime prayers, Scripture reading
- * Talk: Have family conversations about the Catholic faith
- * Show: Display sacred objects, religious images, and the Bible in your home
- * Celebrate: Holidays, feast days of Saints
- * Teach: Children learn by example, provide moral lessons
- * Witness: Plan and implement family projects to help other people

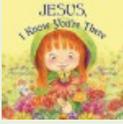
How do you reach out to the families of children in your faith formation program? How do you encourage parents as the primary catechists of their children?

EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTER SPOTLIGHT:

In the true spirit of St. Valentine, the ERC offers resources to help you in your sessions to facilitate an encounter with the love of God. Consider the options in the chart below, or for more ideas, contact the ERC staff:

Kim – 563.556.2580 X210 or dbgmed@dbgarch.org

Tricia – 563.556.2580 X214 or dbqcm1@dbgarch.org

	<p>BK #201502 <i>Jesus, I Know You're There</i></p>	<p>With color and rhyme, help young children understand that God transmits his love and mercy in all things: a flower, a smile, a sad moment, and the Eucharist!</p>
	<p>KA #04748 <i>Wooden Sheep On Wheels and Good Shepherd Pack</i></p>	<p>Hide the 22 sheep. Invite children to take the Good Shepherd (picture) around the room to find the sheep. Share the story of the Good Shepherd to assure children of the love of God who longs for an encounter with them, especially when they lose their way. (More fun activity ideas included with kit.)</p>
	<p>PO #01224 <i>Wall Story: Jesus Is In My Heart</i></p> <p>Where can we encounter Jesus? These 8 posters offer ideas: in my heart, in the manger, on the cross, in the word, in the Eucharist, in the Tabernacle, in the Monstrance, in me (and one another). Help children discover that they can encounter God anywhere, and most especially at Eucharist.</p>	
	<p>DV31515 <i>Come Unto Me</i></p>	<p>Through this fictional but probable story, older children will discover the power of an encounter with Jesus and the love of Mary that can make such an encounter happen.</p>
	<p>DV31203 Video Catechism: Volume I - <i>Creed (The Pursuit)</i> or http://vcacat.org/the-pursuit/</p>	<p>Can we encounter Christ even when we have allowed life to go off-course? Based on the poem, "The Hound of Heaven" teens will discover how Jesus always pursues them in order to offer his mercy.</p>